



Fire Sector Mental Health Update 2024



Overview

- Land Acknowledgement
- What's top of mind in the fire sector?
- How addressing systems issues improves mental health?
- What does the sector really look like?
- What are key issues in mental health?
- What's new in CAFC Mental Health Activity activity?

Greetings from Board and National Advisory Council



Our main asks:

System issues impact mental health

- Asked all parties, MPs and senators to consider:
 - Increasing the volunteer firefighter tax credit (morale, fatigue)t
 - Installing a National Fire Administration for coordination
 - Funding for training and equipment
 - Ensuring the FireSmart program is widely available
 - Make sure housing accompanied by fire and life safety supports



A National Fire Administration Can Help



THE HILL TIMES

Thursday, November 30, 2023

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TRENDING: Pharmacare | Ukraine trade bill | GAC report | Aerospace policy | Hill Climbers | Tim Powers | de Adder's take

A burning platform for a national fire administration

Creating a Canadian Fire Administration could be one of the most consequential policy tools in the history of fire and emergency management in Canada. Fire chiefs are willing to help make this happen. We hope policy leaders will take our advice seriously.



A forest fire in Mississauga, Ont., on June 22, 2023. Canada is burning the equivalent of five million football fields. This is the year that the lines between provincial wildfire firefighting and local structural firefighting blurred, write Ken McMillen and Tina Saucedo-Lee. Photograph courtesy of Cpl. Marc-André Leclerc. [LND](#)

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Check Out Census

Situate Initiatives in the Realities of the Sector (largest known dataset on fire departments sample includes catchment areas of 24M Canadians)



The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC), in partnership with the Answer the Call committee, the Data committee, and the National Advisory Council (NAC), is pleased to announce the results of the 2023 Great Canadian Fire Census. This Census describes the state of the fire and emergency sector, and is the most complete up to date data set known.

For 2023, we expanded the Census to include all departments in Canada, and expanded the questionnaire to include questions on key issues such as firefighter and consumer safety, call volumes, and expenditures on training and equipment. A total of 534 departments across all types (volunteer, composite, and career) submitted data this year. Thank you to everyone who participated.

[Read the press release here](#)
[Read the written report here](#)
[Read about the Census at GR Week 2023](#)
[Read the table of statistics](#)
[Read related media here](#)

Or watch the 2023 Census Results below:



Key Considerations 2024

- Worst wildfire season in history, fatigue, stress, etc.
- Role of fire departments in EM and impact on MH
- New types of fire li-ion, mass timber construction, etc
- Fire prevention, emergency preparedness = +MH
- Training, equipment, coordination staffing =+ MH
- Huge WSIB costs associated with MH
- Census 2024 EM, Wildfire, Humanitarian Workforce
- CAFC Fire Knowledge Network, MH training,
- Becoming what we want to see and doing was we asked of others

What's Happening 2024: Firefighter Cancer Prevention Follow up to Bill C-224

A Special Workshop Series on
Une série d'ateliers sur

**Building out the
Firefighter Cancer
Awareness, Prevention,
and Access to Care Puzzle**

**Assembler le puzzle de
la sensibilisation au cancer,
des mesures de prévention
et de l'accès aux soins
chez les pompiers**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
EN COLLABORATION AVEC



www.cafc.ca/cancerprevmonth

Success story!

**72% of all fire departments report having access to mental health awareness training (thanks all)
CAFC itself has trainers available to train anyone not able to access training.**



**Boots on the Fire Grounds
for Mental Health:**
CAFC Mental Health Resources


**Des bottes sur le terrain de feu
pour la santé mentale:**
Ressources en santé mentale de l'ACCP

[Read More](#) | [En savoir plus](#)

[Veillez appuyer ici](#) pour la version en français

CAFC's putting boots on the fire grounds for mental health: sharing, spreading and scaling resources

What's Happening 2024: Human Factors and relationship to mental health, safety, etc. Six session free course, virtual, synchronous, international speakers



**Rapid Response Program:
Human Factors in the Fire Service**
Register now for the 6-part series
starting March 21, 2024.
Free for CAFC members

**Programme réponse rapide:
Facteurs humains dans les
services d'incendie**
Enregistrez-vous pour la série en 6-parties
débutant le 21 mars 2024.
Gratuit pour les membres de l'ACCP

[Register – Eregistrez](#)

Improving Mental Health by Strengthening Preparedness Leadership Development

Available in 2024 Level 1: Lead Self	2: Lead Others	3: Lead Organizations
Behaviour and bias/Applied Critical Thinking (personality, bias-awareness)	Team Building	HR/Hiring
Leadership Styles (adapting, trauma informed, self-awareness)	Conflict Management	Succession Planning
Mental health (resilience, psychological safety, stress management)	Communications	Unions/Business Acumen
Emotional Intelligence (emotions, attitudes, stress recognition)	Creating an inclusive culture	Vision Setting / Strategic Leadership
Character Based Leadership (integrity, character)	GR/PR/ Political Acumen	Organizational Structure/behaviour
Decision making and Data (judgement, research and interpretation)	Leadership Risks and Pitfalls	Change Management
Ethics. (core values, ethical decision making)		Coaching and Motivating Others

Addressing Bullying in the Fire Service

Literature review and statement for incoming firefighters, fire departments and all members of the sector

FEATURE • ARTICLE DE FOND

Not on Our Watch or in Our House: What Do We Know About Bullying at the Fire Station?

A March 2023 report by United Kingdom's Fire Advisor found that many of the 44 fire departments in the United Kingdom had instances of serious bullying. Between June 2018 and February 2023, an anonymous reporting line accepted 842 submissions. From the time inspections began in 2018, the fire advisor continued to find cases of bullying, harassment, and discrimination, and two of the United Kingdom's fire brigades were put on orange-red monitoring.

In the United States, the International Association of Fire Chiefs prepared a bullying and workplace prevention toolkit called "Respect Our House," which decried the presence and inaccessibility of bullying in fire stations and offered resources for its prevention.¹ Literature shows the same phenomena exist in Australia and Canada. Canada's fire departments are unlikely to be immune, and the literature suggests that bullying has been occurring in fire departments for over 30 years.



One of the first steps is awareness and to realize that yes, bullying is probably occurring to some degree in your fire department.

Pas sous notre surveillance ou chez nous : Que sait-on du harcèlement à la caserne des pompiers ?

Littérature suggère que l'intimidation se produit dans les services d'incendie depuis plus de 30 ans.

Ce que la recherche nous apprend

Un membre du personnel de l'ACFC a entrepris un examen de la portée de la recherche dans le cadre de funes de ses missions de perfectionnement professionnel. Des variantes des termes bullying, harassment, et hazing (et leurs équivalents français « intimidation », « harcèlement », et « sévissage » et propres à notre secteur) ont été utilisées comme mots-clés pour la recherche. Vingt articles de langue anglaise évalués par des pairs sont apparus, dont un a été exclu parce qu'il n'aborde la question que de manière périphérique. Les 19 articles restants traitent des données démographiques et des définitions, des raisons des victimes, de leur vécu, de leurs conséquences et des recommandations pour y remédier.

L'une des faiblesses de la littérature est que la plupart des articles sont basés sur des échantillons de commu-

niés. Cela permet d'être sélectionné pour la formation et le perfectionnement et de se sentir en sécurité sur le terrain. La question de la sous-déclaration est donc un facteur important à prendre en compte par les services d'incendie. Les brigades peuvent publier même si les cas ne sont pas graves.

De plus, les personnes victimes de crimes dans les services d'incendie peuvent provenir à leur tour des agresseurs. Certains articles ont souligné que les brigades ne se produisent pas sur le lieu de l'incident, mais, lorsque les pompiers effectuent ces tâches liées à la réaction de récupération. De nombreuses approches managériales, considérées comme efficaces dans les services d'incendie sont considérées selon les normes actuelles en dehors du secteur, comme des comportements d'intimidation. Cela suggère qu'un examen approfondi de la façon dont nous travaillons dans les services d'incendie est nécessaire.

La troisième constatation concerne le nombre croissant d'articles consacrés aux femmes. Il y a deux raisons

Leadership Mental Health

- Review of the literature Work with Dr. Rose Riccardelli
- Work with CAFC Mental Health Committee Fire Chiefs (n=~35)
 - When you think about mental health from the perspective of a Chief Officer (including company officers), what comes to mind?
 - What mental health related stressors are particular to the job of a Fire Chief?
 - If we were to partner in the dev of a program for the mental health of Chief Officers, what elements or characteristics would be important to consider

Family Members (Companions)

Tips for Fire Families Work with Dr. Heidi Cramm

Companions program run at FRC for over 20 years

Tap into knowledge that has typically been informal

Bell Let's Talk Application for leadership, families, and retired members (A. Therrien leading this)

Get involved 2024: Fire-Rescue Canada



FIRE-RESCUE SECOURS-INCENDIE CANADA

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CHEFS DE POMPIERS

SEPTEMBER 21-25 **2024**
21 AU 25 SEPTEMBRE

DOUBLE TREE HILTON,
MONTREAL, QUEBEC



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Conférence annuelle d'éducation

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