

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Community and Protective Services Committee

From: Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and
Community-Wide Services

John Paradis, Deputy City Manager, Enterprise Supports

Subject: Civic Administration Key Learnings and Update Regarding
the April 21, 2024 CPKC Train Fire in London, Ontario

Date: December 2, 2024

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, and the concurrence of the Deputy City Manager, Enterprise Supports, the report dated December 2, 2024, regarding “Civic Administration Key Learnings and Update Regarding the April 21, 2024, CPKC Train Fire in London, Ontario” **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

This report presents an update and learnings from the London Fire Department and Emergency Management and Security Services following the CPKC train car fire on April 21, 2024.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The CPKC Train Fire Report is aligned with the following strategic area of focus in the City of London Strategic Plan (2023 – 2027):

- Wellbeing and Safety: London has safe, vibrant, and healthy neighbourhoods and communities.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Context:

On June 25, 2024, Municipal Council resolved that the following actions be taken with respect to the CPKC Train Fire:

- a) the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to a future meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee with key learning from the Sunday, April 21, 2024 CPKC train fire including any updates to the Emergency Management notification protocol to address how the Members of Council and the public should be notified when a significant event takes place within the City; and,
- b) the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to a future meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee meeting with respect to the invoices submitted for cost recovery (cost of trucks, staff time and fire suppression foam cost) related to the fire on Sunday, April 21, 2024; it being noted that CPKC has indicated to send the invoices for remittance; it being further noted that the communication, dated June 2, 2024, from Councillors C.

Rahman and D. Ferreira, with respect to this matter, was received. (2024-P16) (4.1/8/CPSC).

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on key learnings identified by Civic Administration, including information regarding the notification protocol to address Members of Council and the Public, and details pertaining to invoices submitted for cost recovery (cost of trucks, staff time and fire suppression foam cost).

2.0 Discussion

Following the CPKC train car fire on April 21, 2024, a debriefing was conducted on May 13, 2024, which included partners from within and outside the Corporation of the City of London, inclusive of CPKC.

Highlighted below are details regarding the response by the London Fire Department and Emergency Management and Security Services and key learnings that each area has incorporated into future responses.

2.1 Incident Information and Key Learnings

Incident Information

On April 21, 2024, at approximately 11:00 pm, 911 was called and fire crews responded along with other emergency responders. The emergency was well controlled, and the following steps were taken on scene:

- A risk assessment was completed upon arrival.
- Ordered priorities during the risk assessment were:
 - life safety;
 - property conservation; and,
 - the environment.
- The incident had a well contained fire with smoke dissipating. There was some building exposure due to heat which was quickly mitigated with cooling.
- The Platoon Chief emailed the internal notification group which includes staff from London Fire Department (LFD), Director of Strategic Communications, Director of Emergency Management and Security Services, and the Deputy City Manager of Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services.
- The London Fire Department used its social media channels to notify residents to shelter in their home.

Learnings coming out of the Debrief

1. Alert London could have been utilized to advise residents within the area to shelter in their homes.
2. Notification of Mayor and Council should have occurred as this was a significant news event.

Synopsis of Current Practices

As noted above, a risk assessment is to be completed for each event/incident upon arrival. Ordered priorities are life safety, property conservation, and the environment. Once a risk assessment is conducted, an incident action plan is to be put into place and a notification of the event is distributed by email.

New Procedures to be Implemented

1. The notification procedure will become a formal process utilizing a Status Report that is formed from Emergency Management Principles. This will be sent to the notification group for all events.
2. **Significant Events** have been defined as, “an event that may include such things as a train fire, large dollar loss fire, civilian fire death or carbon monoxide

death or significant/critical injury, firefighter fatality or significant/critical injury, multi-casualty events, firefighter fatality or significant/critical injury, event that may have a large impact on the surrounding community, and any incident that may garner broad media attention”.

3. A new procedure has been developed regarding **Significant Events**. In the case of a significant event:
 - i. The Platoon Chief shall notify the Director, Emergency Management and Security Services via telephone to provide a verbal situation report, followed by, or in conjunction with, a written Status Report.
 - ii. The Platoon Chief and Director, Emergency Management and Security Services will determine if Alert London is required.
 - iii. The Director, Emergency Management and Security Services will consult with the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services to develop a notification for the City Manager, Mayor, and Council.
 - iv. The Director, Emergency Management and Security Services and the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services will consult with Strategic Communications to determine the necessary communications resources based on the emergency's scale and public concern level (e.g. public service announcements, website updates, social media posts, etc.).

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

As directed by Council, the current fee schedule was utilized to generate invoices for this event. Two invoices were generated and submitted to CPKC, totalling \$21,912.96. One invoice was for the utilization of fire extinguishing foam, and one was for the cost of response to the train fire. Both invoices have been paid in full to the City of London.

4.0 Next Steps

The new procedure regarding “significant event” notifications will be finalized. Staff will be trained to utilize the new procedure ensuring parties are notified. All information will flow directly into the Emergency Management Incident Action Planning and implemented.

Conclusion

An overview from the CPKC Train debrief was provided including current practices, new procedure information, lessons learned and next steps. Invoices for foam and service were generated and sent to CPKC and have been paid in full to the City of London.

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Paul Ladouceur, Director, Emergency Management and Security Services

Concurred by: John Paradis, Deputy City Manager, Enterprise Supports

Recommended by: Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services