

**First Nations Fire Protection Strategy  
2010–2015**

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# I. Overview and Context

Fire losses (deaths, injuries and destruction of property) in First Nation communities, particularly those on remote First Nations lands, far exceed those in comparable off-reserve communities. The First Nations per capita fire incidence rate is 2.4 times the per-capita rate for the rest of Canada. The death rate is 10.4 times greater; the fire injury rate is 2.5 times greater; and the fire damage per unit is 2.1 times greater.<sup>1</sup>

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) is committed to assisting First Nations in providing community services on-reserve comparable to the levels of service that would generally be available to other communities of similar size, location and circumstances. The department provides on average approximately \$15 million annually in core capital funding to First Nations for fire protection services on-reserve such as fire halls, fire trucks and fire protection equipment as well as training for firefighters. In addition, INAC has provided on average \$200,000 annually since 2008 to support the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada (AFAC) in carrying out a number of fire prevention activities, including the National Fire Safety Poster Contest for school-age children and the National Aboriginal Firefighters Competition.

Despite these investments, there is need for greater action on fire protection. Currently, fire protection activities are completed on an ad-hoc basis and lack an overall vision and coordinated approach within and between departments and regions. There is an opportunity to align the individual effort of the many stakeholders involved in fire protection in First Nation communities and to expand on the successes that have been accomplished to date. There is also an opportunity to address gaps that exist in the current system, such as an absence of fire chiefs in many First Nation communities to coordinate fire prevention activities such as fire safety education, firefighter recruitment and retention, training, inspections and reporting, as well as a lack of regulations/standards and associated compliance mechanisms.

In an effort to provide better fire protection for First Nation communities, reduce fire losses, and extend the life cycle of community infrastructure assets, INAC, AFAC, and a number of First Nation regional organizations have agreed to collaborate. The following fire protection strategy has been developed based on joint work undertaken with stakeholders, and notably at a strategic planning workshop held on January 22, 2009 at Westbank First Nation in British Columbia.

The strategy focuses on fire protection in on-reserve communities; however, it also forms linkages between First Nation populations and national and regional firefighter associations and promotes the development of municipal service agreements between on and off-reserve communities.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Fire Prevention in Aboriginal Communities" (2007) Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Available from [www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)

For the purposes of this strategy, the term “fire protection” encompasses the following areas and activities: fire prevention (includes prevention of interface/forest fires and carbon monoxide poisoning); education and outreach; inspections and investigations; maintenance; suppression; training; and engineering.

The strategy presented here outlines overall goals, priorities and activities for the short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (3-4 years) and long-term (5 years and beyond). Initial emphasis is on activities that will generate the greatest impact in the shortest amount of time, such as fire protection education and awareness, fire safety inspections, and insurance of assets. Mid-term and longer term activities will consider options to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve. Further, this strategy focuses on the appropriate means of fire protection in light of such factors as community size and remoteness. It also emphasizes a risk based approach, starting with a gap analysis in the short-term to identify communities at greatest risk, which will serve to guide resource investments and maximize results.

The goals of this strategy can be realized only through close coordination with other partners. Accordingly, it is important for INAC, AFAC and regional First Nation partner organizations to develop a community of practice with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and improved communication and information sharing between partners. Partners may include: other government departments such as Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – Labour Program (HRSDC), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Health Canada, Public Safety Canada, municipal fire departments, provincial ministries for Aboriginal Affairs and provincial fire marshals; provincial/territorial fire associations; regional First Nation firefighter organizations and technical organizations; the First Nations National Building Officers’ Association; the Assembly of First Nations and First Nation Provincial/Territorial Organizations; and Chiefs, Councils and First Nation communities. Specifically, this strategy strives for the streamlining of roles and clarification of responsibilities for fire protection wherever possible in order to avoid gaps and ambiguities.

The strategy that follows details a comprehensive series of fire protection activities aimed at reducing the number of lives lost, the rate of injuries, and property losses in First Nation communities. It will be reviewed regularly by a yet to be established working group of key partners and evolve as required to ensure that the overall goals and priorities are targeted, measureable, and responsive to community needs. Progress will be measured and evaluated through the Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program Performance Measurement Strategy.

## II. Roles, Responsibilities and Guiding Principles

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

At present, a host of different actors are involved in fire protection. The firefighting itself is done primarily by First Nation volunteer firefighters and in some cases paid firefighters. Adjacent communities may share fire protection services with First Nation communities where municipal service agreements are in place. Fire investigations are conducted by First Nations fire chiefs and provincial fire marshals. Training involves provincial fire marshals as well as INAC, training colleges, Tribal Councils and regional First Nation fire associations. For buildings on-reserve, there is currently a regulatory gap where no inspection requirement or role is mandated. HRSDC conducts inspections of schools and public buildings, leaving individual First Nations responsible for inspections of commercial buildings. The maintenance of fire protection equipment and facilities is managed by individual First Nations. Tribal Councils provide firefighter training and also offer technical advice on both construction and fire protection. The organizations involved in fire prevention and awareness include: regional and provincial First Nations firefighter associations; AFAC; Tribal Councils; provincial fire marshals; Provincial/Territorial Ministries of Aboriginal Affairs; INAC; and fire departments of individual First Nations.

This strategy is dependent on the involvement of Tribal Councils, Chiefs and Councils, and regional First Nation firefighter associations, and strives to enhance First Nation capacity. Below is a summary of the current roles and responsibilities of key partners. It is important to note that roles and responsibilities may vary somewhat according to region and will be further clarified through working group discussions.

Key Partners	Role	Responsibilities
First Nations (Includes self-governing First Nations that choose to opt in to the strategy)	<b>Provision of fire protection services (paid fire chief/firefighters)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates fire protection services for the community. This includes emergency services. Ensures staff/volunteers are available to carry out the fire protection mandate and that staff/volunteers are trained in the responsibilities of their respective roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire suppression</li> <li>Medical services and rescue</li> <li>Fire inspections</li> <li>Fire safety education</li> <li>Training of staff/volunteer firefighters</li> <li>Maintenance of equipment and facilities</li> <li>Fire investigation and enforcement services</li> <li>Fire loss reporting</li> </ul>
	<b>Provision of fire protection services (volunteer fire department)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The volunteer fire department provides fire suppression and safety services. The department's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire suppression.</li> <li>Fire inspections.</li> <li>Other duties where required and time permits (capacity varies from</li> </ul>

Key Partners	Role	Responsibilities
	<p>activities are usually coordinated by a fire chief. The volunteer firefighters may receive an honorarium for the calls they attend.</p>	<p>community to community (depending on resources).</p>
<p>Adjacent communities/ municipalities</p>	<p><b>Municipal service agreements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nation communities may have an agreement with a neighbouring community to provide/receive fire protection services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides/receives fire protection services in accordance with established agreement.</li> </ul>
<p>Provincial Governments</p>	<p><b>Provincial fire marshals/commissioners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role in First Nation communities is limited because of jurisdiction. Provincial fire marshals or commissioners may be called to investigate fires where deaths are involved. This request is made either by the First Nations tribal/band council or by the police.</li> </ul> <p><b>Provincial ministries or departments responsible for First Nations/Aboriginal Affairs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role varies depending on provincial mandate. Some provide program support and services. Others work to enhance the provincial government relationship with Aboriginal organizations and First Nation communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigates fires pursuant to its responsibilities under the provincial fire legislation.</li> <li>• Collects fire and fatalities statistics that may include First Nation communities.</li> <li>• Trains First Nation firefighters where arrangements are made.</li> <li>• Provides fire prevention materials and advisory services.</li> <li>• Program support or collaboration directed at fire prevention and educational activities.</li> </ul>
<p>Federal Government</p>	<p><b>Indian and Northern Affairs Canada</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides funding and assists with fire protection services in First Nation communities. Supports level of service comparable to that available in non-First Nation communities of similar size, location, and circumstances.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiates, approves and administers funding agreements with First Nations and other organizations to provide fire protection services.</li> <li>• Ensures approved funding agreements contain the appropriate terms and conditions for codes, standards and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• Ensures compliance by</li> </ul>

Key Partners	Role	Responsibilities
		<p>recipients with established funding agreements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collects and maintains information on the number and location of inspection and engineering services provided for federal and major public band buildings, fire fatalities, fire injuries, and property losses.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (Labour Program)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides fire inspection services as outlined in the 1990 agreement - specialized fire protection engineering and inspection services for major public band buildings on reserves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducts on-site inspections for major public band buildings at the request of Chief and Council.</li> <li>• Provides written reports to Chief and Band Council for action describing deficiencies and recommendations, along with negotiated dates for correction.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Health Canada (First Nations and Inuit Health Branch)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together with First Nations and Inuit organizations and communities, Health Canada carries out many activities aimed at helping people stay healthy and preventing chronic and contagious diseases. As part of this role, information is provided on fire safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides fire safety information for First Nation communities.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Public Safety Canada</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides advice on emergency preparedness with respect to incidents such as fires.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinates response to emergency situations.</li> <li>• Develops national policy, response systems and standards.</li> <li>• Works with First Nation firefighters and organizations.</li> </ul>

Key Partners	Role	Responsibilities
	<b>Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides fire related research and publications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides information on fires in First Nation communities.</li> <li>Develops fire prevention materials.</li> <li>Provides analysis of fire data.</li> </ul>
National organizations	<b>Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National organization for fire prevention, education, training, and safety geared towards First Nation communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develops and maintains national communications on fire prevention in First Nation communities.</li> <li>Assists and builds capacity through the establishment of partnerships.</li> <li>Provides training, technical advice and guidance on the development of fire safety standards.</li> <li>Coordinates the National Aboriginal Firefighters Competition.</li> <li>Coordinates the National Fire Safety Poster Contest for school aged children.</li> </ul>
	<b>Assembly of First Nations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National representative organization of the First Nations in Canada.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents the views of the various First Nations through their leaders in areas such as health and housing.</li> </ul>
Regional organizations	<b>Regional First Nation firefighter associations, technical organizations, tribal councils (including fire protection officers and housing inspectors), and regional PTOs</b> <p>Provides fire safety support to regional members. Examples include the Manitoba Association of Native Firefighters (MANFF) and the First Nations' Emergency Services Society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional fire safety and emergency management programs</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Educational materials</li> <li>Fire and casualty report data collection and dispersal</li> <li>Fire prevention initiatives</li> <li>Technical and advisory services</li> <li>Assistance with</li> </ul>



Key Partners	Role	Responsibilities
	(FNESS).	inspections
Training Institutions	<b>Various colleges and training institutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers fire protection training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides National Fire Protection Association-certified training and other related courses.</li> </ul>

Given the wide variety of actors and potential for gaps and overlapping roles, it is inevitable that some ambiguities of responsibility will exist. Accordingly, this strategy must promote the following changes to the existing roles:

- improved coordination of various departments of the federal government;
- improved coordination between regional service providers and INAC;
- strengthened inspection role with greater involvement of regional First Nation organizations;
- enhanced partnerships with provincial fire marshals;
- increased involvement of Chief and Council in ensuring sound building construction and the implementation of fire protection practices; and
- clarification of roles to cover areas where gaps exist.

### ***Guiding principles***

INAC, AFAC and regional First Nation organizations have contributed to the formation of this strategy. Together they will seek to establish an effective community of practice for fire protection through regular forums and information sharing activities. It is therefore crucial that these organizations affirm certain shared values or operative principles. These are:

- openness to sharing ideas and success stories;
- mutual respect of all parties and for one another;
- transparency of operations; and
- solid commitment to risk management.

## **III. Goals**

### ***Overall Goals***

Fire-related deaths on-reserve are, according to available data, at least 10 times higher than off-reserve.<sup>2</sup> With responsibility over fire protection falling to individual First

<sup>2</sup> See "Fire Prevention in Aboriginal Communities" (2007) Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Available from [www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)

Nations, fire inspection regimes are not uniform and vary from community to community. Further, the guidelines adopted in the terms and conditions of funding arrangements are not always followed and there is currently no compliance mechanism in place. This fire protection strategy is intended to address this situation by meeting the following overall goals:

1. Through awareness campaigns, reduce fire-related deaths, injuries, and infrastructure damage to levels comparable to those in the rest of Canada.
2. Develop mechanisms to support the provision of fire protection services in all First Nation communities that are effective and meet the standard enjoyed by comparable communities in the rest of Canada.
3. By referencing/adapting existing federal and provincial guidelines, establish mandatory standards for fire safety, fire equipment maintenance and inspections that:
  - i. apply to all First Nations in Canada.
  - ii. are as stringent as any applied in comparable communities off-reserve; and
  - iii. are routinely monitored and enforced through a compliance mechanism.
4. Ensure coordinated and continued commitment to fire protection in First Nation communities and the elimination of gaps in inspections, equipment maintenance and fire safety measures.

## **IV. Challenges and Opportunities**

A number of challenges and opportunities associated with obtaining the goals outlined in this strategy have been identified through discussions with stakeholders as summarized below.

### ***Challenges***

- unenforceable standards stemming from the absence of a regulatory regime;
- a deficient inspection regime with inconsistent follow-up and compliance;
- multiple stakeholders with conflicting priorities and mandates and differing cultural viewpoints and languages, making communication a challenge;
- gaps and overlaps in fire protection roles and responsibilities;
- a lack of transparency and accountability in relation to fire protection funding;
- the need for an evaluation of First Nations fire protection infrastructure and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding requirements;
- uncertainty concerning the number of First Nations with fire protection strategies and emergency response plans;
- the diversity of First Nation capacity and size/location means no one model fits all;
- training, retention, and recruitment of firefighters and inspectors is difficult without remuneration and given the migration of young people seeking opportunities outside of small communities; and

- in some cases, there is a limited awareness of risk and sense of ownership to address the issue of fire protection within First Nation communities (both leadership and citizens).

### ***Opportunities***

- a broad-based partnership means there is a lot of expertise to draw on;
- in communities with political will, it is possible to build support through education and effect relatively quick changes;
- Chief and Councils that support fire protection could serve as champions; and
- firefighting, fire inspections and equipment maintenance, fire safety education and outreach, as well as emergency services, are areas that could provide jobs for young people on-reserve.

## **V. Priorities and Activities**

### ***Overview of Priorities***

This strategic plan maps a course of shared priorities and actions to address the challenges, maximize the opportunities, and meet the overall goals that have been defined.

The initial short-term phase of the strategy focuses on a number of immediate actions that can be taken to generate a substantial improvement in fire protection in First Nation communities, such as exploring the role of a fire chief, enhancing fire safety education and awareness, improving data collection, conducting a gap analysis, developing a risk based approach, strengthening fire safety inspections and reporting, examining the issue of insurance on-reserve, and integrating fire protecting into emergency response planning, among other activities.

The medium-term phase builds on and continues many activities from the short-term, while laying the ground work for future action to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve. Medium-term activities include conducting an analysis of fire protection capacity using information available from the Integrated Capital Management System, considering ways to enhance fire protection training, integrating fire protection into community planning activities, revising the Levels of Service Standard for fire protection services, and analyzing options and creating an action plan for closing the regulatory gap.

The long-term phase centres on implementing actions to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve, as well as evaluating progress under the strategy and planning for future action.

This strategy recognizes that regions and communities vary in their size, activities and capacity to deliver fire protection services. Certain regions may have already

addressed some of the priority areas outlined below, while others will be at an earlier stage in the process. Sharing best practices and lessons learned between regions will help to facilitate knowledge exchange and build capacity.

The following chart outlines the key priorities for 2010–2015. Priorities are classified according to the short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (3-4 years) and long-term (5 years and beyond).

<b>Short-term priorities</b>	
1.1	Conduct a gap analysis by reviewing current funding mechanisms and governance structures.
1.2	Explore the creation of a fire chief role.
1.3	Enhance fire safety education in First Nation communities.
1.4	Improve fire loss data collection and integrity to identify communities at risk.
1.5	Strengthen fire safety inspections and reporting.
1.6	Examine the issue of insurance on-reserve.
1.7	Encourage the recruitment and retention of firefighters.
1.8	Develop systems to share information and best practices among regions.
1.9	Promote innovative fire prevention technologies and initiatives.
1.10	Integrate fire protection into emergency response planning.
1.11	Promote First Nation firefighter associations for every region.
1.12	Conduct a regional review of existing fire protection regulations/standards.
<b>Medium-term priorities</b>	
2.1	Complete an analysis of fire protection capacity.
2.2	Consider options for improving fire protection training.
2.3	Further enhance fire loss data collection and integrity.
2.4	Link fire protection to community planning.
2.5	Revise the Levels of Service Standard for fire protection services.
2.6	Develop a plan of action to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve.
<b>Long-term priorities</b>	
3.1	Address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve.
3.2	Evaluate and report on effectiveness of strategy.
3.3	Assess and determine any future action.

### ***Short-term Priorities and Accompanying Activities***

In the short-term (1-2 years), improvements to data collection and integrity will be made to provide a more accurate picture of fire losses, standards of service, current funding mechanisms and governance structures, and communities at greatest risk. In addition, effort will be directed at exploring a role for a community fire chief in each First Nation community or one per cluster of communities. Opportunities for combining this role with

the responsibilities associated with other roles such as first responder, public works manager and/or emergency management coordinator will be explored. The community fire chief could potentially serve as a champion of fire safety and a focal point for the coordination and implementation of fire protection activities within the community, such as education, inspections, and reporting.

INAC will seek opportunities for partnering with regional First Nation organizations on pilot projects to complete some of the work identified in the short-term, such as the pilot application of the Fire Underwriters Survey in a community/cluster of communities to improve fire protection services and lower insurance rates. Below is a summary of key short-term priorities and corresponding activities.

### 1.1 Conduct a gap analysis by reviewing current funding mechanisms and governance structures.

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Collect and analyse data on fire protection services for on-reserve and comparable off-reserve communities.	INAC
b) Re-examine the Cost Reference Manual to ensure that it reflects the true cost of providing fire protection (i.e. costs associated with new infrastructure and operations and maintenance).	INAC
c) Identify funding/resources that may be available through leveraging other existing federal programs/initiatives.	INAC
d) Assess fire department governance structures (in both on-reserve and comparable off-reserve communities) to determine best practices and lessons learned.	AFAC
e) Evaluate a range of practices for increasing fire protection in First Nation communities, including the creation of a fire chief role (see below). Align with successful practices applied on-reserve and in comparable off-reserve communities.	INAC

### 1.2 Explore the creation of a fire chief role.

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Define the role of a community fire chief and explore opportunities for linking this role to other responsibilities (e.g. First responder/emergency response and/or public works).	INAC
b) Identify communities that demonstrate innovation in this area and could serve as potential models for other communities.	INAC

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
c) If it is determined through analysis that the creation of a fire chief role in each First Nation community or one per cluster of communities is a viable and recommended option, a plan of action will be developed for promoting the creation of this role, including the identification of any resource requirements and priority communities for pilot implementation.	INAC

### **1.3 Enhance fire safety education in First Nation communities.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Develop fire safety education kits for First Nation communities (drawing from existing materials where possible).	INAC
b) Develop a promotional plan for distributing fire prevention education kits and conducting fire safety information sessions.	INAC
c) Organize fire safety information sessions for First Nation communities.	AFAC
d) Continue supporting the National Fire Safety Poster Contest as way of engaging children in learning about fire protection.	AFAC, INAC
e) Examine the possibility of incorporating fire protection education and awareness into existing activities (e.g. promotion of fire safety through Health Canada's Injury Prevention Division).	INAC, Health Canada

### **1.4 Improve fire loss data collection and integrity to identify communities at risk.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Review the structure of fire loss reports and implement improvements to enhance data collection.	INAC
b) Monitor fire loss data through the First Nations and Inuit Transfer Payment System and standardize process for annual fire loss reporting.	INAC
c) Conduct an analysis of available fire loss data to determine main causes/ types of fires reported and to identify priority communities at greatest risk.	INAC

### **1.5 Strengthen fire safety inspections and reporting.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
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<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Work with HRSDC (Labour Program), Public Safety Canada, Health Canada, and others to increase the rate and improve the coordination of fire safety inspections, address gaps, and enhance reporting.	INAC
b) Explore options for engaging Tribal Councils or other appropriate First Nation organizations in inspection role.	INAC

### **1.6 Examine the issue of insurance on-reserve.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Conduct an analysis on the issue of fire protection insurance on-reserve (to determine which communities have asset insurance, which regions/communities have applied the Fire Underwriters Survey, and key factors that influence the incidence of asset insurance in First Nation communities).	INAC
b) Promote the Fire Underwriters Survey in regions to improve fire protection services and lower insurance rates.	INAC
c) Promote asset insurance in First Nation communities.	INAC

### **1.7 Encourage the recruitment and retention of firefighters.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Assess best practices with respect to firefighter recruitment and retention in First Nation communities.	AFAC
b) Promote health and safety practices for volunteer firefighters.	AFAC
c) Promote firefighter retention strategies and activities (e.g. establish recognition awards for volunteer service).	AFAC
d) Link with mentoring and internship programs to encourage youth to consider firefighting opportunities and to discourage acts of arson.	Regional organizations
e) Continue supporting the National Aboriginal Firefighters Competition.	AFAC, INAC
f) Develop partnerships with relevant fire training programs/schools and deliver technical information/training sessions.	Regional organizations

### **1.8 Develop systems to share information and best practices among regions.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Develop a means to share fire protection updates and best practices among INAC regions through existing channels (e.g. capital management meetings).	INAC
b) Populate the AFAC website with information/best practices on fire protection, covering topics such as municipal service agreements and collaboration with provincial fire marshals.	AFAC

### **1.9 Promote innovative fire prevention technologies and initiatives.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Develop pilot projects to showcase innovative fire prevention technologies.	INAC
b) Promote the development of municipal service agreements between on-reserve and off-reserve communities.	INAC

### **1.10 Integrate fire protection into emergency response planning.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Work with INAC's Emergency and Issues Management Directorate to incorporate fire protection into broader emergency planning and response initiatives.	INAC
b) Train members of the fire protection service in basic emergency management.	INAC

### **1.11 Promote First Nation firefighter associations for every region.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Determine best practices and develop a model for the creation of an effective First Nation firefighter association that can be adapted by regions.	AFAC
b) Define and promote a set of initial priorities that new First Nation firefighter associations may adopt and adapt.	AFAC

### **1.12 Conduct a regional review of existing fire protection regulations/standards.**



Activities	Lead(s)
a) Complete a regional review of existing fire protection policies, standards, fire and building codes, regulations, and associated compliance measures in on-reserve and comparable off-reserve communities.	INAC

### ***Medium-term Priorities and Accompanying Activities***

In the medium-term (3-4 years), the activities initiated in the short term will continue, with a particular emphasis on fire protection education. In addition, there will be an increase in activities focusing on the review of First Nations fire protection capacity and the Levels of Service Standard in order to determine future funding requirements. As well, an analysis on the development of a fire protection training program will be completed, and steps will be taken to link fire protection with broader community planning activities. Options to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve will also be analyzed, and a plan of action will be developed. Medium-term priorities and activities are defined as follows:

#### **2.1 Complete an analysis of fire protection capacity.**

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Enhance the fire protection component in the Asset Condition Reporting System/Integrated Capital Management System in order that sufficient data is collected to conduct a detailed analysis of First Nations fire protection capacity.	INAC

#### **2.2 Consider options for improving fire protection training.**

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Conduct preliminary research and analysis on the development a circuit rider training program for fire protection similar to the one for water.	INAC

#### **2.3 Further enhance fire loss data collection and integrity.**

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Consider ways to strengthen fire protection data available from plans and activities reported through the Integrated Capital Management System.	INAC

**2.4 Link fire protection to community planning.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Develop a coordinated approach within INAC to link fire protection with broader community planning activities.	INAC
b) Identify case examples that demonstrate the benefits of integrating fire protection into community planning.	AFAC

**2.5 Revise the Levels of Service Standard for fire protection services.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Review and introduce changes to the Levels of Service Standard.	INAC

**2.6 Develop a plan of action to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
a) Analyze options for addressing the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve. Options may include administrative processes, policies, standards, fire and building codes, regulations and associated compliance measures.	INAC
b) Develop a plan of action for addressing the regulatory gap, including the identification of any resource requirements.	INAC

***Long-term Priorities and Accompanying Activities***

The key to reducing fire-related losses is to address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve. The primary long term priority involves finalizing and implementing a plan to address the regulatory gap, based on research and analysis conducted over the short and medium-term. Long-term activities also include evaluating progress under the strategy and planning for future requirements. The long-term priorities and activities are described below.

**3.1 Address the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve.**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
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Activities	Lead(s)
a) Finalize and Implement a plan of action for addressing the regulatory gap governing fire protection on-reserve.	INAC

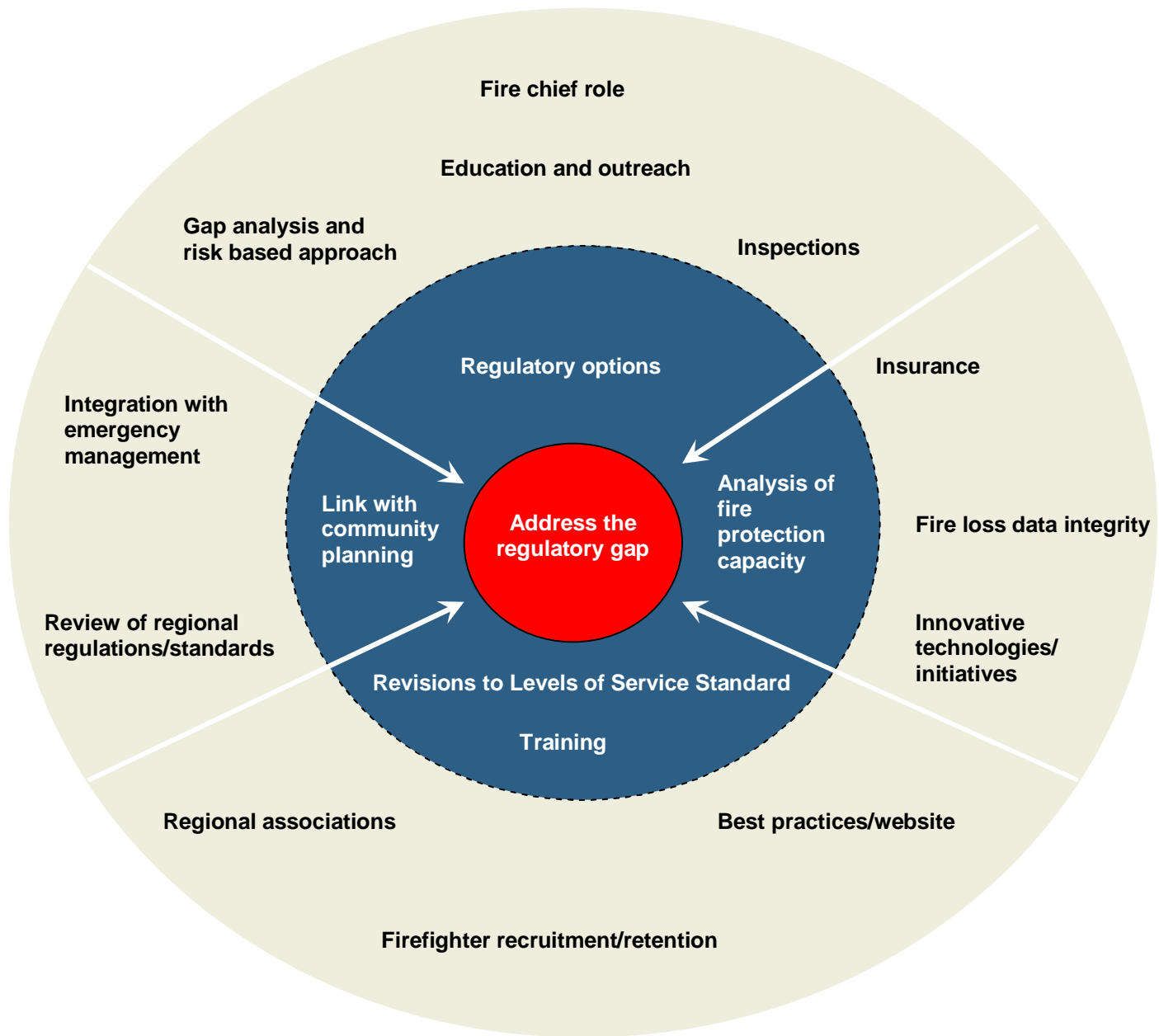
**3.2 Evaluate and report on effectiveness of strategy.**

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Conduct an evaluation of the strategy that reviews impacts of activities and the overall effectiveness of the strategy in meeting objectives.	INAC

**3.3 Assess and determine any future action.**

Activities	Lead(s)
a) Review anticipated fire protection requirements and determine future course of action.	INAC

***Circle diagram summarizing key priority areas***



Short-term



Medium-term



Long-term

## **VI. Governance**

### ***Resourcing***

The implementation of the First Nations Fire Protection Strategy will follow a phased approach over the short, medium and long-term. Short-term activities are anticipated to be planned and implemented using existing programs and resources. As part of the short-term activities, a review of current funding mechanisms will be completed and opportunities for leveraging support from existing programs/initiatives will be identified. In addition, a risk based approach will be applied to guide resource investments and maximize results. Some of the medium-term and long-term activities may require additional resources, with needs to be assessed and determined upon completion of the short-term activities. Any resource requirements will be presented to Senior Management for approval.

### ***Stakeholder Working Group***

Next steps include the formation of a working group consisting of representatives from INAC, AFAC, and regional partner First Nation organizations to oversee the development of work plans and performance indicators for the activities outlined in this strategic plan. The working group will meet twice a year to review this plan, make any modifications as required, and report on progress.

### ***Reporting and Evaluation***

The activities in this strategy will follow existing reporting and evaluation processes, and will be monitored through the Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program Performance Measurement Strategy.

### ***Communications Plan***

INAC's Communications Branch has been engaged by the Community Infrastructure Branch to develop a communications plan for this strategy.