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ROAD RESCUE FEASIBILITY STUDY

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**A RESCUE SERVICE DOES NOT EXIST
FOR WHAT IT DOES.
IT EXISTS FOR WHAT IT MAY HAVE TO DO!**

LBG

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We live in a mobile society where people travel in vehicles on highways and roads for a variety of reasons. The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) is blessed with some of the most spectacular scenery and recreational opportunities in the world. From time to time as the motoring public travel through the CSRD, motor vehicle accidents (MVA) occur which require road rescue emergency responders to come to their assistance to extricate the injured.

Within British Columbia, there is no mandated responsibility for road rescue. Likewise, there is no legislated mandate to have a fire department. By comparison, the British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) does however, have a Provincial mandate to provide pre-hospital care; a service that on occasion they cannot provide without access to patients made possible by road rescue services.

Schedule 1 of the Emergency Program Management Regulation related to the Emergency Program Act, indicates that the Attorney General is identified as the Minister responsible for coordinating government responses to specified hazards. Included in the list of hazards is “motor vehicle crashes”

While the mission of the Attorney General is to administer justice, deliver public safety services and programs, lead emergency management and provide legal advice to Government, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General has assumed responsibility for the oversight of Emergency Management BC (“EMBC”).

No other legislation, nor regulation, addresses the matter of road rescue. A review of the Emergency Program Act, the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation and the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation does not reveal any mandate for the activities of road rescue service providers.

It is interesting to note that in February 2017, the Fire Chiefs Association of British Columbia (“FCABC”) was awarded funding to conduct research and to develop a proposed framework for the provision of road rescue within the province, including provisions for the FCABC to receive and prioritize funding requests for EMBC registered road rescue providers.

Firewise believes the research emanating from this project will assist in a significantly clearer understanding of how road rescue services at the provincial level might be managed and funded.

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) has taken an interest in rescues of all types including road rescue. They have not, however, taken responsibility for road rescue. The interest EMBC has in the issue is to provide some guidance to road rescue groups through the development of a Road Rescue Safety Program Guide (RRSPG) and by

granting task numbers to registered road rescue providers so they can receive liability protection, WorkSafeBC coverage, and claim for operational expenses for providing the service. The province provides compensation to road rescue service providers but not when the incident occurs within municipal boundaries or a defined fire protection service area or where there is a responding fire department, equipped and trained to provide road rescue service. It is the opinion of FireWise that this practice is purely financial. FireWise has been unable to determine any legislation, regulation or policy that provides any other rationale for such a decision. It is hoped that the province-wide initiative being undertaken to look at road rescue services will bring more clarity to this position.

In the last ten years, there have been two road rescue societies that provided the service in the CSRD disband. A third has opted out of providing road rescue services. The service gap caused the CSRD to look to other groups who could step up and provide the service ensuring a reasonable level of public safety. In each of these cases, a fire department has continued to provide road rescue services. Road rescue in many communities is a service provided by the local fire department within their service area. The CSRD is fortunate to have two road rescue societies who continue to provide the service with support from municipal or CSRD fire departments.

This feasibility study was requested to look at the current service delivery models and the sustainability of the service plus other issues.

Within the CSRD there are five road rescue service providers. Two are municipal fire departments, Golden Fire Rescue, and Revelstoke Fire Rescue Service, two are Societies registered with the Province under the Societies Act and the fifth is Field Fire and Rescue Department Society who provide service under contract to Parks Canada. The two societies are the Eagle Valley Rescue Society and the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit. Two more municipal fire departments from outside the CSRD provide road rescue services to other areas in the CSRD close to their municipalities where they are based. The agencies outside the CSRD are Vernon Fire Rescue Service and Chase Fire Rescue. There is no cost to the CSRD for these fire departments to respond to a MVA in the CSRD but there is no guarantee they will always be available.

Information on where and when a MVA occurred was analyzed to determine if the service provided is acceptable. The biggest concern being the time it takes the trained and equipped rescue personnel to arrive at an incident to extract the victims so that they can receive appropriate medical care.

During the time from November 2016 to October 2017, 230 calls for road rescue service in the CSRD were analyzed. Section 7 of this report provides detail on the location of these incidents and response data. The average time for an incident was 1:14:22 (one hour, 14 minutes and 22 seconds). The average response time to an incident was 30:38 (30 minutes and 38 seconds). Emergency service providers have response time standards they strive to meet, which are expressed in the 90th percentile. A simple explanation of this is, once a benchmark has been established, it can be used as a performance measuring tool. The performance measuring tool will show if the agency

can match or improve on the benchmark 90% of the time? The 90th percentile for road rescue events in the CSRD is two hours, forty-one minutes and forty-four seconds (2:41.44). The best efforts of FireWise to determine a provincial average or benchmark were unsuccessful. However, the experience of the project team suggests the 90th percentile in the CSRD is high. It is hoped that the provincial initiative to examine road rescue holistically throughout the province will create a clearer picture of provincial norms.

Doing more analysis of this CSRD benchmark using the response data that was available reveals some factors explaining why the figure is so high.

It starts with the 9-1-1 system. Callers to 9-1-1 out in the rural areas of the province often have difficulty explaining where they are. Dispatchers will probe for more accurate information so that the appropriate road rescue group can be sent.

That creates another problem. The dispatchers scramble to figure out who is the nearest agency. Then there is travel time. Responding to a MVA in the Roger's Pass, for example, is a lengthy road trip for the crews coming from Golden or Revelstoke. It is assumed that travellers traversing through the Roger's Pass understand that emergency services are going to be a long time coming if there is an accident. Travellers therefore assume and accept that risk. Similarly, it is a long distance from Vernon to the Falkland area and from Chase to Anglemont.

On the south and west sides of the CSRD, things are better. The CSRD has established fire departments who routinely respond inside their specified service areas to a MVA in support of BCAS and road rescue agencies. The response times for rescue units coming from Chase or Salmon Arm can be significant. As a result, some CSRD firefighters have expressed frustration at not being able to provide better service while they wait for the specialized rescue tools and equipment to arrive. It is a best practice in many communities where there is an established fire department to provide some road rescue, resulting in this best practice giving rise to the public expectation that most fire departments, including those in the CSRD, provide an all-hazard mitigation service.

Opportunities for improving or enhancing the road rescue service exist. The fire service in the CSRD is a local government service funded by taxpayers within a defined service area, and it would not be unreasonable to consider adding road rescue to the services some of those departments provide within some of those defined service areas.

A case can be made for the existing fire departments who have sufficient members and resources to acquire basic auto extrication equipment and take the training on their use. Modern auto extrication tools usually can be added to existing fire apparatus. Auto extrication tools of today are often battery operated and come in convenient carrying cases allowing them to be easily added to the inventory of equipment carried on fire apparatus without great expense.

The financial impact on CSRD budgets is manageable and enhancing the level of public safety would be a worthwhile investment. Reimbursement rates for out-of-district

response (the local service area) for fire departments are established by EMBC helping to recover operational expenses.

To provide the equipment and training required to allow firefighters to provide a basic road rescue service, will necessitate an initial investment of approximately \$ 35,000.00 per department or per road rescue team. This should provide the team with an initial supply of stabilization tools, a battery-powered combi tool (spreader/cutter), two batteries to power the unit and a full day of training for 10 to 12 firefighters. Training would be initially provided by the vendor selling the tools and assumes that the firefighters have already been trained in scene assessment from a fire and hazard control perspective.

The addition of services, to those already provided by CSRD fire departments, will not attract additional liability concerns providing the members of the fire departments do not exceed their level of training and/or the services that their AHJ has authorized them to deliver. Mitigation of the perceived risks that come with the introduction of providing road rescue service can be achieved by the CSRD Board of Directors introducing the appropriate policies to protect the CSRD. In most situations it complements the training they currently take and can be a strategy to retain volunteers by giving them new personal growth opportunities but more importantly, reducing frustration from feeling undervalued and ineffective at some MVA's.

The report makes one recommendation. That is to allow those CSRD fire departments, who are willing to commit the time required to be trained to provide an additional service, to be enabled by the CSRD to provide basic road rescue in support of other emergency services.

The recommendation of having some CSRD fire departments provide the service is to support the existing road rescue groups, particularly the Eagle Valley Rescue Society and the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit. At the very least, the CSRD Protective Services department should establish dialogue with the road rescue service providers to gather information on road rescue incidents for analysis now that benchmarks have been established looking for continuous improvement.

Another issue is reciprocity. If most other areas in the Province and other provinces do have road rescue services, is the CSRD obligated in any way to ensure its citizens and visitors from other areas receive similar service when in the CSRD? Our experience from other projects completed across the province has been that the expectation of the public is that all fire departments provide some level of road rescue service. We believe a survey of land-owners in the CSRD would show that they expect their community fire department to attend a MVA to eliminate hazards to public safety, and extricate people, or have a plan in place to provide such a service within the CSRD. While there is no mandate that requires the CSRD to provide the service, it would be deemed prudent from a risk management perspective to seek a legal opinion on the position of the CSRD regarding this public safety issue if many other fire departments are providing road rescue services.

The report provides much more detail on the issues so the CSRD can make an informed decision on what steps they should take to enhance the service and keep it sustainable.

2.0 INTRODUCTION & DISCLAIMER

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Regional District) has engaged FireWise Consulting Ltd. to undertake a feasibility study of the current road rescue service within its boundary. The study included determining the best practices surrounding road rescue service delivery, examining the current service delivery models throughout the Regional District, identifying gaps in service delivery and making recommendations as to how the Regional District can support road rescue service delivery throughout the seven Electoral Areas and four municipalities.

2.1 Disclaimer

This report is being submitted for your review and consideration. FWC makes no representation or warranty to the recipient about the information and shall not be liable for any errors or omissions in the information or the use thereof.

3.0 BACKGROUND & HISTORY OF ROAD RESCUE IN B.C.

The history of Road Rescue, also known as auto extrication or highway rescue in British Columbia has not been chronicled due to the fragmented approach to the provision of this service, which has been in existence for many years and which is the current reality.

What is Road Rescue? *It is vehicle extrication defined as the process of removing a vehicle from around a person who has been involved in a motor vehicle accident when conventional means of exit are impossible or inadvisable. A delicate approach is needed to minimize injury to the victim during the extrication. This operation is typically accomplished by using chocks and bracing for stabilization hydraulic powered tools, including the “Jaws of Life,” saws, winches, jacks, airbags or combinations thereof. Standards and regulations are found in NFPA 1006¹ NFPA1670².*

As communities developed and the automobile became increasingly popular, accidents regularly occurred. As more automobiles used the road, the frequency and severity of

¹ NFPA 1006 Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications

² NFPA 1670 Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents

accidents increased resulting in many deaths and serious injuries often due to victims trapped in vehicles involved in accidents.

There is no provincial legislation governing the provision of road rescue services in British Columbia. Road rescue, or highway rescue as it is known in some parts of the province, is a discretionary service, delivered by an array of service providers. The primary agencies that provide the service are fire departments and volunteer road rescue societies. Where there are gaps in the provision of the service by these agencies, road rescue has been, and continues to be, provided by the British Columbia Ambulance Service, Search and Rescue groups and in some extreme cases tow-truck operators.

Within British Columbia, there is no legislated requirement to have a fire department unlike other emergency services such as police and the British Columbia Ambulance Service. Establishing a fire department is purely a local government decision typically made by the local community who support it financially often through taxation. Once the local community decides it would like to have fire protection, some form of governance and oversight structure is created. The governing body then determines what type of services its fire department will provide with firefighting as its core service.

In the same manner, the emergence of road rescue services in many situations has been a result of local governments and volunteer organizations recognizing the need for the service and, through local property taxation or fund-raising, the funding to purchase equipment and provide training.

In most metropolitan and urban areas of the province, the service is provided by municipal fire departments. Within the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, road rescue services are provided by Field Fire and Rescue, Golden Fire-Rescue Services, and Revelstoke Fire Rescue Services within their fire protection boundaries as established by the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

“Whose responsibility is it to provide Road Rescue in British Columbia?”

In other urban and rural areas, where road rescue service is not provided by the local fire department, the service may be provided by a

volunteer road rescue society. Two local examples are the City of Salmon Arm and the District of Sicamous where road rescue services are provided by Salmon Arm Rescue Unit and the Eagle Valley Rescue Society.

For other rural areas of the province, the service is generally provided by agencies which have registered with EMBC as a Road Rescue Service Provider.

EMBC defines a Road Rescue Service Provider as:

“An organized fire rescue service or volunteer rescue society whose members maintain an on-going competence through participation in a training and exercise program that meets the intent of the current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards on operations and training for technical rescue incidents.”

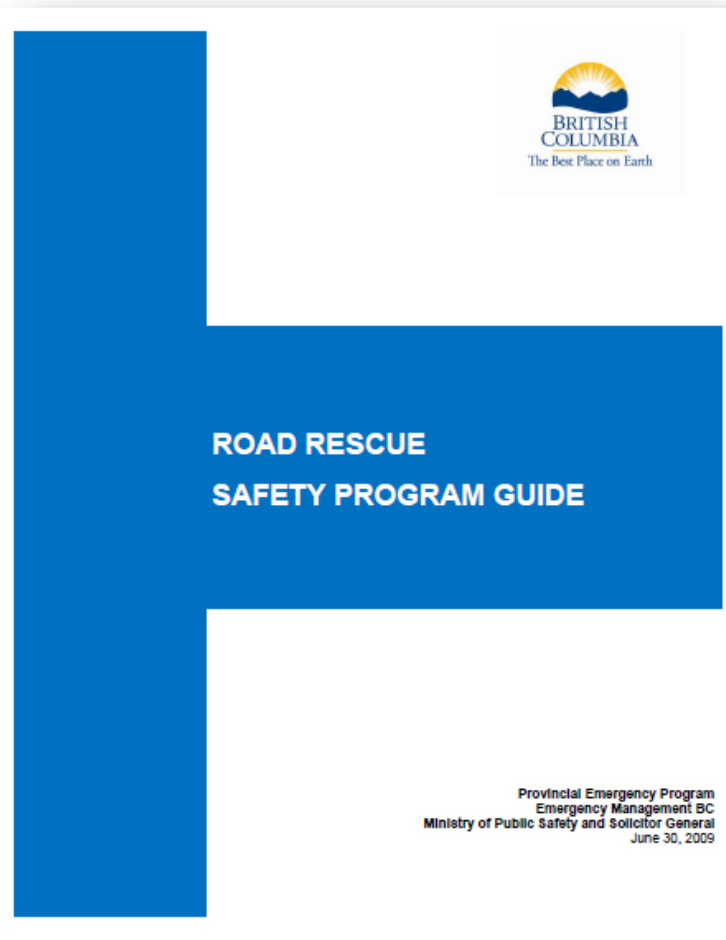
EMBC, formerly known as the Provincial Emergency Program or “PEP,” provides oversight to the BC Road Rescue program. The program maintains a registry of agencies who may be requested to provide support to people involved in out-of-jurisdiction motor vehicle accidents, where specialized skills, such as vehicle extrication and other rescue services and equipment, are required.

EMBC, in their Policy 2.07, defines an “out-of-jurisdiction response” as:

“The service provided is outside the established municipal and fire protection area and is not covered under a contract, mutual aid agreement, automatic aid agreement, or

extended service by-law. This definition applies to organizations that operate without a defined jurisdictional boundary (e.g., road rescue societies not affiliated with a fire department and search and rescue societies).”

A primary function of the EMBC Road Rescue program is to provide WorkSafeBC coverage, including injury, disability, accidental death, and liability coverage for members who are tasked to respond to incidents. EMBC also provides some financial reimbursement for operational cost recovery, to the registered agencies when task numbers have been granted. To ensure the reimbursement and coverage outlined above is in place, an EMBC emergency response task number must be obtained by the responding agency at the commencement of the task.



While EMBC has established policies and a safety guide for those agencies which have chosen to provide road rescue services in the rural areas of the province, the delivery of the service at an incident is contingent upon the availability of trained personnel and the equipment they have at their disposal. There is no one consistent service delivery model in place, either within the CSRD or the Province of British Columbia.

The Road Rescue Safety Program Guide (RRSPG), introduced in June 2009 is a comprehensive document developed by EMBC. The RRSPG outlines best practices and safety-focused guidelines. These guidelines are intended to ensure agencies providing road rescue services, but which are not under the authority of an established fire

department, are aware of and understand the risks and responsibilities that come with the provision of the service.

In the CSRD, when a motor vehicle accident occurs within the municipal boundaries of the City of Salmon Arm or the District of Sicamous, the local fire department will be dispatched to support the road rescue service provider by providing standby fire suppression resources and additional personnel.

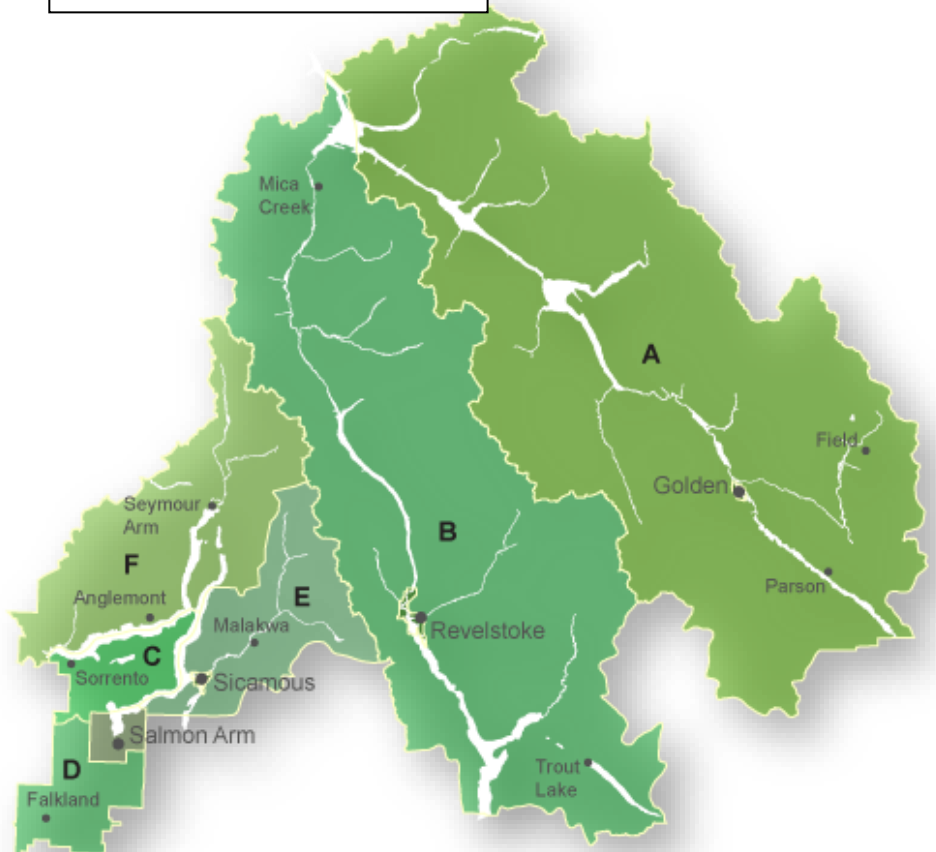
The costs associated with the response by a fire department, under such circumstances, is borne by the AHJ for the fire department.

The provision of fire suppression resources to incidents, which constitute an “out-of-jurisdiction response,” will not automatically be approved by EMBC for reimbursement. The issuance of an EMBC emergency response task number will be dependent on the facts and the circumstances. The key qualifier for reimbursement is where the fire suppression equipment and personnel are required to protect response personnel and subjects involved in the incident where there is an actual or imminent threat to life due to fire.

A principle of any life-threatening injury is defined as the “Golden Hour.” Victims suffering serious injuries in a motor vehicle accident have higher survival outcomes when they are extricated and receive appropriate medical attention within one hour of being injured.

The CSRD covers a large area which is sparsely populated with mountains, lakes, and streams and with seasonal population fluctuations. As in all reactive emergency services, response times to a Motor Vehicle Incident (MVI) are crucial in saving lives, but it is not practical to provide any emergency service equally and consistently within the CSRD. CSRD has developed the fire service within its jurisdiction and has undertaken this study to understand how it can support road rescue.

CSRD Electoral Areas Map



The question of whose responsibility it is to provide road rescue remains to be answered.

Any consideration by the CSRD to allow their fire department apparatus and personnel to respond to incidents outside of the defined service area of the fire department will require a policy of the CSRD Board of Directors unless a mutual aid agreement, an automatic aid agreement or some other regional assistance policy is in place. Establishing a new service in the CSRD will require amendments to Bylaw No. 5587. It is important to note that the authority to allow a CSRD Fire Department to provide road rescue service outside its' designated fire service area boundary can be achieved through a CSRD policy and that it does not require the creation of a specific area of the regional district or the need for electorate assent procedures to be implemented, as the Regional District has the authority to create such enabling policy as noted in paragraph 22 of Bylaw No. 5587.

4.0 TRENDS IN ROAD RESCUE DELIVERY

While Road Rescue services continue to vary across BC the trend across the country is for these services to be included within the mandate of organized fire departments. Vehicle rescue has become increasingly technical due to the advances in safety systems, fuel systems, and the design of vehicles. Providers are having to be proactive in both maintaining their skills and learning, to be competent and ensure safety for themselves and victims.

As jobs become more technical the trend is for services to become specialized. This helps to ensure competency and practices and has contributed to the development of special teams and equipment for this purpose. Organized fire departments tend to incorporate this within their existing service mandate. The skills and equipment for road rescue differ from that of search and rescue, or other technical rescues sufficiently enough to require specialized training and support.

From discussions we had with the two rescue societies it would appear they train continuously incorporating new techniques and new vehicle technology.

As detailed in section 7 of this report, response data shows where incidents have occurred. This is another benchmark that should be reviewed annually looking for trends in the frequency of MVA's which could indicate there may be road design flaws or enforcement issues.



5.0 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

EMBC has done a commendable job of documenting the various key aspects of introducing and maintaining a road rescue service that is designed to ensure the safety of all road rescue responders who register with the BC Road Rescue program. The Road Rescue Safety Program Guide is extensive and comprehensive and is designed to contribute to the safety of other people on-scene at incidents that road rescue service providers attend.

The municipal fire service agencies who provide out-of-jurisdiction road rescue services are governed by the OG's that their AHJ have approved for this service. The provincial guide provides road rescue societies, such as the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit and the Eagle Valley Rescue Society, provides clear direction to their members who deliver road rescue services so, they understand and are compliant with WorkSafeBC regulations.

As noted previously, when road rescue service is being provided out-of-jurisdiction the Province through EMBC provides responders with injury, disability, accidental death, and liability coverage through the assignment of an EMBC Task Number. Each incident that road rescue responders are called to requires a specific EMBC Task Number.

For fire departments delivering road rescue service within their defined fire protection boundaries, the coverage for injury, disability, accidental death, and liability is provided by the AHJ responsible for the fire department.

Through telephone interviews with the representatives of the various road rescue service providers, it was confirmed that they have procedures ensuring compliance with the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. The two societies who provide Road Rescue in the CSRD, review safety issues at their management meetings, while the fire departments have either safety committees or a health and safety representative appointed by the Fire Chief as required by WorkSafeBC.

Record-keeping is essential concerning all safety-related issues. Confirmation was provided that all agencies understand the requirements in this regard, particularly as they relate to injuries, training, near-misses and the need for appropriate and relative operational guidelines.

One aspect of health and safety that is important to those who provide road rescue services is to have a robust critical incident stress debriefing program. The need to identify the possibility of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) through knowledge of the signs and symptoms is understood. All agencies have a guideline to conduct debriefing sessions after significant events and are aware of the counseling services available through WorkSafeBC when required.

6.0 ROAD RESCUE SERVICES IN THE CSRD

The delivery of road rescue services in the CSRD reflects a model that is in place in most parts of the Province of British Columbia with a few unique components.

The following CSRD agencies are registered with EMBC provide road services to the rural areas:

- Golden Fire Rescue
- Revelstoke Fire Rescue Services
- Eagle Valley Rescue Society
- Salmon Arm Rescue Unit

Other parts of the CSRD are serviced by the following CSRD-based road rescue agencies which are not registered with EMBC

- Field Fire and Rescue operates under an agreement with Parks Canada and is responsible for the Yoho National Park will provide service outside of the park boundaries upon request
- BC Hydro Mica Dam Fire Department will and has provided service outside of its' defined fire protection boundary under extraordinary circumstances only.

The following agencies, from outside of the CSRD, have agreed to provide road rescue services within designated areas of the CSRD:

- Vernon Fire Rescue Service provides service along Highway 97 in the Falkland area of Electoral Area D.
- Chase Fire Rescue provides service along the western stretches of the Trans-Canada Highway, within CSRD Electoral Area C, and to the north side of Shuswap Lake area of Electoral Area F as far as Seymour Arm.

It is unusual for communities such as Salmon Arm and Sicamous, with established and mature fire departments, not to provide road rescue services within the boundaries of their fire protection districts. In conversation with the Fire Chiefs of those communities, the long-established relationships with the road rescue societies, who service the areas within their municipal boundaries, are solid and there is no suggestion of any recommended change to the current arrangements. The societies respond to these incidents under an EMBC emergency response task number through which they can obtain reimbursement for the services rendered.

The Salmon Arm Rescue Unit and the Eagle Valley Rescue Society currently provide service to large parts of the CSRD's Electoral Areas C, E, and F.

Another reality of the history of road rescue service in the CSRD which is not unlike other regional districts, is the demise of road rescue service societies. Not many years ago

EMBC reported there were 23 societies providing road and other types of rescue services operating in the province. Today EMBC is aware of only eight societies, now dedicated to the provision of road rescue services.

In the CSRD the disbanding of the Falkland Road Rescue Society and the merging of the Chase Firefighters Association into the Chase Fire Rescue are examples of the changes that have occurred.

As discussed in a later section of this report, it is solely the decision of the CSRD whether they wish to request fire departments, operating under their oversight, to undertake the necessary training and commitment to deliver road rescue service.

Analysis of the delivery of road rescue services within the CSRD indicates that service is being provided upon request and there have been no recorded instances where a request for road rescue service has been denied.



It is recognized that in two areas of the regional district, road rescue service is being provided by two municipalities located in neighbouring regional districts. The arrangements with the City of Vernon and the Village of Chase have been reviewed, and it is noted that in both cases, the CSRD is neither funding nor liable for these services. The CSRD appreciates the service these municipalities provide, but the CSRD may withdraw its consent for the provision of road rescue service by either municipality at any time.

We believe that the arrangements with these two municipalities constitutes an acknowledgment by the CSRD of the importance and the need for road rescue service in two areas. The areas are the Falkland area of Electoral Area D and, in the western extremities of Electoral Area C and along the north side of Shuswap Lake in parts of Electoral Area F. Both arrangements were made to provide the service in the areas that road rescue was previously provided by the Falkland Road Rescue Society and the Chase Firefighters Association.

It is also noted that the CSRD has recognized the importance of road rescue services through the Grant-in-Aid funding support it has provided on an annual basis to the Eagle Valley Rescue Society.

7.0 ROAD RESCUE SERVICE IN THE CSRD – EVENT & RESPONSE ANALYSIS

From November 2016 until October 2017, 230 calls for service within the CSRD were analyzed as a part of the study. Seventy-nine (79) of the events did not have a unit arrive leaving 151 events with response times.

Of the 79 calls where no unit arrived, 69 were canceled before a unit left their station. Another ten calls were canceled while units were en route. This can be explained by realizing that often police or BCAS may arrive and determine there is no entrapment and the injuries are not life-threatening so the road rescue services are canceled.

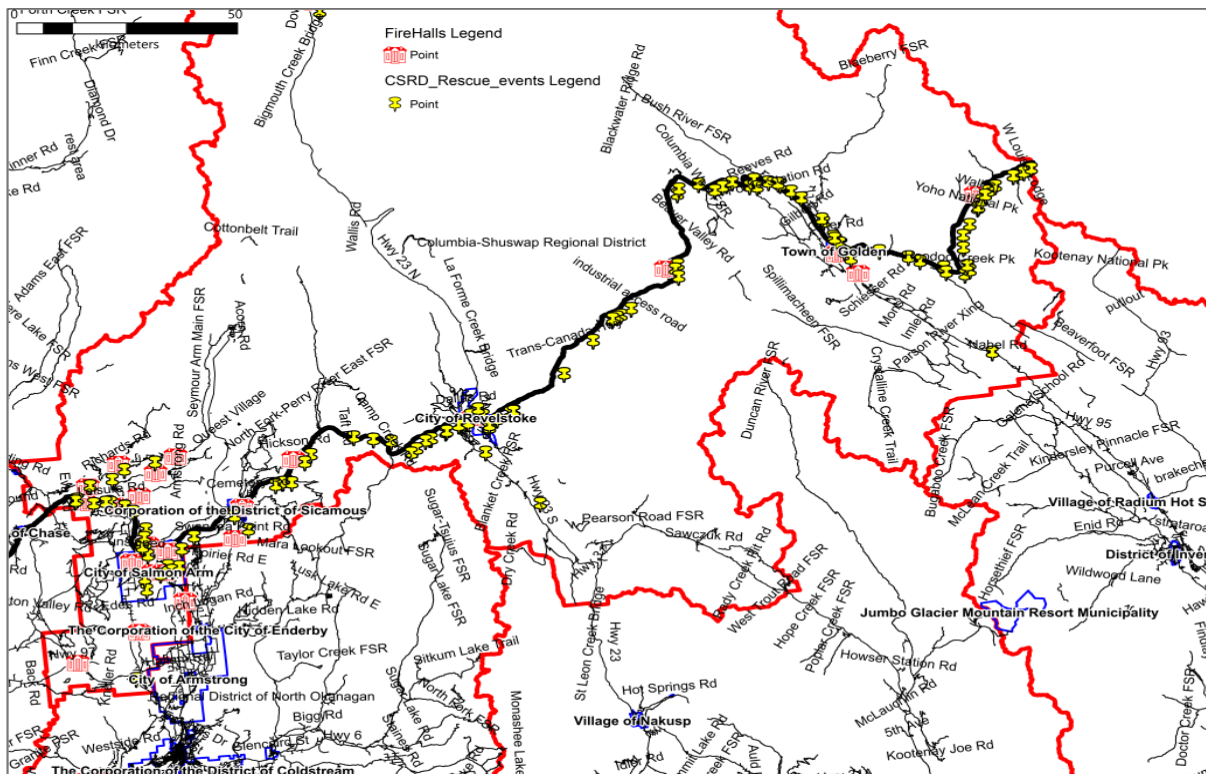
People calling into 9-1-1 see a serious accident and assume there are injuries with possibly people trapped. The 9-1-1 call taker has to assume the information from the caller is accurate and dispatch the appropriate agencies.

Dispatched Events	Number
Event canceled – no response	69
Event canceled en route	10
On scene before complete	151
Total	230

The events include only those cases where Surrey Fire dispatched the call. We are aware the other events may have been dispatched by Kamloops Fire, Vernon Fire or directly by BC Ambulance dispatch to one of the rescue societies. This creates challenges in terms of maintaining event records and is discussed later in the report around dispatch. The map shows that the concentration of events is along the Trans-Canada highway and within the towns along it.

In the process of getting information on where incidents in the CSRD have occurred, FireWise learned that when a call comes directly to the BCAS 9-1-1 dispatch centre for a MVA with possible entrapment, the 9-1-1 call takers often must guess which agency should be sent. This is a significant contributing factor to the dispatch process being delayed and the appropriate road rescue agencies being sent. If a rescue agency is not registered with EMBC or, BCAS is not aware of where the service road rescue agency operates, dispatching delays can occur while BCAS contacts regional fire dispatch centres for assistance. In some situations, BCAS, the police and fire service could arrive but then need to wait for a road rescue crew to arrive.

Figure 1 Map of CSRD Marking Road Rescue Incidents



Figures 2 and 3 provide a look at the patterns of the events indicating that they concentrate around high traffic times and weekends as expected.

Figure 2 Road Rescue Events Count by Time Period

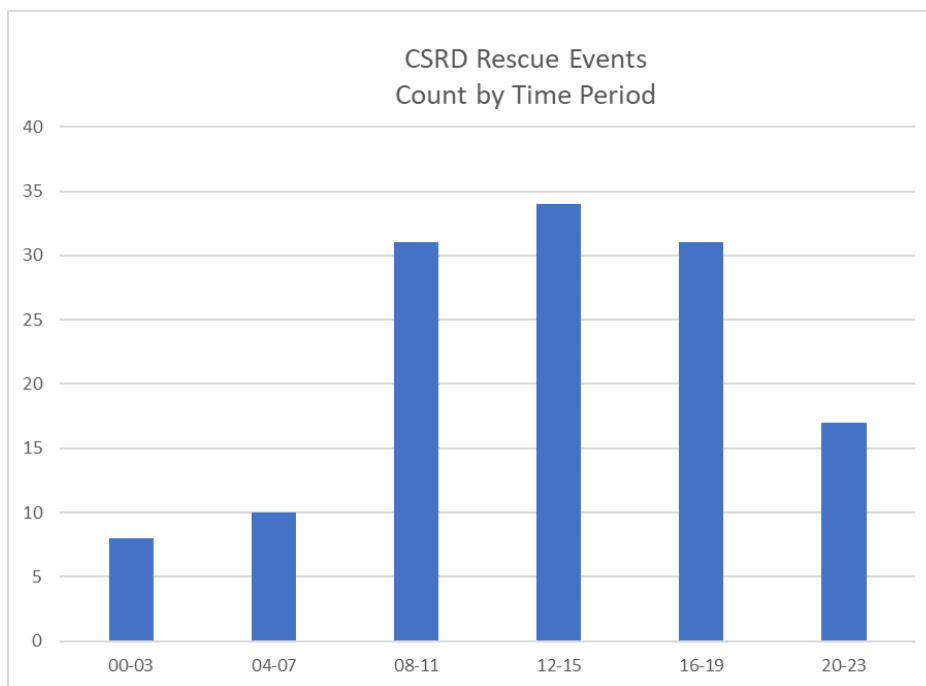
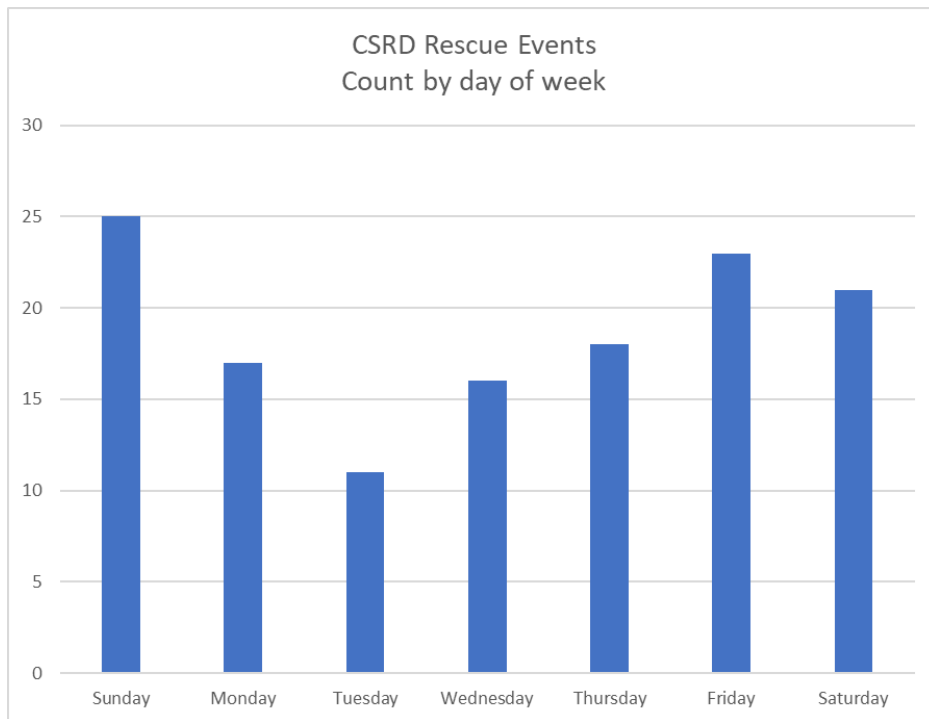
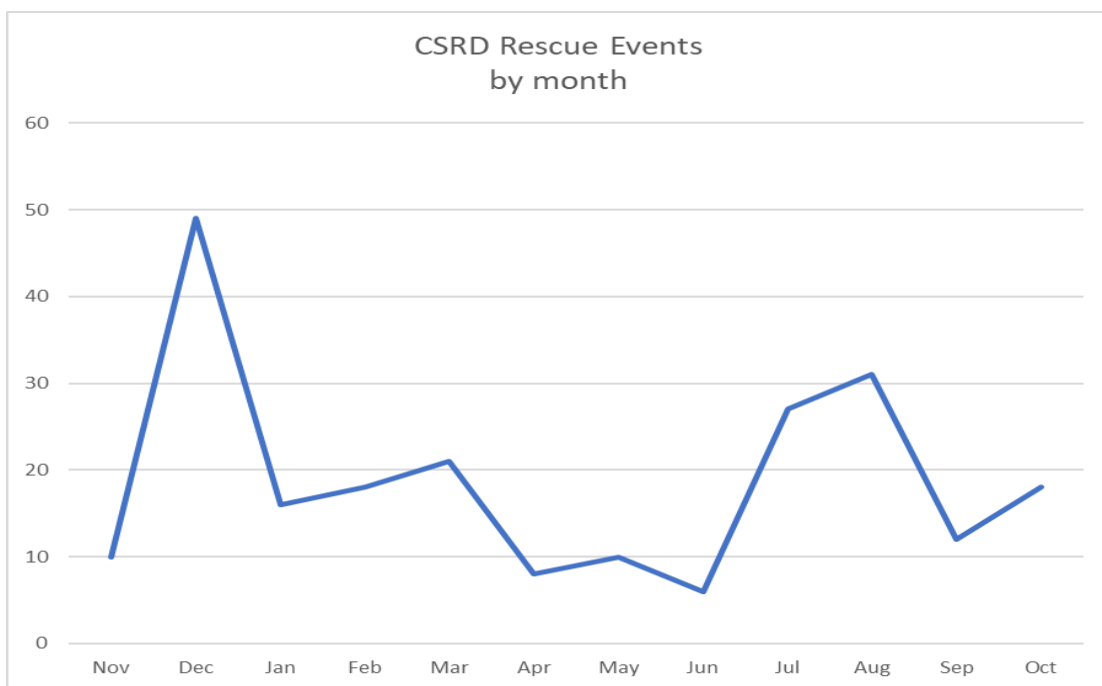


Figure 3 Road Rescue Events Count by Day of the Week



Figures 2 and 3 show road rescue incidents are most likely to occur between noon and 3:00 pm on Sundays or Fridays in the months of November through February with another spike in the summer from June to September. There is a seasonal variation of calls (Figure 4) which shows that a combination of weather and seasonal travel contributes to increased road rescue incidents which has the potential to stretch resources.

Figure 4 Rescue Events by Month



Time Performance Analysis

For the 151 events that reached scene we looked at the elapsed time performance as shown in the table below.

	Turnout	Travel	Response	Trip	Call Processing
Average (230 calls – 79 no arrival at MVA)	0:05:26	0:20:40	0:30:38	1:14:22	0:04:32
90th percentile	0:14:02	0:41:17	0:52:04	2:41:44	0:11:57

Definition of times included for an event are:

Turnout – Time from when Road Rescue Service is called, and first unit rescue unit is enroute to the scene

Travel – Travel time for first rescue unit to arrive at the event

Response – Total time from when 9-1-1 call is received to first road rescue unit arrived at the event

Trip – Overall duration of event from when dispatched until road rescue unit is available

In emergency services, response times are an important performance measuring tool. For example, response standards look at how often a career fire department is able to reach the scene of a fire in under ten minutes. If the fire department can meet that response time standard 90% of the time, then it has met its response time target. If the fire department cannot meet the standard, then new building restrictions come into play. BCAS has response time targets for its ambulance in municipal areas.

By analyzing response data regularly, the AHJ can get a picture of how the service is performing. If the average call response figures are used, one could say the service is performing quite well. When you look at the 90th percentile however, you will note that 90% of the time it takes almost 12 minutes for a road rescue unit to be called. This could be because callers to 9-1-1 do not know precisely where they are, and dispatchers have to quiz them over the telephone to get accurate incident location information. As improvements are made to cell phone technology this issue will get better.

As dispatch centres throughout the province embrace technological advances such as Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) services it will become easier to identify which rescue unit is nearest the incident. Having AVL is a long-term enhancement that will require additional expense for the AHJ requiring additional equipment on each emergency vehicle and expensive technological upgrades to equipment in the dispatch centres.

It is evident that there are significant variations in performance in most times and opportunities for improvement exist. Figure 5 shows the distribution of response times for the events. Those beyond the 90th percentile when looked at in detail highlight issues with record keeping and dispatch procedure for example. Managing these exceptions

properly has the potential to engender continuous improvement and set realistic benchmarks for performance.

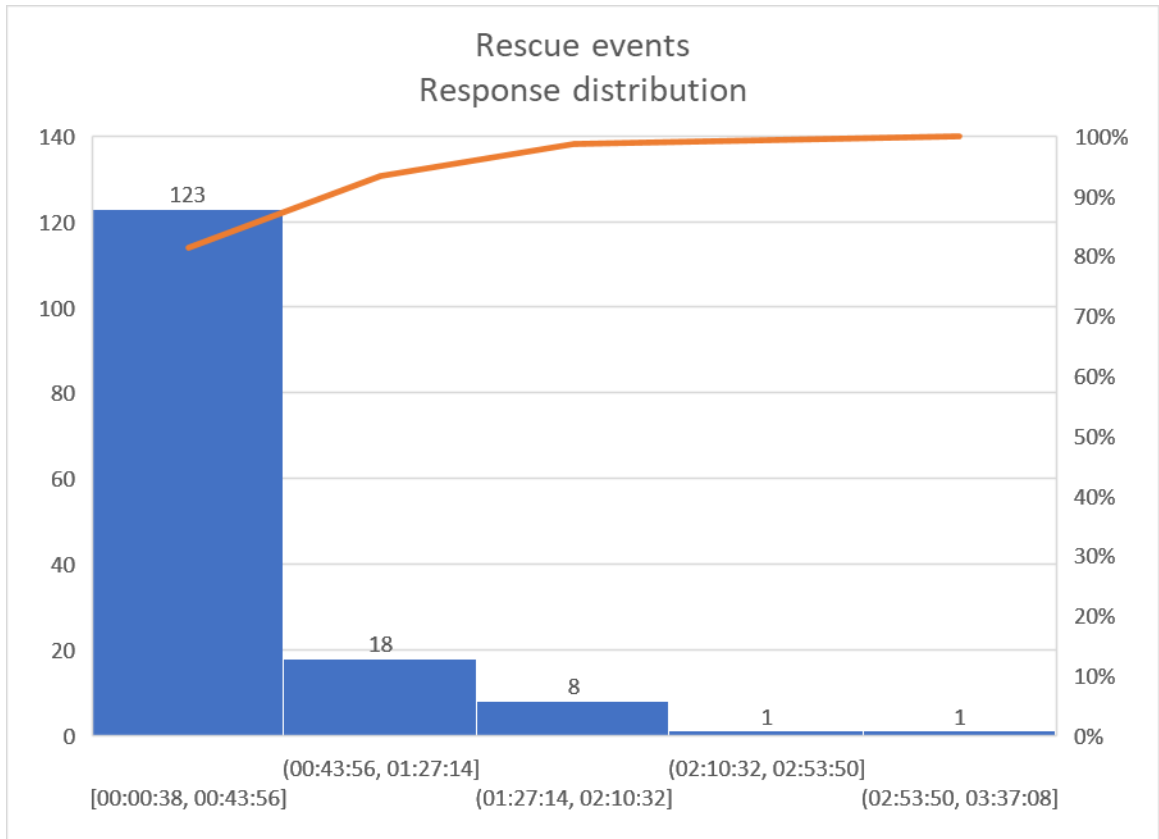


Figure 5 Road Rescue Events Response Distribution

8.0 REGIONAL DISTRICT COMPARISON

A survey of the following Regional Districts was completed:

<u>Regional District</u>	# of Regional District Fire Departments (# providing Road Rescue Service)	Population (2016 Census)	Size of Regional District in Sq. Km	Communities in RD with populations over 5,000
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	3 (0)	132663	44449	Kamloops Merritt
Regional District of East Kootenay	8 (2)	60439	27542	Cranbrook Fernie Kimberley
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako	4 (1)	37896	73361	Smithers
Regional District of Kootenay Boundary	8 (2)	31447	8085	Trail
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	13 (0)	51366	28929	Revelstoke Salmon Arm

Attempts to connect with the following Regional Districts were unsuccessful in obtaining specific details of their involvement in providing road rescue services.

<u>Regional District</u>	# of Regional District Fire Departments (# providing Road Rescue Service unknown)	Population (2016 Census)	Size of Regional District in Sq. Km	Communities in RD with populations over 5,000
Cariboo Regional District	14	61988	80610	Quesnel Williams Lake
Regional District of Fraser-Fort George	13	94506	50676	Prince George
Regional District of Central Kootenay	12	59517	22095	Castlegar Creston Nelson

The feedback we received suggested that provision of road rescue service is provided in a manner that is similar to what is occurring within the CSRD. The main difference is, in three of the four regional districts that shared information, it is the regional district fire departments that are providing road rescue services.

The ability to provide meaningful benchmarking for this report proved challenging as the spokespersons for the various regional districts we connected with did not know the

history or the rationale behind the decision that road rescue service would be undertaken by regional district fire departments.

It was confirmed that each of the regional districts contacted provide financial support to road rescue societies and search and rescue organizations that provide road rescue. This is done through Grants-in-Aid in the same way that the CSRD supports the Eagle Valley Rescue Society. FireWise has recently learned that this may create a problem for Road Rescue Societies with EMBC and prevent the Society from obtaining a task number. This is based on an interpretation of EMBC Policy 2.07, that an agreement between the Society and a defined fire protection service area exists making the Road Rescue Society no longer eligible to receive an EMBC Task number.

It was also a challenge to determine what the cost is to provide road rescue services by regional district-funded fire departments because analytics have not been tracked for this service. Once the decision is made for road rescue service to be a service provided by a regional district fire department, the capital costs and costs to maintain the specialized equipment, to maintain the training and the compensation of the volunteer firefighters becomes part of the operating budget for the department.

FireWise asked the spokespersons, for the other regional districts, if road rescue services was ever a topic of discussion with their elected and appointed officials. The feedback indicated that the new remuneration rates introduced by EMBC for out-of-jurisdiction responses was seen as an improvement in recognizing the value of the service being provided and that was appreciated.

A challenge in most of the regional districts contacted is the inconsistent approach to dispatching. Where a fire department is being dispatched, the response request is routed through the 9-1-1 dispatch centre for the fire department. However, when a road rescue society in the CSRD is dispatched the request comes from the BC Ambulance Service. When a road rescue is requested from a search and rescue society that provides road rescue, the call is made by the police force responsible for the area in question. The difference being a specific Road Rescue Society as opposed to Search and Rescue Society that also provides road rescue. The dispatching solution to ensure the appropriate agency is requested to attend an incident expeditiously is beyond the scope of this report.

9.0 CSRD RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a critical component of any feasibility study. There are several considerations that require analysis when road rescue service is the subject of a study.

One of the prime considerations is identifying the various risks when assessing the impact of the CSRD taking a more direct involvement in the delivery of the service.

The first obvious risks are for the first responders who arrive to assist at an accident scene. Awareness of hazards that could cause harm to the responders and others on the scene must be part of the responders training. Team leaders must be prepared to complete a scene assessment. This is a fundamental requirement and the actions one would expect that individual to follow must be laid out in the procedures developed by the agency responsible for providing the road rescue service. The procedures must be designed to mitigate threats to the first responders and for the safety of all those on scene, including victims.

In addition to the on-scene risk assessment, it is recommended that a general risk assessment, pertaining to issues which are linked to the provision of road rescue services, be conducted by the AHJ, to review risks that could affect the sustainable operational readiness of the road rescue service provider. These risks include the stability of rescue societies. Does the sustainability of the society depend on current leadership? Is funding consistent and where does it primarily come from? Is the equipment well maintained and adequate?

Risk assessment of the ability to deliver road rescue service consistently is fundamental. Factors such as having sufficient and adequately trained personnel available to respond 24/7. Are the qualifications and experience of the team leaders adequate? Are there training records of members? Are maintenance records of the apparatus and equipment kept? Does the agency have appropriate insurance coverages to address worker injuries and potential liability? These are examples of risks that should be considered.

In those instances where the road rescue service is being provided by a fire department, it is reasonable to assume that these issues have already been addressed within the scope of current services being provided by the fire department.

When the service is being provided by a registered society, the AHJ is the society's board of directors. Issues relating to general risk assessment rest with those individuals and they need to be aware of what risks are in play and what steps they can take to ensure they are protected from personal responsibility if the society is cited by WorkSafeBC or if any aspect of the society's operation comes into question.

Once registered with EMBC, if the road rescue society has chosen to be a part of the BC Road Rescue Program, there is no ongoing monitoring or audit of the society's structure and activities to ensure there are no predictable risks evident. Basic requirements such as Directors and Officers Liability insurance, financial reporting practices, appropriate

policies to guide the members in adopting and following a code of conduct plus WorkSafeBC compliant record-keeping are examples of responsibilities that perhaps not all societies are aware of.

It should be noted however that conversations FireWise had with leaders of the Eagle Valley Rescue Society and the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit indicates they are well-organized and have completed risk assessments within the realm of their agency's operations.

The reason for including this commentary in the report is that the CSRD may wish to consider providing the road rescue societies with an offer of management oversight to ensure the sustainability of the societies as they continue to provide a valued service to the taxpayers, residents, and visitors to the regional district. Such oversight might include an offer to provide training in subjects such as incident command currently not included in the societies' training program.

When exploring risks, it is reasonable and desirable to strive for a consistent level of service for road rescue across the whole regional district.

The term "level of service" has become very familiar to most AHJs in British Columbia as it was a key element within the Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook developed by the British Columbia Office of the Fire Commissioner.

"What is an acceptable level of road rescue service in the CSRD?"

The terms "level of service" or "service level" are mentioned throughout this report. In the context of risk assessment, it is important to acknowledge that there is no "rule of thumb" or "best practice" concerning response times for

a road rescue service provider. Every incident is different but the sense of urgency by first responders is consistent throughout.

EMBC refers to a reasonable time frame when addressing response times. To define "reasonable time frame" in minutes is deemed impossible to set and so it is up to the AHJ to determine what it judges to be appropriate in this regard. Some service providers establish what is often referred to as a "chute time" for their agency. A definition of "Chute time" is the length of time from when a call is dispatched, until the time when an emergency vehicle begins continuous travel to a call. Volunteer-staffed first responder emergency services have little control over "chute time" because the volunteers must get to the rescue station to respond. By comparison, a career fire department has staff in the fire station ready to respond.

The question for the CSRD is, considering the current service delivery model, what is an acceptable level of service, (response time, responder safety, specialized training) for road rescue in the CSRD.

It is important that regardless of the structure of the road rescue service provider that the AHJ has policy in place addressing such topics as:

- the training competencies they require their road rescue service providers to have attained
- demonstrated evidence that all occupational health and safety risks have been addressed
- expectations of the AHJ in the event of conflicting priorities where an emergency incident occurs within a fire department's fire protection area at the same time as a request to attend an "out-of-jurisdiction" motor vehicle incident with confirmed entrapment is received.

These examples suggest some of the policies the AHJ should have in place to ensure that the agency delivering the service is provided with adequate direction from the AHJ and that expectations of the AHJ are reasonable.

To assess some of the risks described, FireWise completed interviews with senior members of the two road rescue societies operating within the CSRD. In both cases, the societies appear to have good structure, many years of experience, a solid core of dedicated members, well-organized training programs and a good record of providing dependable service. Both organizations enjoy the respect and support of the fire chiefs in the communities where they are based.

As alluded to previously, it is suggested that representatives of the CSRD form a liaison with the current road rescue service providers. The purpose of the liaison would be to provide support, to address issues facing the agencies that may impact the regional district and to demonstrate that the CSRD is aware of the value of the service being provided within its' boundaries to its' residents and visitors.

A couple of examples of how CSRD may be able to offer important guidance and awareness would be to provide the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit with details of the CSRD Grant-in-Aid program, a financial benefit that the Eagle Valley Rescue Society has enjoyed for many years.

The other example would be to reach out to the leadership of the Field Fire and Rescue Department Society to discuss whether they should consider registering with EMBC so that they might enjoy the remuneration and insurance coverages available when they leave the confines of Yoho National Park as they often do. The contract between the Field Fire and Rescue Department Society and Parks Canada does not appear to address this issue, and it is recommended that the CSRD demonstrate leadership by raising the matter and discussing the implications with the Fire Chief of Field Fire and Rescue.

10.0 FEASIBILITY OF CSRD ROAD RESCUE SERVICE

10.1 Overview

The provision of road rescue services is accepted by many jurisdictions across Canada as a part of their commitment to local public fire and life safety and as a service included in the provision of protective services.

As previously mentioned, the question of who has responsibility for road rescue has not been determined. Why would the CSRD consider road rescue service options within its jurisdiction? The answer would be to demonstrate that the CSRD regularly reviews where there may be real or perceived service gaps with respect to public safety and that they are committed to seeking solutions to such issues. The current road rescue services being delivered in parts of the regional district may not be as adequate as would be desired from reliability and timely response perspectives. To chose to have select CSRD fire departments equipped and trained to provide such service would certainly address such a service gap in the absence of any other viable or available solution.

Such action on the part of the CSRD would improve response times for road rescue services and avoid the current dependence on services from jurisdictions outside of the CSRD. Allowing firefighters in some existing departments to provide road rescue service will show that public safety is a priority to the CSRD and provide the residents and visitors with a sense of security while travelling in the regional district.

Additionally, allowing firefighters to provide this vital service will reduce their frustration, as first responders waiting for another emergency service to respond. It is important for the CSRD to be aware that having their firefighters standing by in situations, which can often have life or death implications, and not being empowered or equipped to act, may create stressful repercussions on those CSRD firefighters. Also, recognizing the value of firefighters learning new skills will aid in recruitment and retention as most volunteers join a volunteer fire department for altruistic reasons and want to be able to help people thereby attaining self actualization.

Before discussing the feasibility of the CSRD considering additional involvement in providing road rescue services, we understand that many small fire departments cannot provide the same services as other fire departments. Community demographics, seasonal population, the number of volunteer firefighters, the tax base, budgets, the demand for the service and the analysis of the return on investment to provide the service, are just some factors preventing a small rural fire department from providing anything more than basic firefighting. Many fire departments are considered all hazard mitigation experts. In rural communities, this expectation is not reasonable, so other emergency responding agencies must provide the mitigation expertise.

A fire department should equip and train for what is most likely to occur but not ignore a worst-case scenario. Motor vehicle accidents are common occurrences and is a service provided by most fire departments. By comparison, a serious hazardous material incident is not a common occurrence, so most fire departments have chosen to provide a hazardous material (hazmat) response at an “awareness” level and call in outside agencies including private contractors to mitigate the incident. Hazmat incidents are often not life threatening and quickly stabilized with considerable time to think things through. A MVA may could be life threatening and as stated elsewhere in this report, patients need to get to appropriate medical treatment facilities quickly.

The level of service that an AHJ may wish to have their fire department provide when considering road rescue can vary from “no service” to “complex vehicle and machinery extrication incidents.” Decision-makers contemplating the introduction of a new emergency response service, such as road rescue, must determine the cost implications of purchasing the appropriate components of the rescue equipment required to deliver the desired level of service and that they are confident that sufficient trained staff can be recruited.

Decision-makers must also research the anticipated costs, so they can be thoroughly evaluated. Will the service add value? Will it be understood in the communities where the primary responsibility of the fire department is to provide fire suppression services? Assurances are required that the introduction of a new service will enhance the value of the fire department, increase public safety and not compromise the safety of the volunteer firefighters in any way.

The requirements for registration with EMBC must be evaluated if the decision is made to ask a fire department or a group of fire departments to form a road rescue team.

If another road rescue service option was to be introduced to replace the service currently being provided in Electoral Areas C, D, and F, by the two municipal fire departments from outside the CSRD, the Salmon Arm Rescue Unit (SARU) could be looked upon to provide supplementary road rescue service. The discussions FireWise had with a representative of the SARU suggested they would be supportive of such an approach. FireWise believes it would be prudent for the CSRD to ensure that any conversation around the introduction of road rescue services include a transparent and open exchange of information with the SARU.

The introduction of additional road rescue response capabilities within select CSRD fire departments should be viewed as complementing the current road rescue service structure. The CSRD has been well-served and well represented by the two road rescue societies, and it is recommended that any decisions made by the CSRD should be designed to enhance the current services provided by these societies and not to replace them.

If a decision is made for certain CSRD fire departments to provide road rescue, it will be a relatively straightforward process to accomplish the goal in the existing well organized and well-managed structure of CSRD fire departments.

10.2 Prime Considerations

To fully analyze the pros and cons of authorizing one or more of their fire departments to start delivering road rescue services, some questions need to be addressed:

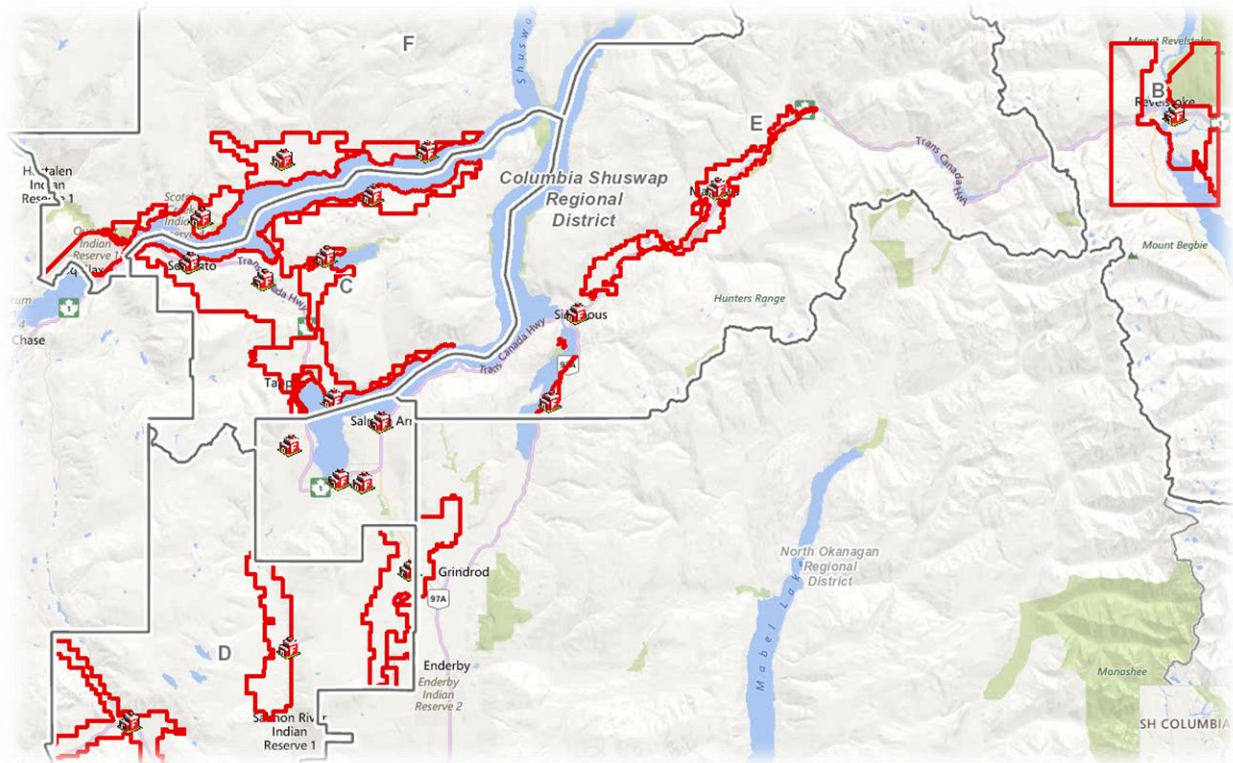
10.2 .1 Service Gap Analysis

If a person looks at a map of the CSRD such as in Figure 1 in this report, or the snippet below showing some of the CSRD fire service areas, it is easy to see where service gaps exist.

For example, it is approximately 148 kilometers from Revelstoke to Golden through the Roger's Pass. MVA's happen along this stretch of road frequently. Road rescue services are provided by the City of Revelstoke Fire Rescue for 74 kilometers from the west and the Town of Golden Fire Rescue Service provides the service for the east half of the Roger's Pass. Figure 1 provides detail of where accidents have occurred and it is easy to figure out which rescue service would have responded and how long it might have taken to arrive. That could be seen as a service gap. Likewise, MVA's have occurred on the shore roads around Shuswap Lake considerable distance from Salmon Arm or Chase where road rescue units are based. This is also easy to identify as a service gap.

However, people must understand and appreciate the risk they are taking when they venture away from metropolitan areas. The services they expect to receive in a city are not going to be the same in rural British Columbia. The public must take responsibility for their safety and consider the risk of getting in an accident when travelling on rural roads.

The apparent service gap example in the Roger's Pass is not easy to improve and it is a risk people seem willing to accept. Conversely, other service gaps in the CSRD have options to consider on how to enhance the service that are more practical.



As seen on the map above, there are several established volunteer fire departments in the CSR. These fire departments are often called to an MVA in their response areas. Volunteer firefighters who are frontline first responders within the CSR have expressed concerns regarding response times from some of the current service providers. These concerns are confirmed by the travel times from the rescue service to the incident. The volunteer firefighters are highly motivated but are frustrated by not having the tools and equipment required to save lives in some situations. Their prime motivation is to help people.

“ Road Rescue service gaps do exist in the CSR ”

It seems logical therefore, that one way to address the service gaps would be to have the fire departments complement the existing road rescue groups by taking basic auto extrication training and acquire basic tools.

Volunteer firefighters in some CSR departments would like the CSR to consider empowering their fire departments to provide the service. It was brought to our attention that some taxpayers expressed surprise that road rescue service is being provided by agencies based outside the CSR. In some areas of the CSR, this makes sense from a public safety perspective. Having firefighters trained and equipped to do basic auto extrication would allow them to be more effective at motor vehicle accidents when lives are at risk. Having firefighters trained in auto extrication principles to a basic level will prevent them from being injured when they attempt to extricate people from modern vehicles including transport trucks.

Other situations that have occurred show the vulnerability of the service. In 2013 the Revelstoke Fire Rescue’s Rescue truck was severely damaged in a motor

vehicle incident jeopardizing their ability to provide out-of-jurisdiction road rescue during the time it took to secure a replacement vehicle. Having additional resources to call upon in such situations is a contingency that is worthy of consideration.

A review of the CSRD fire service completed in 2009 raised the question of expanding the services provided by the fire departments to include road rescue. The question that was raised in the 2009 review has been discussed but no action taken on adding the service to CSRD departments willing to expand the service they provide.

The demise of the Falkland Road Rescue Society, Chase Volunteer Firefighters Association, and the opting out of road rescue service by the Golden District Search and Rescue Society raised the issue of sustainability and posed the question, who has responsibility to provide the service? The issue has caught the attention of the CSRD administration and elected officials.

10.2.2 Availability of Service

The answer to this question is “yes,” the service is available. The next question is *“from where and how long will they take to get here?”*

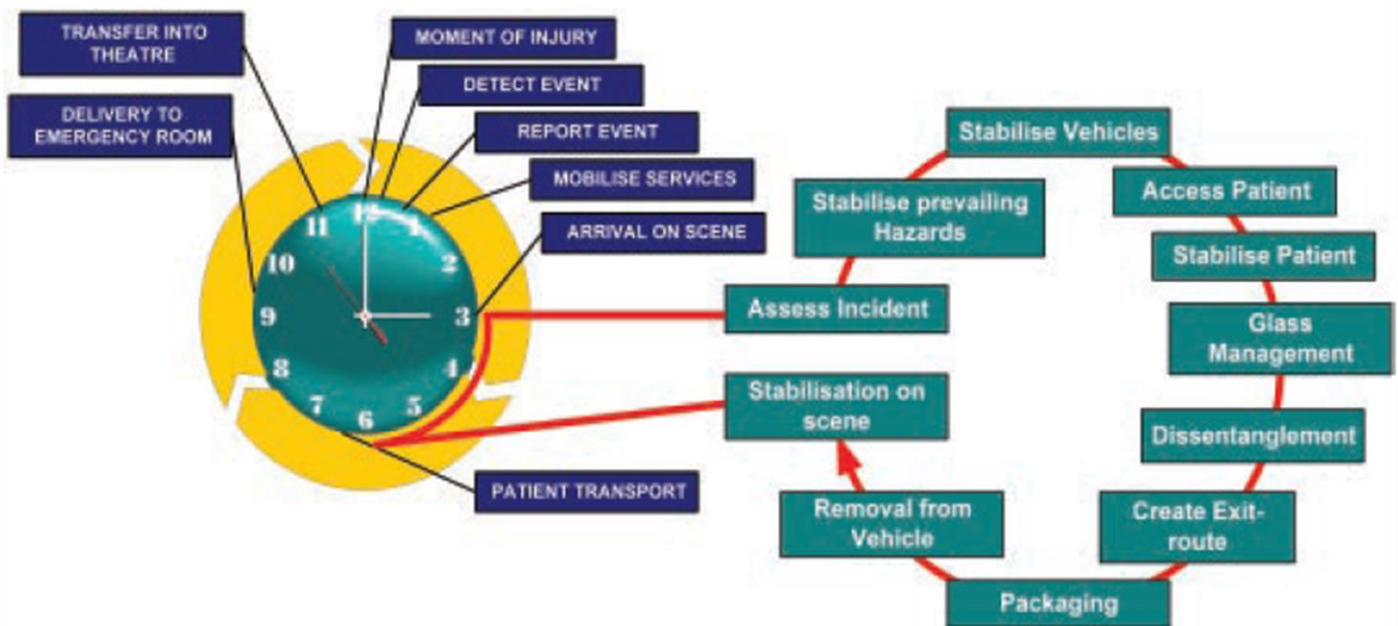
This report has outlined in the section headed “Road Rescue Services in the Columbia Shuswap Regional District” when auto extrication of injured people from vehicles involved in an accident, within the CSRD, one of the eight agencies providing road rescue within the CSRD will be dispatched to attend.

It is believed that in the recent history of road rescue service in the CSRD, a road rescue agency has always responded and there is no record of no agency attending. This seems to be an important point of discussion. The service is available but are there options on how to improve or enhance it?



10.2.3 Adequacy of Service

The opinion of some taxpayers in the CSRD is not that the current service is inadequate but that the ability of some of the current service providers to respond promptly is in question. This feedback was received from reading previous reports, talking to key contacts and from information provided by CSRD fire department personnel. Arrival time of trained and equipped rescue crews appears to be the only issue regarding the adequacy of the service. In any type of accident where someone is injured, getting appropriate medical attention to the victim is critical in saving lives. Some of the lessons from the Korean and Vietnam wars were applied to auto extrication in the seventies and eighties. The most important lesson perhaps, is the “Golden Hour” principle.



The Golden Hour

The concept of the ‘Golden Hour’ was originally promoted by an American medic, Dr. R. Adams Cowley, first in his capacity as a military surgeon and later as head of the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Centre. The data initially used to motivate the concept may have been derived from data collected by the French armed forces during the First World War. The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Centre section of the University of Maryland Medical Centre website quotes Cowley as saying, “There is a Golden Hour between life and death. If you are critically injured, you have less than 60 minutes to survive. You might not die right then; it may be three days or two weeks later, but something has happened in your body that is irreparable.”

As previously discussed under the Risk Assessment section of the report, the term “level of service” for fire departments was introduced to a broader audience of AHJs in September 2014 as a component of the Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook (“Playbook”)

The Playbook does not include any reference to road rescue, so determination of a level of service for this service remains at the discretion of the AHJ, if they have approved the service to be delivered by a fire department.

Standards for the road rescue services provided by fire departments within the CSRD do not appear to have been established at this time as FireWise was unable to find any definition or supporting policy of the relative AHJs stating the level that is acceptable to them. It is the responsibility of the AHJ, as noted in the Playbook, to determine service levels for all services provided by their fire departments.

It is evident that the CSRD is aware of their responsibilities to establish a level of service for their fire departments. CSRD Policy No. W-12 has established a level of service for CSRD fire departments to provide concerning fire suppression. The CSRD has declared in this policy that it strives to have all fire service members trained and competent to an Interior Operations service level.

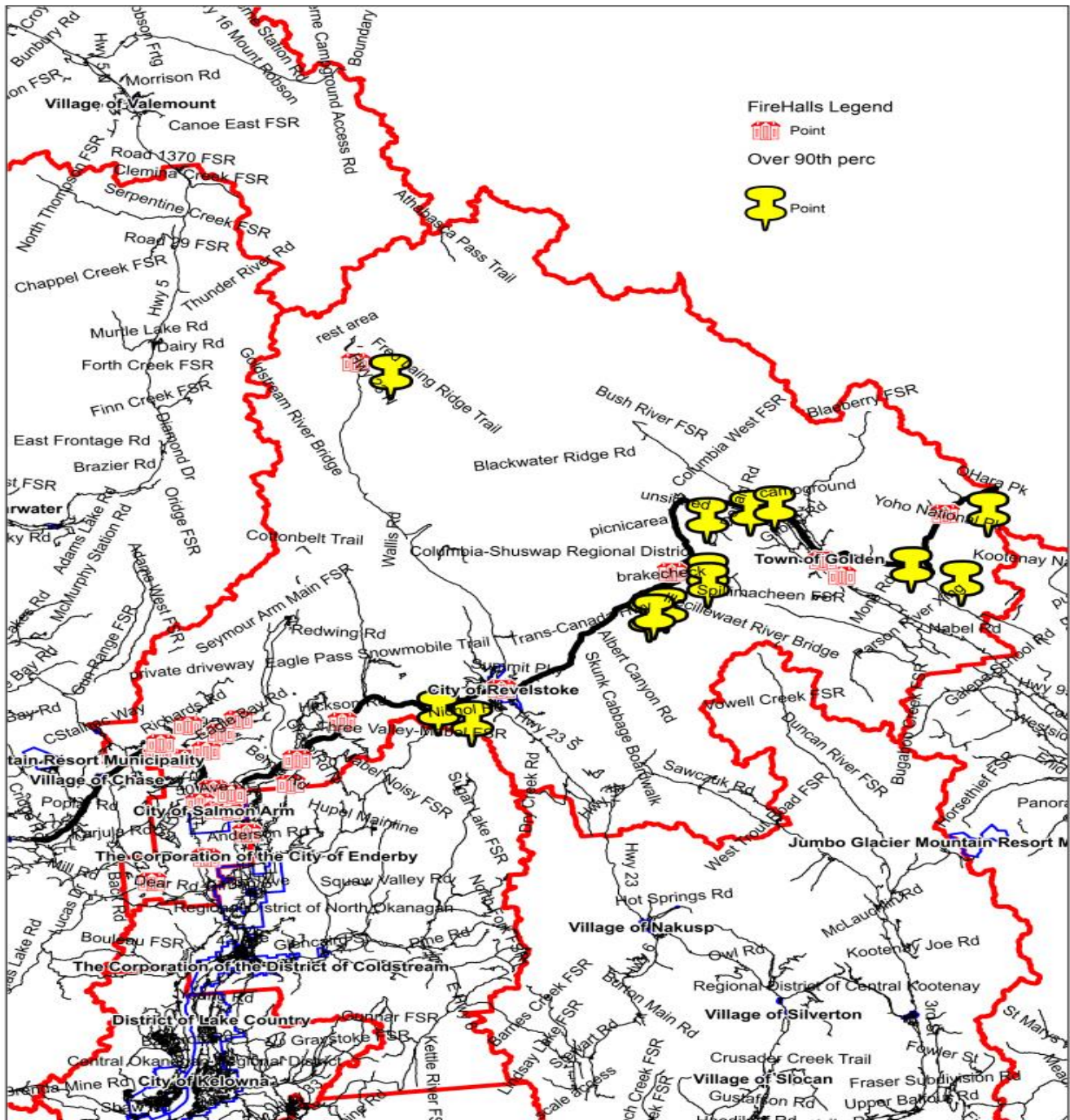
It is suggested that should the CSRD proceed to introduce road rescue as a service that they link their level of service to ensuring their firefighters are trained to the competencies outline in NFPA 1670 Technician Level 1 (Auto component).

Many of the competencies CSRD firefighters must have to meet the declared level of service for interior operations would apply to auto extrication or other type of rescue. Some of the competencies would be size-up, establishing command, developing an incident action plan, safety, rehab, debrief plus many more.

Figure 6 on the following page shows those events where the response time exceeded the 90th percentile. The locations suggest that a combination of factors contributed to these responses.



Figure 6 Road Rescue Events Over the 90th Percentile



10.2.4 Support for the Service

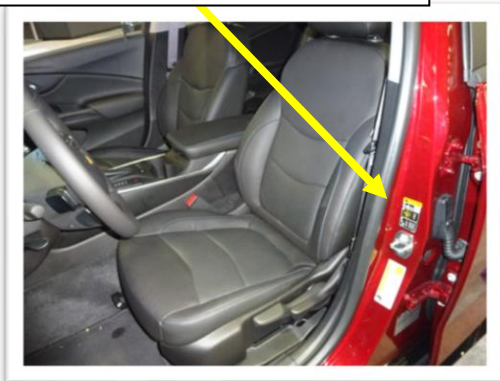
Currently, volunteer firefighters in the CSRD regularly respond to motor vehicle incidents that occur within their defined fire protection districts. They are often the first on scene but are limited by their mandate as to what they can do to assist victims of motor vehicle incidents. It has been reported to FireWise during our research that many of the firefighters feel frustrated that they are unable to assist in the extrication of trapped occupants beyond assuring that “help is on the way.”

CSRD firefighters routinely take action at scenes to mitigate the threat of fire, identify the presence of potentially hazardous materials or, provide emergency scene traffic control to protect their personnel and other on-scene first responders. Their training and OG’s prevent them from doing much more due to lack of training and equipment. Auto extrication can be dangerous to both the victim and the rescuer with the advanced technology in vehicles. Giving firefighters who arrive at a MVA knowledge of vehicles and the technology of that vehicle will prevent injury to the rescuers, ambulance personnel, victims and firefighters. We live in a technological advanced society. Firefighters, particularly the millennials embrace technology. One of the recent advancements in auto extrication technology is the addition of QR Codes on vehicles that can be scanned, and important vehicle information displayed on a phone or tablet. This information should be used to develop and incident action plan to prevent the deployment of secondary restraint systems (airbags) or cutting high voltage cables in hybrid and electric vehicles.

WorkSafeBC require all workers, including volunteer firefighters to do a job hazard analysis. Without some knowledge of the complexities of modern vehicles, firefighters could inadvertently be injured by not having enough information to adequately analyze the hazards at a MVA. Having basic information in the hands of firefighters will improve safety and support other rescue agencies building mutual respect and confidence in the process.

The inability to provide a basic extrication service is a cause for volunteer firefighters to feel ineffective, undervalued and responsible for a delay in those who are injured receiving timely medical intervention. This

QR Code on door post and display on smart phone



sentiment was communicated to us during the interviews with some fire department members.

The survey conducted with the CSRD fire departments indicated some departments have personnel, in sufficient numbers, who are interested and willing to take on the provision of road rescue services.

Comments were made referencing time delays and inadequate staffing by current road rescue service providers. For example, one CSRD department indicated on one incident it took the responding road rescue agency ninety minutes to arrive on scene. Other examples were that the road rescue service provider had arrived with only 2 or 3 personnel.

Some of the respondents indicated that the introduction of new services such as vehicle rescue would assist them with their recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. This topic is more fully discussed later in the report.

It was also mentioned that the equipment previously owned by the Falkland Road Rescue Society has been purchased by a CSRD fire department and that residents of that community have questioned firefighters why the equipment has not been put back into service by their community fire department.

The CSRD fire departments are in a position to support and enhance the existing service. Allowing those who choose to be involved should be allowed to do so if only to provide a safer work environment for the firefighters.

At a minimum, vehicle technology training should be provided to all CSRD firefighters as a work place safety initiative.

10.2.5 CSRD Benefit Analysis

The primary benefit to the taxpayers of the CSRD would be improved response times by road rescue crews to motor vehicle incidents in certain parts of the regional district where past experiences resulted in lengthy delays.

As referred to previously, one of the other major benefits of introducing a new service, such as vehicle rescue, would be the value it has in assisting CSRD fire departments in the recruitment and retention of their volunteer firefighters.

The recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters is an issue for many fire departments across North America, and smaller communities especially have difficulty because the pool of potential recruits is not as large.

The introduction of the new service is not the be-all-end-all for recruitment and retention as there will continue to be barriers which are beyond the ability of the fire department and the AHJ to overcome. Some of these barriers are family-related, some are work-related. Others relate to the time commitment and competing interests and some are a result of aptitude and attitude to fit the demands of being a member.

It is evident that the CSRD is making a significant investment in equipping and training their firefighters. It is obvious that they have understood that while recruiting volunteers is essential, retaining volunteers can also present a significant challenge. The labour that volunteers provide to the community through their fire department is a gift and it is important that every strategy and idea on how to retain volunteers should be explored to keep CSRD fire departments sustainable.

It has been stated that the most successful fire departments are those willing to adapt to the realities of a new kind of volunteer and evolving expectations about volunteering. Examination of successful fire departments with members who serve many years has shown that the provision of a structured, certified, and challenging training program is a key element of successful retention strategies. A well-planned, consistent training program demonstrates that the time volunteers invest in the department is highly valued.

Providing training for new recruits skills maintenance of veteran firefighters is demanding both of time and financial resources. The CSRD has recognized this and has put in place the appropriate human resources and financial resources to reflect how important the training of firefighters is. The investment in the training of volunteer firefighters also reflects the high standards of risk management set by the CSRD to ensure the health and welfare of the volunteer firefighters. Having a stable work force is critical to achieve the service deliverables that the CSRD wishes to provide and to ensure they meet the declared Level of Service.

Another recognized strategy for both recruitment and retention is to offer to provide new skills to the volunteer firefighters. The ability to provide an enhanced list of service deliverables, at a modest cost to the taxpayers, by introducing a new service can bring more value to the regions served by the fire departments.

Road rescue is such a service. There are many fire departments around the province who provide this service, because their AHJs have seen the importance of providing this potentially life-saving service. When a serious motor vehicle incident occurs both the CSRD's taxpayers and their visitors expect that road rescue service will be provided in a timely and professional manner. As previously mentioned, changes that have occurred in the manufacture of vehicles, require



trained, knowledgeable personnel to take charge when a motor vehicle incident occurs with entrapment. The introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles, the inherent danger of undeployed air-bags and the exposures that can occur from injuries sustained by trapped vehicle occupants requires careful scene management by qualified emergency responders.

A challenge that occurs is well-meaning citizens who arrive on scene, may put themselves at significant personal risk if they take matters into their own hands without the knowledge of the hazards that may be present. Having a trained firefighter on scene may prevent adding to the victim count by establishing a safe zone on the scene and helping other authorities on scene keep everyone safe from harm.

10.2.6. Road Rescue Service and Liability

FireWise cannot provide a legal opinion but it does recommend that legal counsel be consulted whenever a new service is being introduced for a fire department to deliver as good risk management.

While the CSRD is not currently directly funding the provision of road rescue services, their actions in some ways may suggest they have an interest in ensuring a viable road rescue service is being provided in all parts of their regional district.

As mentioned previously in the risk assessment section of the report, the provision of grants-in-aid to emergency service providers and the engagement with the City of Vernon and Village of Chase are examples of where the CSRD has been actively involved.

Legal opinions may suggest that an unacceptable risk exists and that those risks may have legal implications to stakeholders associated with any motor vehicle incident to which a road rescue service provider responds. Having an area of the regional district underserved by virtue of its location from the base of a road rescue service provider or having service provided by agencies managed by AHJs that fall outside the CSRD may constitute an unacceptable risk. An example would be where those agencies may not be able to respond due to conflicting interests in their jurisdictions. A structure fire in Chase may not allow Chase Fire Rescue to respond to a rollover motor vehicle incident with trapped occupants in Anglemont.

Motor vehicle incidents can certainly present a hazard and the delayed response of an agency, with the capacity to mitigate the impact of the hazard must be assessed as to whether such a situation is acceptable or unacceptable for the CSRD in terms of life safety.

Additionally, while attending out-of-jurisdiction incidents the insurance coverages provided under the EMBC task number cover most of the key aspects, it is unclear

whether indemnification is automatically in place for fire departments providing service outside of their defined boundaries without clear policies of the AHJ granting authority and fire department OG's for out-of-district response.

10.2.7 Other Risk Factors

Most of the discussion on risk appears previously in the report. There are a few other considerations for the CSRD to think about.

Firstly, as has been seen with the examples previously cited with respect to Falkland and Chase, the leadership and recruitment and retention history of road rescue societies providing road rescue service must be considered to determine if they are sustainable. A drop in the number of calls, impacts members interest in maintaining their skills through training which can lead to members resigning and investing their disposable volunteer time elsewhere.

Not having a reliable funding source for road rescue societies could be detrimental to their survival although that does not appear to be an issue in the CSRD at this time. Fund raising activities put demands on volunteers and having people who are capable and experienced in fund raising is important for societies. New government reporting rules for registered societies requires administrative support which can be a challenge in some situations.

Secondly, it must be respected that some volunteer firefighters join the fire service to provide fire suppression services only. They wish to help their neighbours when a fire occurs. They do not wish to deal with situations which often result in post traumatic stress. They will accept the stress brought upon by fire but do not wish to increase the percentage of calls where images of badly injured individuals, particularly children, will impact their day-to-day lives. The risk would be the loss of valuable firefighters if a department took on the added responsibility for road rescue and insisted that all members of the department must take the required training and be prepared to respond to road rescue calls. It is recommended that if road rescue is deemed viable for a CSRD fire department to deliver, the choice be given to the current firefighters to opt out of being trained to deliver such a service.

Respect and appreciation of current road rescue societies may be in the minds of some firefighters and they do not want to jeopardize the good working relationship they have with existing groups. It was expressed to us that the fire departments do not want to be viewed as wanting to take over the service, just support it and enhance it where opportunities may exist.

Many volunteer fire departments have gone through a similar dilemma when they chose to engage in providing a medical first response service. Members of the fire departments who did not wish to commit to the additional training or to increase

their time commitment to the fire department elect to not participate in the new service. First medical response does have specific training and licencing requirements with regular recertification. First medical response certainly adds to the call volume of a fire department and there are no cost recovery opportunities, so it is not recommended for the CSRD to take on that additional service. Pre-hospital care is a provincially mandated service of the BCAS unlike road rescue which is not.

10.3 Governance and Authority Implications

Throughout this report it has been stated that there is currently no provincial legislation, nor are there any related provincial regulations that directly address the matter of who has responsibility for road rescue services

The Emergency Program Act defines an "emergency" as *“a present or imminent event or circumstance that is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure or the forces of nature, and requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of a person or to limit damage to property.”*

This reference is too broad to draw the conclusion or to raise the expectation that the Province through EMBC has assumed responsibility to provide oversight for the provision of road rescue services. Through the development of policy, the Province has established a process to provide financial reimbursement and injury, disability, accidental death, and liability coverage to agencies who have registered to deliver out-of-jurisdiction responses. Agencies engaged in providing road rescue services are responsible for ensuring that their AHJ has provided them, by means of a Bylaw, the authority to provide the services and through Policy to define a level of service.

The starting point in a feasibility study is to examine the bylaws, policies and records of the AHJ to determine if any agency under the auspices of the AHJ has the authority to provide road rescue services or, as it is sometimes referred to, Highway Rescue services.

In the case of the CSRD there is currently no agency operating as a department of the CSRD that is sanctioned through policy or funding to deliver road rescue service other than by grants-in-aid.

While the CSRD is under no obligation to undertake the provision of road rescue service, the fact is that road rescue services are being provided within the CSRD. Despite having no direct cost to the CSRD, there is an implied expectation on the part of the taxpayers that in the event that a current service provider is unable to continue to provide the service, that the CSRD will take the necessary actions to ensure the service is available. In the last ten years, three service providers in the CSRD ceased operations and fire departments have filled in the service gap. In

two of these circumstances the CSRD made arrangements with fire departments outside of the CSRD (Vernon and Chase) and in the third, the Town of Golden Fire Rescue added the service. The implied expectation of road rescue services being available resulted in the CSRD taking affirmative action in the matter ensuring reasonable level of public safety.

The resolution passed by the Board of Directors on October 13, 2013 provides consent to the City of Vernon to provide road rescue service within the jurisdiction of the CSRD. It should be noted that the service being provided by Vernon Fire Rescue Services will be at no cost to the CSRD, may be canceled at any time and that the City of Vernon will indemnify and hold harmless the CSRD.

A similar resolution had been passed in April 2010 when the Village of Chase assumed responsibility to continue to provide the service previously provided by the Chase Firefighters Association.

Although no cost analysis was done, it is possible that the Vernon and the Village of Chase taxpayers are subsidizing road rescue in the CSRD. Even if these two fire departments do get reimbursed by EMBC for cost recovery, they do not get any funding through the rate structure process for capital costs.

The CSRD does have Board policies relating to the delivery of highway rescue services.

The CSRD has declared through Policy No. A-52, dated February 1996, that volunteer fire departments under the auspices of the CSRD shall not be granted the authority to provide "highway rescue" services.

The CSRD has also determined through Policy A-53, dated February 1996 that they will offer encouragement and any available support for the provision of "highway rescue" under the auspices of an independent, non-profit society.

The CSRD is a regional district as defined by Part 6 of the Local Government Act from which it derives authority to deliver specified services as determined by its elected Directors. The CSRD Board of Directors have chosen to exercise their discretionary powers to establish and maintain fire departments providing fire protection to parts of the CSRD not covered by the municipal fire departments.

In addition to the policies, referred to above, the CSRD through Bylaw No. 5587 has stated that the authorized service, that their fire departments shall provide, shall be fire suppression and all related, ancillary or necessary services in connection therewith, including suppression of Interface Fires.

It is noted however that under Paragraph 22 of Bylaw No. 5587, the Area Directors of the CSRD may, by separate Bylaw, approve the provision of such other services, including rescue, by one or more Fire Departments, on the recommendation of the CSRD Fire Services Coordinator.

It appears that the reference to these sections of Bylaw No. 5587 outlines the steps that the CSRD should follow if the introduction of road rescue services, for one or more of their fire departments, was deemed to be in the best interest of public safety in the CSRD.

The authority to amend the services delivered by CSRD fire departments lies solely in the hands of the CSRD's elected officials.

10.4 Operational Structure Options

There appears to be only two choices concerning the operational structure that can deliver road rescue.

One is to have the AHJ, in this case the CSRD, provide direction to one or more of their volunteer fire departments to be equipped and trained to deliver the service. The other is to find a group of community-minded residents who would be willing to form a registered society to provide road rescue services within a specified service area of the CSRD.

This report will limit discussion to the first of these two options as that option seems to make the most sense for the CSRD to consider.

When the feasibility of adding services to the fire departments operating under the administration of the CSRD is considered, it is important to do so in the context of the obligation to meet a duty of care and simultaneously, a corresponding standard of care.

Currently the CSRD fire departments owe a duty of care to those within their defined service area. In plain terms, this means that the CSRD must take reasonable steps to equip and train its fire department and that the firefighters must take reasonable measures when implementing their activities, which are currently limited to fire suppression as outlined above.

The standard of care is measured against what is reasonable in the circumstances based upon standards of training and available resources. On the provision of road rescue services, this may allow for greater risks to be taken, but it will also require heightened vigilance. Any change to the services provided by a fire department will require careful consideration of both the duty of care and standard of care implications.

If the CSRD determines that there are areas of the regional district that may be underserved with respect to road rescue services, or areas that they feel should be serviced by agencies based within the regional district, the impact on current fire departments is obviously a primary concern.

The current members of the fire departments, from where it makes the logical sense to develop a road rescue team, should be given the opportunity to become

a road rescue team member but their continuing membership in their current fire department should not be contingent upon them doing so.

If a new service is instituted in certain CSRD fire departments, the job profile of a volunteer firefighter job profile should be included so they can decide at that time if they wish to join. Regardless if a new service is implemented, the opinions of the current experienced and dedicated firefighters should be respected. Recognition of their continuing value to the fire department should be acknowledged including those who may decide not to “sign-up” for training in the new service.

10.5 Administrative Requirements

The primary responsibility from an administrative support perspective would be to ensure records are maintained in a similar manner to how they are kept for fire departments.

Personnel records, training records, incident reports, occupational health and safety documents, paid-on-call related data, operational guidelines, equipment service records, report compilation, personnel management and correspondence are some of the aspects of administrative support that are already in place for a fire department. To add a new service would have limited impact to the work-load.

If not already in place, a robust records management system is recommended to keep all the pertinent records, including those outlined above. It is further recommended that the administrative support be provided by the CSRD and that the volunteer firefighters focus on keeping their fire departments operationally ready.

An annual report from all service providers should be received by the Protective Services department of the CSRD so the matter of road rescue can be analyzed regularly looking trends and methods for continuous improvement.

10.6 Financial Issues

There are many options available to the CSRD if they choose to expand the services provided by some of their fire departments. Before identifying the specific budget line items, consideration must be given to the type of rescue truck or apparatus to carry the necessary road rescue equipment. It would be assumed that when the service is introduced, a vehicle within the fleet of apparatus owned by the AHJ could be identified to be a rescue unit. Alternatively, many fire departments have rescue engines that carry basic rescue tools, those being hydraulic spreaders, cutters, chains and perhaps low-pressure air bags.

The initial purchase of equipment should be appropriate for the level of service that the fire department, as a first response unit to a motor vehicle incident, is authorized to provide. Based on what is the most likely scenario to occur, the past experience of the fire department responding to motor vehicle incidents inside their current response boundaries should help in this regard, the equipment purchased should fit within one or two re-configured compartments of an existing apparatus. Having one multi-purpose fire/rescue unit arrive at a MVA is a common practice. The multi-purpose unit should be able take care of the threat of fire providing some protection to personnel at the scene.

FireWise contacted two rescue tool suppliers and both suggested a basic tool package with some firefighter training, included in the pricing. Both felt that the proposed approach would be appropriate for a new road rescue team. Both vendors indicated that the equipment and training required to allow firefighters to provide a basic road rescue service, will necessitate an initial investment of approximately \$35,000.00 per department or per road rescue team. Such a budget should provide the team with an initial supply of cribbing and stabilization tools, a battery-powered combi tool (spreader/cutter), two batteries to power the tool and a full days training for 10/12 firefighters. Training would be initially provided by the vendor selling the tools. The vendors assume that the firefighters will have already been trained in scene assessment from a fire and hazard control perspective. The costs outlined above do not include the minimal alterations required to allow a piece of existing fire apparatus to carry the road rescue equipment, nor do they include the costs to compensate the paid-on-call firefighters for the training.



Many rescue units have been originated from a general-purpose utility truck providing a solution for the space necessary for road rescue equipment and accommodation for a team of four firefighters.

Sources that may be looked at to assist with this expense are discussed later in the report under the cost-recovery considerations.

The financial implications of undertaking the provision of road rescue are closely aligned to the current budgets of the fire departments.

Key line items that would be impacted are as follows:

Enhancements to Personal Protective Equipment.

It is expected that the fire department might have all the appropriate items to ensure the personal safety of their firefighters during a road rescue incident. An operation guideline should provide details of the policy and procedures to be followed. The EMBC operational guideline suggests that at a minimum, the personal protective equipment for road rescue will consist of helmet with face shield/approved eye protection, Nomex or similar material coveralls, and rescue approved boots and gloves.

Training

Training is discussed later in the report, but the costs associated with the specialized training required to provide firefighters with the required competencies would be less than those that would be incurred to acquire fire suppression skills. This is because many of the same competencies will be used in the new service.

Firefighter Compensation

The anticipated increase in costs associated with the rates outlined in CSRD Policy No. F-12 would be modest as it is anticipated that the call outs for road rescue would be unlikely to exceed one per quarter based on the statistical information made available to FireWise in the areas of the CSRD where introduction of road rescue service is most likely.

Out-of-Jurisdiction Call-outs

It is recommended that if a decision is made to enter the “road rescue service” as an employer, the CSRD register the chosen fire departments with EMBC. The rationale for doing so is referred to earlier in the report.

The CSRD would be eligible for provincial reimbursement only for call-outs which require the CSRD fire department to travel outside its’ established fire service area. There is no eligibility under the current EMBC structure and policy to access provincial reimbursement for call-outs to provide road rescue within a CSRD fire department’s established fire service area. At the present time, the province **will** reimburse road rescue providers, including road rescue societies, registered with EMBC, who respond to road rescue incidents within the defined service areas of CSRD fire departments.

The ability to respond to out-of-jurisdiction call-outs will allow the CSRD to submit a claim for reimbursement at the rates outlined in the following link:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/policies/inter-agency_working_group_report_reimbursement_rates_2016.pdf

The current all-found rate for a rescue vehicle responding under an EMBC Task Number, with a maximum of four rescue team members, is \$300.00 per hour.

CSRD Administrative Costs

Direct costs to the CSRD, outside those discussed above are estimated to be minimal.

As indicated previously the increase in call-outs will be minimal and the cost-recovery process for calls out-of-jurisdiction is deemed reasonable for the service being provided.

One aspect that the CSRD may wish to explore is any increase in insurance premiums related to adding road-rescue to the services provided by the CSRD. The comprehensive liability insurance coverage considerations and the vehicle insurance for responding out of defined fire protection boundaries are worthy of investigating as are any WorkSafeBC cost implications for providing the service inside current fire protection districts.

It is the experience of the FireWise team that it is unlikely that insurance costs will change but it is recommended that the CSRD's insurance broker be made aware of any change to the services being provided.

Financial Responsibility of the CSRD

Regional District Boards have been elected by the taxpayers to manage their tax dollars in the most cost-effective manner. The Directors and the CSRD Administration have the responsibility to compare the actual performance of the services they provide with the potential performance of their service providers. Fire departments are expensive to establish and maintain so occasionally a review needs to be done to ensure the service offered is performing at a reasonable level for the money spent before the introduction of any additional services is evaluated.

There is little argument that the current staffing model of the CSRD fire departments is within the financial capacity of the taxpayer. When looking at performance measures, the CSRD fire departments of today provide excellent value to the taxpayer. However, in terms of equity, do the taxpayers assume their local CSRD fire department can provide auto extrication and that they believe they are already invested in the provision of this service through the payment of their taxes?

In addition, consideration must be given to whether the introduction of any additional services being provided by a fire department will be seen as an effective risk management strategy and whether the CSRD administration can provide the necessary oversight.

FireWise believes that the CSRD has the capacity both financial and structurally to introduce road rescue services, in some form.

10.7 Training Demands

The CSRD has an extensive and impressive manual of Standard Operating Guidelines. Section 3 of that manual is dedicated to Fire Service Training Standards.

The manual indicates that the fire department will train all fire department members on a regular basis to applicable Provincial standards. The manual also defines what those standards are.

When submitting a registration request to EMBC to become a part of the BC Road Rescue program the following question is asked: *“Does your organization’s training meet the intent of the current NFPA standards on operations and training for technical rescue incidents?”*

Any amendments to the CSRD Standard Operating Guidelines manual should be straightforward.

The EMBC Road Rescue Safety Program Guide is an excellent source of information on all aspects of road rescue, particularly in the operational guidelines they have established. The EMBC standard for training to the Operations Level refers to Chapter 8 Vehicle Search and Rescue of NFPA 1670, Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents, specifically the section dealing with Vehicle Extrication. This standard identifies and establishes levels of functional capability for efficiently and effectively conducting operations at technical road rescue incidents while minimizing threats to rescuers.

For the CSRD to contemplate becoming a road rescue service provider, the content of NFPA 1670 outlines some of the decisions that must be made with respect to the level of service they may wish their fire departments to provide. FireWise suggests that the goal of NFPA 1670 is to outline how to manage an incident efficiently and effectively, to maximize personal safety, and to bring about the successful rescue of victims and the eventual termination of the incident.

EMBC also recommends that the road rescue training described above be complemented with Hazardous Materials training to the Awareness Level, training that some CSRD firefighters already have.

In discussion with the current road rescue service providers operating within the CSRD, they have indicated that they subscribe to the EMBC requirement outlined above. Specifically, their training programs align with NFPA 1006 which is the Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications. This standard identifies the minimum job performance requirements (JPRs) for fire service and other emergency response personnel who perform technical rescue operations. Chapter 8 of this standard addresses Vehicle Rescue.

The CSRD Fire Departments have a well organized and focused training program and if the decision is made to add road rescue to the services some of them provide, the CSRD should modify its' established policy and training standards to reflect the level of service they have chosen to deliver.

Access to accredited training should not present a challenge. There are several respected training sources in the province of British Columbia. These include the Justice Institute of British Columbia, the College of the Rockies, as well as several well-established vendors who, in addition to selling vehicle rescue equipment, provide excellent training programs which meet the relative NFPA Standards.

Consideration should also be given to having joint training sessions with the two road rescue societies operating within the CSRD. These agencies have many years of experience and lessons could certainly be learned for those entering the field of road rescue.

10.8 Cost Recovery Options

As discussed earlier the decision for a CSRD department to offer road rescue services is discretionary. There is no automatic funding agency who will provide financial assistance to purchase the equipment required to effectively and efficiently deliver the service.

The federal government cancelled the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) a number of years ago and has not replaced it with any alternate sources of funding.

Registered societies in BC, who offer road rescue service, may be eligible for government community gaming grants to support their programs and services. A review of the gaming grants paid to community organizations in the last fiscal year identifies a number of rescue-related organizations who have been successful with their applications.

The representatives of the CSRD road rescue societies spoke highly of the program and the benefits provided by gaming grants.

If the CSRD has access to someone with grant-writing skills, there may be an avenue they could explore on behalf of registered societies to access the equipment required to establish a road rescue program.

Where it is determined that the initial cost of purchasing road rescue equipment will put undue budgetary pressure on the fire departments, many road rescue services have been established as a result of community fund-raising efforts. These efforts are often driven by the volunteer firefighters who wish to provide the service. Such initiatives frequently have attracted support from community service clubs and businesses who value the fire department and wish to show their support. Community events of this nature have proven to have the added benefit of being unofficial recruitment opportunities.

FireWise has reviewed the list of grants-in-aid distributed by the CSRD in the past year and has reviewed CSRD Policy F-30 – Electoral Area Grants in Aid. It is unsure if this mechanism can be used to assist in the purchase of the road rescue equipment. Many emergency response organizations, search & rescue, first responder & fire departments have benefited from this program but, recently strict and narrow interpretation of EMBC Policy 2.07 has jeopardized this source of funding for Road Rescue Societies.

FireWise is aware that the CSRD was able to fund the introduction of Structure Protection Unit trailers without impacting their fire department budgets and such out-of-the-box thinking may assist in seeking options to assist in covering the cost of road rescue equipment.

The issue of cost recovery for agencies providing road rescue services has been a point of discussion and debate for many years.

In eight Canadian jurisdictions (province/territory) vehicle insurance companies are billed in at least some circumstances for road rescue services. For example, service providers in Saskatchewan may bill Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) for all vehicle fires, and road rescue calls whether inside or outside the established fire protection boundaries if the service is being provided by a fire department. In Ontario, the Ministry of Transportation reimburses fire departments for road rescue calls on provincial highways. Insurance companies of vehicle owners are billed directly for extrication service in four provinces.

In British Columbia some agencies can charge ICBC for services rendered in connection with motor vehicle incidents. These are the same incidents that fire departments respond to within their fire protection districts.

Police can assess a fee for providing ICBC with copies of their motor vehicle incident reports.

The British Columbia Ambulance Service bills the patient, not the insurer for services they provide to victims of accidents, and the patient then gives the bill to the insurance claims office as part of their claim. It is understood that ICBC and BCAS have developed a cooperative agreement whereby BCAS provides periodic reports of billings to ICBC so that they may check their files to ensure payment has been made.

Towing Companies are at a distinct advantage when dealing with billings to ICBC; they can hold the vehicle as collateral until their fees have been settled.

Road rescue service providers in British Columbia have no access to a cost recovery process through ICBC. Ironically ICBC will pay invoices received in connection with out-of-province motor vehicle incidents where an ICBC insured party has incurred costs assessed by a road rescue service provider in that province or territory. This is not an option in our province.

Proposals for introducing a cost-recovery process within BC have been developed, but at the current time, neither the Province of British Columbia nor ICBC have initiated any changes to legislation, regulation or policy that would adopt such a proposal.

In the opinion of FireWise, the efforts of local governments to come together under the auspices of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities should be renewed to bring the matter to the attention of government.

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

This report has been designed with two primary goals in mind.

It has tried to provide an overview of today's road rescue program in British Columbia and more importantly, the structure of the road rescue service within the CSRD. One outcome of this effort has been to provide a benchmark for response times. This benchmark can be used as a performance measuring tool for continuous improvement and to assess the effectiveness of the service delivery model.

Secondly, the report has attempted to lay out the many and varied implications that the CSRD must consider if it chooses to enhance the services provided by volunteer firefighters in the regional district through the introduction of road rescue service.

To determine whether to add road rescue to the services provided requires careful evaluation of the risks by adding this service. Providing a higher level of public safety would be the highest benefit and would likely offset any perceived risk.

Our experience in matters like road rescue is that the public lacks understanding on how complex the issue is. When we have had opportunity to discuss the issue with people, they assume someone is providing this service but do not know for sure who that is. This lack of understanding is complicated by the universality of 9-1-1. Police and ambulance are provincially mandated and funded services. Fire departments are a local government service supported financially by taxpayers who have given authority to the local government to provide that service. They operate in defined service areas and have been criticized for refusing to leave the defined service area. Calling 9-1-1 outside of a fire department service area does not mean a fire department will attend like the police and ambulance. During some conversations with people they express surprise that fire departments do provide road rescue and have the mistaken understanding that they are an all hazard service provider.

As the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov put it, *“never put a gun on the wall in the second act of a play without using it by the end of the third - for the audience will be expecting gunshots.”*

Perhaps this same principle applies when a fire department is established. What does the public expect the fire department to do?

The CSRD has been prudent in not taking on this additional service. The CSRD elected officials and management team are responsible to manage the services they provide both mandated and optional. Taking on an additional service like road rescue will have consequences and it is hoped this report will provide more information on ensuring there is a sustainable level of public safety in the CSRD.

The following pages provide a SWOT and PEST analysis on the issue.



11.0.1 SWOT Analysis:

	FUNDAMENTAL	ROAD RESCUE RELATED
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSRD has strong and experienced management in their Protective Services Department • The CSRD has a well-established fire service supported by a robust training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elected officials and senior management have access to knowledge and experience in delivering road rescue services. • The mechanism and structure to provide the service is in place
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on current service providers based outside the regional district • Very limited number of trained firefighters to deliver service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of responses is unpredictable • Need to evaluate, select and train volunteer firefighters
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Retention of Firefighters • To improve level of service in parts of the regional district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighters are keen to learn new skills • Current arrangements in Falkland and North Shore of Shuswap Lake areas not ideal
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current service providers elect to discontinue service • Volunteer firefighters leave departments • Volunteer firefighters might consider the introduction of road rescue as a first step to adding more services, such as first response medical aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vernon and Chase may choose to discontinue current arrangements. • Road rescue societies are forced to disband. • Firefighters who do not wish to participate in road rescue skills training may chose to retire. • In conversations with stakeholders no expression of interest to be involved in providing medical aid was expressed

11.0.2 PEST Analysis

	ROAD RESCUE RELATED
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Directors must be fully aware of the implications of taking on a new service. • They must understand the service under consideration is road rescue not patient care. • They must be convinced that the introduction of road rescue serves the best interests of the regional district as a whole
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of introducing the service is reasonable. • Once the initial cost of equipment is determined and approved, the year-to-year operational costs are modest. • Planning to replace equipment and to configure new apparatus can be strategically incorporated with the current long-term capital cost plans for the CSRD fire service
Socio-Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residents, taxpayers and visitors have expectations of road rescue service being provided in a timely manner. • The early intervention to provide medical treatment to occupants of motor-vehicle incidents is the objective of road rescue service as long as it is accomplished in a manner that is safe for all persons on scene.
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of the protective services team have the ability and knowledge to select the most appropriate equipment for the level of service chosen by the CSRD. • The support for servicing the equipment and the availability of accredited training are primary considerations and must be costed in evaluating the most appropriate equipment. • There is a need to review the dispatching procedures relating to road rescue calls as there are currently some inconsistencies being experienced as to dispatchers selecting the closest agency to the incident.

1. Determining the appropriate Level of Service

The CSRD's decision in this regard should be based upon the same criteria as they considered when establishing the level of service for fire suppression.

Issues such as input from the management and current leadership of the CSRD fire departments, the availability of firefighters to provide the service and their ability to respond. The ability of the CSRD to financially support its fire department to enable it to meet all applicable training, safety and operational requirements for the chosen Service Level and the assessment of the communities under consideration in terms of demographics, risks, travel distances, fire hall locations and apparatus.

2. Where and when to introduce the service

The focus throughout this report has been to look at the relationship between the CSRD and the current delivery of road rescue services throughout the regional district.

As has been identified, the provision of road rescue service is a time sensitive issue and when an AHJ identifies parts of its jurisdiction that are not receiving a reasonable level of service as compared to other areas, it requires assessment to determine if the service can be improved and if it can, what service delivery model makes the most sense.

Once gaps are identified the risk assessment analysis must occur and the various cost implications evaluated.

In the opinion of FireWise, the CSRD should explore the opportunity to develop road rescue teams in the Falkland area, using the resources of the Falkland Volunteer Fire Department and in the Celista area using the resources of the Celista, Scotch Creek/Lee Creek and Anglemont Volunteer Fire Departments.

Before any decision is undertaken on whether road rescue should be provided by CSRD fire departments where service gaps exist, the CSRD should consult with taxpayers plus other stakeholders to ensure that the reason for the initiative is fully explained and understood. The primary reason is to upgrade public safety in the areas where service gaps have been identified.

From the research completed by FireWise it is clear that other CSRD fire departments are keen to become involved in road rescue, particularly in the Shuswap sub-region. It is important that any actions taken by the CSRD are not at the expense of current viable and well-established agencies but by entering the arena of providing road rescue service the CSRD is mitigating some of the risks that have been documented previously in the report.

11.1 Recommendation

The CSRD should enable those fire departments within the regional district who are willing to provide road rescue services to indeed provide the service in support of emergency services and to improve the safety of the public and firefighters.

As stated above the opinion of FireWise suggesting the development of road rescue teams in the Falkland area, using the resources of the Falkland Volunteer Fire Department and in the Celista area using the resources of the Celista, Scotch

Creek/Lee Creek and Anglemont Volunteer Fire Departments would be a logical first step to ensure a reasonable level of road rescue is provided.

12.0 SUMMARY

Providing road rescue in the CSRD is challenging. This is due to the terrain of the CSRD which has large mountains, beautiful large lakes but a relatively small population that is located predominantly in small communities throughout the district. Many of the small communities have major seasonal population variances compounding the issue at times throughout the year.

Incidents requiring road rescue as defined in this report, occur throughout the year. The peak time for a MVA is from November until the end of January with another spike occurring in the summer. The frequency of road rescue incidents occurs along the Trans Canada Highway with most those in the Roger's Pass where there are very few emergency services. More specifically, some of these incidents occur in one of the National Parks which raise another jurisdictional issue.

The first question asked is "who has responsibility for road rescue." EMBC has taken limited interest in the greater issue of rescue of people from all types of life threatening issues including road rescue. The CSRD also taken some interest to ensure the service is available and has contributed financially by a grant in aid to support one society providing the service.

In many communities, fire departments provide road rescue and it has become an accepted best practice. CSRD is an exception to what is expected of fire departments elsewhere. By enabling some fire departments in the CSRD to provide even basic road rescue services, public safety would be improved.

It is hoped that this report provides enough information for the CSRD to consider the recommendation made on how to enhance the service and keep it sustainable.

It has been a privilege to provide this report for the CSRD.

Respectfully,

Dave Ferguson

Dan Bishop

13.0 GLOSSARY

AHJ -	Authority Having Jurisdiction
AVL -	Automatic Vehicle Locator
BCAS -	British Columbia Ambulance Service
CSRD -	Columbia Shuswap Regional District
EMBC -	Emergency Management BC formerly known as the Provincial Emergency Program or PEP
JEPP -	Joint Emergency Preparedness Program
MVA/MVI -	Motor Vehicle Accident or Motor Vehicle Incident
OG -	Operating Guideline
Playbook -	Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook (“Playbook”)
PTSD -	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RRSPG -	Road Rescue Safety Program Guide
SARU -	Salmon Arm Rescue Unit
SGI -	Saskatchewan Government Insurance