



*CANADIAN INTERAGENCY FOREST FIRE CENTRE INC.
CENTRE INTERSERVICES DES FEUX DE FORÊT DU CANADA INC.*

2019 – 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

March 28, 2019

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Executive Summary

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) is a not-for-profit corporation owned and operated by the federal, provincial, and territorial wildland fire management agencies to coordinate resource sharing, mutual aid, and information sharing. CIFFC's strategic plan has been renewed to ensure the Corporation continues to evolve along with the needs of the wildland fire community. Direction for this new strategic plan was identified by members of the CIFFC Board of Directors (BoD) and Management Committee (MC), and Fire Centre staff during the renewal process which included a survey, phone interviews, and a workshop held in late 2018.

The CIFFC 2019-2021 Strategic Plan consists of the corporate mission, vision, values, priorities, and strategies. Priorities categorize CIFFC's plan to better fulfill its mission and vision. The four priorities are:

1. Fire Centre HR
2. Response Capacity
3. Web-Based Systems
4. CIFFC 2.0

Several strategies were noted as the steps CIFFC could take to make improvements in each priority. These strategies have been broken down further into key activities for years 1-3, and assigned leads.

During the creation of this Strategic Plan, it was vital to keep several "themes" in mind in order to maintain CIFFC's Mission and Values: continuous improvement and safety culture; maintaining the status of CIFFC as an independent facilitator and nexus for interagency and international cooperation; and a commitment to ensuring a continued focus on equality and inclusion for all people engaged in the CIFFC community.

Preamble

In addition to coordinating resource sharing, mutual aid, and information sharing, CIFFC also serves as a nexus for and facilitator of wildland fire cooperation. CIFFC maintains a critical strategic role in wildland fire management across Canada and internationally, and provides a forum for pan-Canadian cooperation and coordination in long-range fire management planning, program delivery, and human resource strategies.

CIFFC's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan focused on sustaining operations and managing change by improving the delivery of mutual aid between member agencies, supporting safe and effective national wildland fire management, maintaining a state-of-the-art Fire Centre in Winnipeg, providing leadership on Canadian wildland fire issues, and sharing knowledge and resources internationally.

The Strategic Planning Task Team contracted Hartley Nonprofit Consulting to conduct preparatory surveys, facilitate a workshop, and prepare a draft strategic plan and report for CIFFC. In order to create a successful strategic plan, it was important to include individuals with the best sense of how to improve CIFFC and implement the agreed-upon strategies. Members of the CIFFC BoD, MC, and Fire Centre Managers contributed to the renewal process by participating in a written survey, follow-up phone interviews, and the workshop.

In preparation for the workshop, participants responded to the following survey questions:

1. In the past 5 years, from your perspective, what *specific*, significant improvements has:
 - a. CIFFC "the Fire Centre" in Winnipeg made
 - b. CIFFC "the community" of partners/owners made
2. What *specific*, significant weaknesses (areas for improvement) need attention within:
 - a. CIFFC "the Fire Centre" in Winnipeg
 - b. CIFFC "the community" of partners/owners
3. Should CIFFC continue to concentrate on its core mandate of resource and information exchange OR should we consider a "CIFFC 2.0" that is resourced and governed to allow it to expand to be a national leader in other areas of wildfire management?
 - If your answer is "no" or "not sure" please provide some of your thoughts
 - If your answer is "yes," what areas of wildfire management?
4. In terms of our core mandate of resource and information exchange, what other specific, significant opportunities or partnerships do you believe CIFFC needs to consider pursuing?
5. What specific, significant internal or external roadblocks do you believe CIFFC needs to put significant attention towards?
6. Looking over all of the information you have provided in your answers above, in the next 18 months what 2 or 3 significant actions/changes do we need to prioritize?

The responses to this survey and the subsequent phone interviews helped shape discussions during the workshop.

The workshop was held in King City, ON on November 1-2, 2018. All but one member of the BoD and MC were in attendance, along with the Fire Centre's Executive Director and Managers. During the 2-day session, participants created the framework for the priorities, strategies, and actions of this Strategic Plan.

In this document, the term "CIFFC" is used as the entire collective of CIFFC from the BoD, MC, Committees, Working Groups (WGs), Task Teams (TTs), and staff at the Canadian Forest Fire Centre in Winnipeg.

Vision

To be the global leader of safe wildland fire resource sharing, cooperation, and mutual aid.

Mission

To provide timely, effective, and efficient support to members agencies for the enhancement of national wildland fire preparedness, safety, and response capability while fostering a culture of continuous improvement in wildland fire management programs and policies by facilitating interagency and international cooperation.

Values

CIFFC's organizational value statements are an important strategic component, particularly in an interagency corporation. These values provide guidance for performance and conduct; they form the foundation of the CIFFC cooperative network.

CIFFC Values:

- a safety first attitude and culture in ourselves and our workforce;
- excellence and efficiency in all activities;
- the maximization of combined benefits to all member agencies;
- transparent, consultative, and fiscally responsible decision making;
- environmentally and socially responsible business practices;
- integrity and respect in all dealings among members agencies, staff, clients, and partners;
- resolution of issues through discussion and cooperation to achieve common goals; and
- ownership of work and responsibility for decisions.

Priorities


CIFFC priorities are key components in realizing the mission and vision of the corporation, and reflect the overall results and direction sought after by the CIFFC community for 2019-2021.

1. Fire Centre HR


Staffing issues continue to pose challenges to CIFFC. The current surge capacity protocols do not meet the increasing demands of the wildfire community, and external Duty Officers have been difficult to recruit and maintain. Further work is required on the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) regarding personnel in order to match the strong processes already in place. As several Fire Centre staff members near retirement, there is concern surrounding the absence of succession planning.

Deliverables of this priority include formal succession plans for all Fire Centre staff, a completed surge response plan including a functioning Duty Officer roster, a completed BCP, and briefing materials regarding the operation of CIFFC. Striving to meet the bi-lingual needs of the Canadian community, and the principle of inclusion for all will be a focus point as this work progresses.

Strategies

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '19 - March '20	Led By
	1. Develop Succession Plan	Develop draft succession plan	ED & Exec Comm
		Engage consultant to review and react to draft plan	ED
	2. Develop Surge Response Plan	Develop a new Surge Response Plan for Fire Centre	ED / CIFFC staff
		Formalize workable national roster for Duty Officer that is less reliable on agency assistance by April 1, 2019 - target bi-lingual coverage where possible	
3. Renew Business Continuity Plan for CIFFC staff (unplanned leave)	Update Business Continuity Plan to include personnel	ED & CIFFC staff	
	Develop protocols to address unplanned departure of individual positions during fire season		
4. Create briefing materials to share with new BoD/MC/WFMWG	Await outcomes of CIFFC 2.0		

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '20 - March '21	Led By
	1. Develop Succession Plan	Present to Management Committee for recommendation to the Board of Directors	ED
		Board of Directors gives final approval	
	2. Develop Surge Response Plan	Review and expand the plan	ED / CIFFC staff
		Present to Management Committee for final approval	ED
3. Renew Business Continuity Plan for CIFFC staff (unplanned leave)	Executive Director to present draft plan to the Management Committee for approval	ED	
4. Create briefing materials to share with new BoD/MC/WFMWG	Create documents to brief new board members on the role of CIFFC and CCFM	ED	


Priority	Strategies	Activities April '21 - March '22	Led By
	1. Develop Succession Plan	Begin implementation of Plan where applicable	ED & Exec Comm
	2. Develop Surge Response Plan	Review and modify Plan where applicable	ED
3. Renew Business Continuity Plan for CIFFC staff (unplanned leave)	Ensure annual review of the Plan	ED	
4. Create briefing materials to share with new BoD/MC/WFMWG	Place on Repository for use by agencies	ED	
	Create associated PowerPoint presentation		


2. Response Capacity


More frequent and prolonged serious fire activity in Canada has demonstrated there are insufficient resources (human, equipment, and aircraft) to meet national needs. This problem is compounded by the lack of up-to-date information at CIFFC regarding agency availability. Importing human resources from CIFFC's international partners has proven successful, however, the International Deployment Readiness Plan to support those partners has not yet been tested beyond the USA.

Deliverables of this priority include a clear and accurate national resource inventory, accepted and adopted common national language and terminology, and increased Type 2 capacity. It is expected that all member agencies will sign the international agreements with Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand to further increase import possibilities as well as ensuring Canada will be able to deploy resources in return.

Strategies

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '19 - March '20	Led By	
	1. Sufficient & Defined Resource Inventory	1.a Using the online SitRep Inventory Form beginning in April 2019 and annually, each agency will identify seasonal (complement) and exportable human, aviation, and equipment resources, and daily availability of same	CIFFC	
		Investigate a methodology to identify peak national human resource needs (T1, T2, Overhead) - what are the national resource demands		
		Investigate a decision support tool to model agency personnel availability		
		1.b RMC Equipment Inventory Project Team to investigate barriers to equipment availability and mobilization	CIFFC	
		i) Refurbishment and recycling - options to expedite		
		ii) Demobilization of equipment by Receiving Agency to Lending Agency in a more timely manner		
		iii) Improve tracking of mobilized equipment		
		iv) Identify (if possible) what agencies optimal equipment inventory should be		
		2. Adopt Common Language & Terminology	Re-activate a Project Team and commit to full participation	CIFFC MC
			Determine scope of common language & terminology future state - does it apply to all language and terminology, just glossary, or the recommendations from "Developing More Common Language Terminology and Data Standards for Wildland Fire Management in Canada" report	

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '20 - March '21	Led By
	1. Sufficient & Defined Resource Inventory	1.a Test the resource requirement methodology/model and revise	CIFFC
		Test the human resources availability model and revise	
		Identify needs and subsequent deficiencies through analysis of resource requirements and actual availability versus inventory	
		1.b Test specific solutions and work arounds to identify barriers	CIFFC
		Evaluate test results and make final recommendations	
		2. Adopt Common Language & Terminology	2.a If scope is limited to glossary, or "Developing Common Language" report, agencies approve the glossary as the common language/terminology standards
2.b If scope includes all language/terminology, Project Team to make recommendations on approved standards and present to agencies for integration into their respective programs beginning in year 3			


Priority	Strategies	Activities April '21 - March '22	Led By	
	1. Sufficient & Defined Resource Inventory	1.a Based on analysis in year 2, develop plan to address deficiencies	CIFFC	
		Explore the desired partnerships (ISC as an example)	CIFFC & ISC	
		Approve the plan and begin implementation		
		1.b Implement recommendations from RMC Equipment Inventory Project Team	CIFFC	
		2. Adopt Common Language & Terminology	2.a Ensure full compliance with the implementation of approved terminology standards	CIFFC MC
			2.b Agencies to initiate full integration of recommended common language/terminology standards within their respective programs	


3. Web-Based Systems


While work on an updated CIFFC website is underway, the remaining web-based systems currently in use are dated and inefficient. Resource orders and updates to the national Situation Report require manual data entry which is time consuming and prone to human error. Software used for online training is becoming obsolete and will be unsupported by 2020, and navigation of the learning system is not intuitive.

Deliverables of this priority will include an updated resource ordering system, improvements to the national Situation Report, a fully supported online training system, and a completed CIFFC website and Portal. Resource ordering and the Situation Report will be integrated with each other as well as agency tracking systems to ensure accurate and consistent information in each area. Software for all web-based systems will be modern and supported.

Strategies

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '19 - March '20	Led By
	1. Development of Online Resource Ordering & Tracking System	Develop multi-agency project team	CWG Lead
		Complete a business analysis of CIFFC and agency processes for resource ordering	Help: IMIT/CIFFC
		Enviroscan of corresponding used by agencies to support resource sharing	
		Develop an application road map	
		Costing/budgeting	
		Submit proposal/charter	
	2. Automate the National Situation Report	Encourage all agencies to have compatible systems that can auto-feed into the Data Integration Project Database	IMIT Lead Help: CWG/CIFFC
		Develop training for the Situation Report	
	3. Modernize the CIFFC Website, Integrating a "Portal" Concept	Go live with version 1.0 of the website	CIFFC
		Add content	Help: IMIT
		Integrate the Situation Report (IM/IT support)	
	4. Create a More Modern, Accessible Online Training System	Prioritize the order for revitalizing the training courses	TWG
		Project team to review content and make appropriate updates	Help: IMIT, RMC
		Update 1/4 of the courses to HTML 5	
		Develop sustainability model (funding) based on course review cycle	

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '20 - March '21	Led By
	1. Development of Online Resource Ordering & Tracking System	Based on application road map, choose appropriate software	CWG Lead
		Review initial costing, complete budget revision if necessary	Help: IMIT/CIFFC
		Develop and deliver initial training	
		Prototype outputs/inputs	
		Testing and acceptance of various modules of the application	
	2. Automate the National Situation Report	Monitor for accuracy, adjust auto-feeds as necessary	IMIT Lead Help: All WGs
	3. Modernize the CIFFC Website, Integrating a "Portal" Concept	Add additional reporting (mapping, products)	CIFFC
		Integrate the resource ordering/tracking application into the website/portal	Help: All WGs
	4. Create a More Modern, Accessible Online Training System	Convert 1/2 of the identified prioritized courses to HTML 5	TWG
			Help: IMIT, RMC


Priority	Strategies	Activities April '21 - March '22	Led By
	1. Development of Online Resource Ordering & Tracking System	Evaluation/user acceptance	CWG Lead
		Integration with agency proprietary systems and CIFFC website/portal	Help: IMIT/CIFFC
	2. Automate the National Situation Report	Monitor success!	IMIT Lead Help: CWG/CIFFC
	3. Modernize the CIFFC Website, Integrating a "Portal" Concept	Integrate the "National Toolbox" application(s)	CIFFC
		Fully integrate DIP data into the website/portal	Help: IMIT
	4. Create a More Modern, Accessible Online Training System	Convert remaining courses to HTML 5	TWG
			Help: IMIT, RMC


4. CIFFC 2.0


As increased wildfire activity becomes the “new normal” in Canada, CIFFC is realizing the need for improved preparedness and role clarity in order to adapt to meet national needs. The involvement of multiple organizations has obfuscated leadership and mandates at a national level and resulted in a gap in clear public authority for wildfire management.

The deliverable of this priority is a resilient, modernized CIFFC. In addition to strengthening the core mandate of resource and information sharing, CIFFC will be recognized as the national voice for wildfire management in Canada and act as the source for awareness, guidance, best practices, and standards regarding new wildfire management. Wildland Fire Management Working Group (WFMWG) and CIFFC project work will be folded into CIFFC, which will be appropriately and sustainably resourced for its full mandate and accountabilities.

Strategies

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '19 - March '20	Led By
	1. Develop Business Case with Options for CIFFC 2.0 that Identifies Secure Funding	A Business Case that explores options to include wildland fire prevention and mitigation, and to include proposed sustainable funding sources	Kim & Mike N.
		Engage external consultation	
		Present to CIFFC Board of Directors for approval	
	2. Develop Governance & Financial Model for CIFFC 2.0 that Reinforces Resource & Information Exchange	Review and revise corporate by-laws and articles of incorporation if necessary	Kim & Mike N.
		Identify additional human resource needs for CIFFC 2.0 and associated funding requirements	
		Ensure governance model remains a-political and strengthens the resource and information exchange functions	
	3. CIFFC will Facilitate a Process with Board Partners to Develop Common Understanding & Need for an Integrated Wildfire Management System in Canada		
	4. Develop Communication & Marketing Plan for Full Mandate		

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '20 - March '21	Led By
	1. Develop Business Case with Options for CIFFC 2.0 that Identifies Secure Funding	Seek Ministerial endorsement (likely at CCFM in September)	BoD
		Note: year 2 and 3 actions contingent on this endorsement	
	2. Develop Governance & Financial Model for CIFFC 2.0 that Reinforces Resource & Information Exchange	Identify positions and organizational chart for CIFFC 2.0 - create position descriptions and recruitment strategy	Kim & external
		Rationalize WFMWG and CIFFC Workplans	BoD
		Develop workplans for new mandate areas	Committee leads
	3. CIFFC will Facilitate a Process with Board Partners to Develop Common Understanding & Need for an Integrated Wildfire Management System in Canada	Establish a task team to organize a process with broad partners to define and develop integrated Wildland Fire Management System	MC
	4. Develop Communication & Marketing Plan for Full Mandate	Identify target audience and messaging strategy	Committee leads

Priority	Strategies	Activities April '21 - March '22	Led By
	1. Develop Business Case with Options for CIFFC 2.0 that Identifies Secure Funding		
	2. Develop Governance & Financial Model for CIFFC 2.0 that Reinforces Resource & Information Exchange	Operationalize new governance and financial models within CIFFC	Kim
	3. CIFFC will Facilitate a Process with Board Partners to Develop Common Understanding & Need for an Integrated Wildfire Management System in Canada	Convene a whole of governments dialogue to develop and implement a work plan associated with a pan-Canadian wildfire management system	BoD & MC
	4. Develop Communication & Marketing Plan for Full Mandate	Develop communication & marketing plan and implement 2-3 priority communication/marketing campaigns as related to the new mandate of prevention and mitigation	Mitigation & Prevention Committee