

<b>TO</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2012</b>
<b>FROM</b>	<b>JOHN KOBARDA FIRE CHIEF</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>AGREEMENT FOR ON-LINE TRAINING SYSTEM</b>

**RECOMMENDATION**

That, on the recommendation of the Fire Chief, the attached By-law (Appendix A) **BE INTRODUCED** at the Council meeting of June 26, 2012:

- (a) **TO APPROVE** a Master Agreement with Desire2Learn Incorporated , 151 Charles Street West, Suite 400, Kitchener, Ontario N2G 1H6 attached as "Schedule A" to provide an on-line training system; and
- (b) **TO AUTHORIZE** the Mayor and the Clerk to sign the agreement.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER**

None

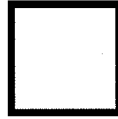
**BACKGROUND**

The London Fire Department's (LFD) Training Division is instrumental in maintaining the skills of the Department's fire fighters, which is an essential requirement of the LFD. Delivery and coordination of training has been problematic for several reasons, which include the Department's inability to successfully recruit for Training Instructor vacancies, as well as the challenges associated with the coordination of training across the Department's 56 work sites (4 different platoons times 14 fire stations). Many programs require an Instructor to travel to all of the 56 work sites, which not only strains resources but also is inherently inefficient.

The requirement for Training Instructors to travel to the fire stations has been as a result of the Department's goal to minimize the amount of time that frontline staff and vehicles are out of their response districts because the latter could result in extended response times. Furthermore, unless the training subject matter and delivery method specifically requires an Instructor to attend a fire station, such a method is inefficient given the time required to travel to and from a fire station(s), as well as setting up and then packing up training materials and equipment, both of which are non-value added.

Another challenge that has faced the Department is the impact of the implementation of the 24-hour shift, which has made the coordination of training more difficult. Equally problematic, Training Instructor time is at a premium because the Department has been unable to fill Training Instructor vacancies because of the 24-hour shift. Many potential internal candidates would prefer to maintain the more desirable 24-hour shift position rather than work the 8-hour Monday to Friday schedule. Further complicating matters has been the introduction of 24-hour shift and experience pay throughout the Province because essentially applicants for Training Instructor positions from other fire departments need to move from the desirable 24-hour shift to the standard workweek, as well as lose the premium (3%, 6% or 9%), thereby resulting in a pay reduction. Additionally, any individual coming from another department would lose their service credits, thereby impacting vacation entitlement, seniority and the timing of receiving any experience pay.

Some training by its nature requires hands on instruction; however, on-line applications would satisfy the requirements of certain types training such as lectures, training videos, or the review of policies and Standard Operating Procedure to name a few. By implementing an on-line training system, the need for a Training Instructor to attend at each fire station is significantly



reduced. In addition, on-line training systems have inherent in them a record keeping and feedback mechanisms that track all training activity. Furthermore, they also allow for the input of results from other training not done through the on-line system. Currently, the Department tracks training initiatives by person through an Excel spreadsheet, which requires clerical time for input. Discussions with the Ministry of Labour over the last number of years have not only underscored the requirement to provide training but also the need to be able to document such training. Implementing an on-line system will assist in meeting the City's legislative requirements. Additionally, there could be some efficiencies result through the system automatically capturing on-line training activity, thereby eliminating the need for manual data input.

In searching for a solution, the Department reviewed three (3) on-line training systems. Desire2Learn Incorporated provided the most flexibility, as well as the lowest ongoing annual operating cost. The Department enlisted the assistance of the Technology Services Division for the purposes of reviewing the security of the system, noting that they have determined that it meets the City's requirements. The quote from Desire2Learn also includes the cost of the Hardware – Capture Station 300 – which will allow the Department to develop its own training materials for use on the system. This provides an added benefit in that any training events and materials will be recorded so that employees can be view them at any time. This is particularly important, as crews will be able to review any training if they are called out to an event during a training session. Employees on vacation, sick or absent for another reason could also easily access the training, whereas currently it takes an extended period of time to train all employees. Another benefit arises where the training is recurrent by nature, as the training can be provided in further years without the need for Training Instructor involvement. The Training Division would simply send out an email directing employees to review the recorded material with a goal date provided. As noted earlier, the training system will also reduce the requirement for travel by the Training Division staff, thereby increasing efficiency.

Currently, the Department knows of at least two (2) other fire departments using this system: Edmonton (AB) Fire Rescue Services and Fairfax County (VA) Fire and Rescue Department. It would be the intent of the LFD to seek partnerships with these fire departments, where possible, to share training material. The LFD has already established partnerships on other training initiatives with the fire departments in Richmond Hill, Windsor, Burlington, Mississauga, and Whitby. In doing so, additional efficiencies may be possible, as existing programs could be modified to meet the LFD's needs versus a need to create a program from scratch.

Because the system is scalable, there may be opportunities in the future for other Divisions within the Corporation to join the training system, noting that each group would be required to cover the annual cost for each employee using the system as well as any other incremental costs associated with expanding the system.

The City Solicitor's Office, Risk Management and Technology Services Division have been reviewed attached agreement, noting that the terms of the agreement are relatively standard and, generally speaking, are in Desire2Learn's favour; however, the LFD has been advised that this is typical of software agreements. Furthermore, there are two areas of concern that have been raised by Risk Management and the City Solicitor's Office: 1) Typically, the City requests the vendor's Limitation of Liability to be \$5 million dollars, whereas Desire2Learn has limited its liability to 6 months of fees paid which in this case is \$14,125.00 (Annual fees are \$28,250) and 2) Clause CHSA 7 pertaining to the Capture equipment and software provides that the City will indemnify Desire2Learn and or its partners to the maximum extent of the law for any and all claims, losses and damages Desire2Learn may suffer as a result of the unlawful, unlicensed or misuse of the Branding, Client Information and/or Capture by Authorized End Users. The Department does adhere to all copyright laws and requirements and as such feels that the exposure to the Corporation for this clause is manageable. It is the intent of the Department to reiterate to all staff on implementation of the system the Corporate Computer Usage Policy and further to ensure that all pertinent staff are aware of copyright issues.

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

The implementation of an on-line training environment has enabled the Department to reduce the complement by one (1) Training Instructor, which was removed from the 2012-operating budget. The cost of a Training Instructor (salary and benefits) of approximately \$126,000 offset by the annual fees allowed the Department to reduce the 2012 Operating Budget request by

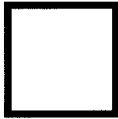
approximately \$98,000. The cost of the annual fees of \$28,500 can be accommodated within the 2012 approved budget. The one time costs of \$16,200 for implementation of the hardware, software and training can be accommodated with the approved Capital budget.

<b>SUMMARY</b>
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The London Fire Department has a need to ensure that it has the capacity to provide adequate training to its staff. To ensure the safety of the community and maintain critical response times, it has been the Department's goal to minimize the time that fire crews are out of the response districts. As a result, Training Instructors are quite often required to attend the LFD's 56 work sites (14 stations times 4 platoons); however, this traditional method of delivering training is not efficient. In addition, the Department has had difficulty filling vacant Training Instructor vacancies over the last several years. On-line training provides an effective and efficient method of delivering consistent and high quality training, where such training does not require oversight of hands on training. The implementation of an on-line training system will provide the Department with an effective method of delivering training. Corporately, the Department has reduced its 2012 Operating Budget by the cost of a Training Instructor, offset by the annual cost of the on-line product, with the intent of implementing such a system, which has resulted in \$98,000 in savings.

<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>

<b>JOHN KOBARDA</b> <b>FIRE CHIEF</b>

**APPENDIX A**

Bill No.  
2012

By-law No.

A By-law to authorize and approve the Agreement between The Corporation of the City of London and Desire2Learn Incorporated regarding the provision of an on-line training system and to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Agreement.

WHEREAS section 5(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

AND WHEREAS section 9 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other Act;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. The Agreement attached as Schedule "A" to this by-law between The Corporation of the City of London and Desire2Learn Incorporated regarding the provision of an on-line training system is hereby authorized and approved.
2. The Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to execute the Agreement authorized and approved under section 1 of this by-law.
3. This by-law shall come into force and effect on the day it is passed.

PASSED in Open Council

, 2012

Joe Fontana  
Mayor

Catharine Saunders  
City Clerk

First reading -  
Second reading -  
Third reading -