

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND BENCHMARKING PROJECT



**A partnering project involving:
The Ministry of Public Safety and
Security-Office of the Fire Marshal,
Municipalities, Fire Departments,
and the Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing**

Fire Marshal's Welcome

Welcome to the 'Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project'. To ensure the success of the project, the Office of the Fire Marshal has partnered with municipalities, fire departments, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In addition, the project is benefiting from close working relationships with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC), and the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI).

This project is focused on assisting fire departments to better identify their unique characteristics and respond to changing community needs. It is also about the building and implementation of a transparent and structured framework, that creates a learning environment, where the best practices of some can lead to an improved service delivery for others.

I am delighted with the efforts being displayed by all project participants to jointly contribute to this project.

As well as providing the above-mentioned framework, project objectives include:

- helping municipalities meet mandatory fire prevention and public education responsibilities;
- establishing a cooperative and collaborative project relationship with key stakeholders;
- developing performance measures that are relevant and meaningful for municipal management and decision-making, and for meeting high-level reporting requirements; and
- identifying best practices that can help improve municipal service quality across the province.

As you can see, the benefits of this project for the fire service in Ontario are significant, and I thank the project participants for their valuable contribution.

Bernard A. Moyle
Fire Marshal of Ontario

Project Introduction

In February of 2002, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM), in conjunction with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing initiated a 'Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project' for the fire service in Ontario. The project, currently in progress, was set up to develop and test a performance management process which Ontario fire departments and municipal decision makers can use to review and/or establish appropriate performance measures and best practices for the planning and delivery of fire protection services.

The project is made up of a steering committee (representing municipalities and the province), three teams representing fire departments, and a support team of OFM managers and senior staff. This mix of representatives is to ensure that the diverse needs and circumstances of municipalities is appropriately recognized and is accommodated within the project scope.

Project objectives include: supporting municipalities to meet mandatory fire prevention and public education responsibilities; developing performance measures that are relevant and meaningful for local decision making and for meeting high-level reporting requirements; and identifying best practices that can help improve municipal service quality across the province.

Once in place, the frameworks for performance measurement and benchmarking will allow fire departments to align their strategic directions with measurable outcomes, assess more quickly the adequacy of their strategies, and make decisions more easily with respect to the targeted allocation of resources. Most importantly, the framework makes it easier for fire departments to identify and meet changing community needs. Operational advantages also include an ability for departments to incorporate a continuous improvement strategy that focuses on user satisfaction and employee involvement.

Collectively, the performance management process will support fire departments in optimizing their services and learning from the best practices of others, leading to improved service delivery everywhere in the province.