



**MINUTES OF THE  
THIRD FIRE SUB-COUNCIL MEETING OF 2018**

**DATE:** May 10, 2018

**TIME:** 9:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Radisson Hotel, Edmonton

**PRESENT:** **Sub-Council Members**

Michael Walker, Chair  
Mike Baker  
Cameron Bardas  
Allan Blatz  
Michael Bos  
Joseph Davis (until 2:00 p.m.)  
Robbin Foxcroft, Vice Chair South  
Cammie Laird  
Hunter Langpap  
Gary Mayorchak, Vice Chair North  
Mario Poser  
Stephen Suen  
Chris Taylor

**Safety Codes Council**

Allison Karch, Danielle Paradis

**Alberta Municipal Affairs**

Tina Parker, Keven Thomson, Liz Gillean, Paul Chang,  
Kevin Inkster, James Orr (morning only), Kevan Jess (afternoon only)

**Guests**

Ken Roskell, BSC Liaison

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Sandi Orr

**2018 MEETINGS:** September 13, November 22

## **1. Meeting Opening**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:00 a.m. and a round table introduction was held.

### **1.1. Agenda Adoption**

The following item was added to the agenda:

- 4.13. – Expectations and Guidelines: Variances

**Joseph Davis / Cameron Bardas moved to adopt the agenda, as amended; CARRIED**

### **1.2. Previous Minutes**

#### **1.2.1. Adoption of March 22, 2018**

The minutes were included in the portal and reviewed. Under action items, Building Licensing was corrected to read Builder Licensing.

**Mike Baker / Robbin Foxcroft moved to adopt the minutes of March 22, 2018, as corrected; CARRIED**

## **2. Matters for Decision**

### **2.1. Draft STANDATA for Review**

#### **2.1.1. Fixed Fire Suppression & Exhaust Systems – Cooking and Cleaning**

The draft Interpretation STANDATA (Ver. 5) was included in the portal and reviewed. It was noted that most suggestions from the last meeting were included in the current revision. It was suggested that pictures of some of the appliances be added in an appendix and Robbin Foxcroft has offered to assist the Administrator in compiling these. There were questions regarding suppression installation and clarified that this is to be done in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Relative to the note on Page 4, reference will be made to "follow the manufacturer's instructions". The note on Page 7 will be moved back to Page 5. Minor typographical errors were noted.

A discussion was held regarding how to move forward with the support of this STANDATA. It was explained that the Council will not be using Letter Ballots in the future but that a conference call could be scheduled just to address supporting this revised STANDATA.

**Gary Mayorchak / Cammie Laird moved to support the publishing of the Fixed Fire Suppression & Exhaust Systems – Cooking and Cleaning Interpretation STANDATA, pending the recommended revisions suggested; CARRIED**

### **2.1.2. Draft Revision to Fire Safety and Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Facilities Variance**

The draft revision of the Variance STANDATA was included in the portal and reviewed. Background on the need for the STANDATA was provided.

**Gary Mayorchak / Allan Blatz moved to support the publishing of the Fire Safety and Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Facilities Variance STANDATA, as circulated; CARRIED**

### **2.1.3. Children’s Custodial Homes – Joint STANDATA**

The draft revision of the Interpretation STANDATA (Ver. 2) was included in the portal and reviewed. These homes are licensed under Children’s Services and an annual fire inspection is completed. The trigger for the need for this STANDATA is due to a reference in the 2014 code that classifies Group Homes as Group B Division 3 care occupancy. A discussion was held regarding the fire safety plan and it was noted that this was requested by Children’s Services. It was questioned and clarified that an AHJ could require a permit for Change of use. It was suggested that reference be included that this STANDATA is relative to any new application for children’s custodial homes and not retroactive.

Any additional feedback should be provided to the Building and Fire Administrators. [All]

### **2.1.4. Updated Standards (Joint)**

The draft multi-discipline Variance STANDATA was included in the portal and reviewed. It was questioned and clarified that it is more appropriate as an Interpretation than a variance. Clarification was provided regarding the ability to use an updated standard if it is deemed to provide for approximately equivalent or greater safety. However, an SCO cannot mandate the use of an updated standard if it is not yet in force. Clarification was provided regarding the SCO’s ability to request additional information to prove equivalent or greater safety performance. Clarification was provided regarding the request for the Variance so that professionals have the ability to use the most current standards. AMA is giving further consideration to the general nature of this variance and whether it is too broad and could be seen as circumventing the legislative process.

It was clarified that a province-wide variance is typically intended to not require a site-specific variance. However, it was suggested that there is a need to ensure that the professional documents how the use of the new standard does provide approximately equivalent or greater safety performance. There was concern expressed regarding the broadness of the variance. It was noted that some AHJs have the resources to review alternate solutions and others do not.

Relative to the automatic code adoption process, it was noted that “as published from time to time” would apply to standards, but only those specifically referenced in the code.

Concern was expressed from the fire discipline perspective that if a site-specific variance is not issued, there is no variance in place for the life of the building. It was noted that the intent of the

STANDATA is to assist AHJs in understanding that they can accept the use of a new standard. From a professional perspective, the concern is relative to how they can justify using an obsolete standard.

It was recognized that the other 3 disciplines need to review this, so it could be some time before it is ready to be published. Members were asked to provide their feedback to the Building Administrator. [All]

### 3. Review Matters Arising/Action List

Date	Action	Responsible	Status/Update
Nov 23, 2016	Qualified Persons Registry (E.2.06.11)	AMA & Council Mgmt	Still in discussion
Nov 23, 2016	Use of sea containers as storage – PFA will continue to work on the Shipping Containers Info Bulletin (E.3.05.14) <b>ACTION:</b> Final feedback was provided regarding referencing equipment and the fuel reservoir as this is exempt from the Fire Code. It was suggested that reference to Manufacturer’s Instructions be added regarding storage that could require ventilation. The PFA noted this STANDATA would be published very shortly.	Parker	New action for PFA to consider final adjustments; STANDATA to be issued Summer 2018
Sept 14, 2017	Ask whether findings of evaluation of high rises in the City of Edmonton may be shared with the FSC once complete (arose during Grenfell Tower Fire discussion)	Bardas	In progress
Mar 22, 2018	Provide feedback about clarity on SCO equivalencies for NFPA 1031 and 1033 to the Administrator of Certification	Council Administration	Completed, will be removed from action list
Mar 22, 2018	Grenfell Tower Fire Report will be added to the portal and members notified	Council Administration	Completed, will be removed from action list
Mar 22, 2018	Gather more information about Life Safety System maintenance forms and their consistency across the province. <b>UPDATE:</b> Allan Blatz reported that he was not able to find any standardized forms. A discussion was held whether there was interest in creating standardized forms. It was suggested this be discussed with OFC and it is believed that this would also require education for SCOs.	Blatz / Parker	Remains outstanding

During discussions about STANDATA, the Provincial Fire Administrator noted that her team will be conducting a STANDATA review of what is currently on the Municipal Affairs website and will provide the sub-council with information about STANDATA being working on and STANDATA they are considering retiring. This will be added as an item for discussion on the next agenda.  
[Council Administration]

#### **4. Matters for Discussion**

##### **4.1. Understanding Government Policy**

A presentation was shown on screen regarding Understanding Government Policy and included in the portal for reference. Highlights of the presentation included:

- What Policy is
- Government is best defined as the Executive Branch (Cabinet)
- Government Policy Authority comes from the Constitution and Acts
- Acts allow the government to take action through many tools including Regulations and Operating Policies
- An overview was provided on:
  - How Government Policy is developed
  - How policy makers determine which policy to use
  - How laws are created
  - How Government decisions are made, including the Flow Chart used for making decisions
  - How laws are drafted
  - What the Department does
  - How the Council fits in for Safety Codes Policy
  - How the Council and the Government can work together
- It was emphasized that the Minister is ultimately accountable for making the decision

Any questions can be addressed to [lizabeth.gilleen@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lizabeth.gilleen@gov.ab.ca).

##### **4.2. NFC/AFC Harmonization Projects**

###### **4.2.1. Harmonization Working Group Chair**

The 6-column document for Part 2 was included in the portal and includes the status relative to the 2018 AFC in preparation for the next code cycle. The other Parts have will be completed over time. It was clarified that the sub-council has provided recommendations to the Administrator already so there is nothing further for the working group to do for this code cycle. Once the 2018 AFC is completed, work will need to start immediately for the next code cycle.

The working group has completed their task for this code cycle. Mike Baker has resigned as Chair and a new Chair will be required for any continued work. The remaining working group members are Allan Blatz, Michael Bos, Mario Poser and Gary Mayorchak. Mario Poser volunteered to be the Working Group Chair. Mike Baker will continue to support this working group on behalf of AMA.

**Mike Baker / Allan Blatz moved that Mario Poser be appointed as the Working Group Chair; CARRIED**

**Robbin Foxcroft / Mike Baker moved that Hunter Langpap be added as a member of the Working Group; CARRIED**

Nabil Habashy asked to make a Building Code presentation relative to the Fire Code at the September 2018 FSC meeting and this was acceptable to the sub-council.

[Council Administration]

#### **4.3. Lockdowns and Fire Alarm Systems – Single Stage / 2-Stage Alarms in Schools**

Michael Bos reported that he was seeking feedback at the last meeting regarding the use 2-Stage Alarms in elementary schools. Ontario currently does not allow this, but a source at the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs stated they will be harmonizing with the National Code during the next code cycle.

It was clarified that lockdown and 2-Stage alarms are two totally separate things. It was reported that a decision to modify the fire alarm system to allow lockdown functionality in a St. Albert school actually impaired the fire alarm system significantly. From the alarm system perspective, it was suggested that you should not try to combine lockdowns with the alarm system. The alarm sounds and the strobe lighting are intended to get people to evacuate the building. It was suggested there was no issue relative to the use of a 2-stage alarm but it is not to be used in combination with lockdowns.

Caution was expressed regarding mixing up lockdown procedures and fire evacuation procedures as it will likely confuse students. This led to a discussion regarding the review of existing standards and reference was made to CAN/ULC-S576-14, Standard for Mass Notification System Equipment and Accessories.

It was questioned and clarified that no other municipalities are facing this same issue. Many have lockdown procedures but do not combine it with the fire alarm system.

It was suggested that some sort of Information Bulletin be created to clarify this, make note of appropriate Standards that could be used, and provide better direction because solutions are not yet included in any of Alberta's codes. It was questioned whether this is a code issue or more relative to education based on specific types buildings and situations. It was suggested that this be addressed through fire safety plans.

It was requested that research be done to determine if any reference to CAN/ULC-S576-14, Standard for Mass Notification System Equipment and Accessories will be included in the 2020 codes and will bring information back to the next meeting.

[Parker / Chang]

#### **4.4. Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

The Fire Commissioner reported that a decision has been made to provide tools and resources to the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association to create a safety awareness campaign regarding Carbon Monoxide. It was suggested that education should include the proper maintenance of heating appliances, as well as a reminder regarding smoke detectors. For buildings constructed prior to the 2006 Alberta Building Code, carbon monoxide retroactivity is not being considered at this time.

An update will be provided on the safety awareness campaign at the September 2018 meeting.

#### **4.5. Fog/Smoke Security Systems**

The draft STANDATA from February 2011 which was never finalized or published was included in the portal.

When the draft STANDATA was being considered in 2011, the sub-council did not believe that it would be appropriate to install smoke type building security systems in most applications. The focus of the STANDATA was to say that if an individual wants to use this type of system they should consult with the AHJ to determine if it was appropriate in that application.

Both Red Deer and St. Albert have allowed the use of this type of device and believe they can manage it.

There was no desire to publish the draft STANDATA and this item will be removed from the agenda.

#### **4.6. Volunteer Needed for SCO Continuing Education Working Group**

An overview was provided of the mandate of the working group. Cammie Laird volunteered.

**Michael Bos / Mario Poser moved to appoint Cammie Laird to the SCO Continuing Education Working Group, representing the Fire Sub-Council; CARRIED**

#### **4.7. Occupancy Load Working Group Report**

There was nothing to report from this working group. It was reported that Mike Baker was previously a member of the working group and will be removed from the matrix as the Chair of the working group. He will continue to work with this group in a supporting capacity on behalf of Municipal Affairs. [Council Administration]

#### **4.8. Office of the Fire Commissioner Report**

Keven Thomson provided an overview of the following activities underway at the OFC:

- Research project regarding a Wildland Plan

- Operational review relative to the OFC, Search and Rescue, Fire Investigations and Fire Inspection Processes

Examples were provided by the insurance industry of doing inspections via smart phones to save on travel costs to remote areas.

#### **4.9. Administrator / AMA Report**

The Administrator reported on the following:

- Michael Baker will be starting with AMA as the new Technical Advisor in June 2018
- Further discussion will be added to the September agenda regarding PTMAA's request for interpretation regarding emergency shut down switches at gas stations.
- Discussions are being held with a company wishing to offer mobile fuel vending; the code requirement states that you cannot fuel gasoline (class I liquid) from a tank vehicle into another vehicle. The company has submitted a document to the City of Calgary and they are calling this document a request for variance; however, there is no justification of equivalent or greater safety performance being provided in this document. Further update will be given at the next meeting.
- A brief overview was provided regarding a new fire extinguisher approved by ULC that requires monthly maintenance without the need for annual testing; more information will be provided in the fall (RUSOH)

#### **4.10. BSC Liaison to FSC Report**

There was nothing new to report.

#### **4.11. FSC Liaison to BSC Report**

There was nothing new to report.

#### **4.12. Council Updates**

The following report was provided:

- Outlook meeting requests are being used to determine anticipated attendance
- All expense reports should be sent to Gerry Letendre ([gerry.letendre@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:gerry.letendre@safetycodes.ab.ca))
- The conference is fast approaching, and members were encouraged to get registered if they have not already done so as the hotel is running out of room
- The Council office move is complete
- The September meeting will be at the Council's new office and a package will be provided with information on hotels, parking, etc.

#### **4.13. Expectations and Guidelines: Variances**

It was explained that there is an unproclaimed section of the Act to allow for an appeal of a denied variance. It was recognized that there is a need to clarify the use of variances before that



section of the Act could ever be proclaimed. It was later clarified that having sufficient resources in place to deal with these types of appeals would also be a contributing factor of whether that section is ever proclaimed.

The following was included in the portal as information:

- Expectations and Guidelines: Variances Presentation
- Safety Notice - Expectations and Guidelines for Safety Codes Officers Respecting Variances
- Sample Variance Form Template

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Purpose of Variances
- Why this is being raised
- What a variance is
- What a variance is not
- The expectation of an SCO when a variance is requested
- Why a variance is issued
- The expectation of Registered Professionals
- Outstanding issues include jurisdiction-wide variances and discipline specific issues
- An overview was provided of the next steps

A brief overview was provided regarding discussions with APEGA and their belief that an SCO does not have the expertise to review a Variance if they are not a Registered Professional.

Caution was expressed regarding the use of terms and it was suggested that an alternative solution is the process used and the variance is the documentation in place. It was clarified that relative to objective-based codes, a variance is an alternative solution. The terms are interchangeable.

It was clarified that only an SCO can accept a Variance. An overview was provided regarding procedures that APEGA has in place for third-party reviews. Stephen Suen was asked to determine if there were similar procedures in place for Architects. [Suen]

It was clarified that the presentation could be shared with nominating organizations but that the Notice is still in draft form and will likely be revised before being published. The intent of this information is to ensure that Variances are being used appropriately by providing approximately equivalent or greater safety performance and not as a relaxation of the code.

It was questioned when the most appropriate time is to submit a variance: design, building permit, or construction stage, and who should be submitting the variance. It was suggested that a variance be submitted at the earliest opportunity. You can only submit a variance for something within your control. It is expected that the designer is working with the owner.

It was questioned and clarified that there is no process in place for an appeal of the refusal of a variance because that part of the Act has not yet been proclaimed. But an SCO should not deny

a variance just because they don't want to consider it. It was further clarified that an SCO should not help build the variance either.

The Director of Codes and Standards clarified that jurisdiction-wide variances can be issued but only by an Accredited Municipality. The Council policy that stated that an SCO can only issue site-specific variances is believed to be inappropriate and is under review. However, the reason jurisdiction-wide variances can only be issued by an Accredited Municipality is because it is within a defined geographical area. An Accredited Corporation or Accredited Agency may be operating throughout the province and only an Administrator can issue a province-wide variance.

Any additional feedback should be forwarded to the Director of Codes and Standards. [All]

## **5. Meeting Finalization**

### **5.1. Meeting and Agenda Feedback**

There was nothing further brought forward.

### **5.2. Next Meeting**

The next meeting was reconfirmed for Thursday, September 13, 2018 at the Council's new office.

#### **5.2.1. 2018 AGM**

Members were reminded of the upcoming AGM and Conference.

### **5.3. Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

--- NEW ACTION ITEMS ---

**2.1.3. Children’s Custodial Homes – Joint STANDATA**

Any additional feedback should be provided to the Building and Fire Administrators. [All]

**2.1.4. Updated Standards (Joint)**

Members were asked to provide their feedback to the Building Administrator. [All]

**3. Matters Arising/Action List**

During discussions about STANDATA, the Provincial Fire Administrator noted that her team will be conducting a STANDATA review of what is currently on the Municipal Affairs website and will provide the sub-council with information about STANDATA being working on and STANDATA they are considering retiring. This will be added as an item for discussion on the next agenda.  
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[Parker / Chang]

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[Council Administration]

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[Suen]

Any additional feedback should be forwarded to the Director of Codes and Standards. [All]

--- MOTIONS ---

**1.1. Agenda Adoption**

**Joseph Davis / Cameron Bardas moved to adopt the agenda, as amended; CARRIED**

**1.2.1. Adoption of March 22, 2018**

**Mike Baker / Robbin Foxcroft moved to adopt the minutes of March 22, 2018, as corrected; CARRIED**

**2.1.1. Fixed Fire Suppression & Exhaust Systems – Cooking and Cleaning**

**Gary Mayorchak / Cammie Laird moved to support the publishing of the Fixed Fire Suppression & Exhaust Systems – Cooking and Cleaning Interpretation STANDATA, pending the recommended revisions suggested; CARRIED**

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**4.2.1. Harmonization Working Group Chair**

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