

Edmonton Fire Rescue Services receives International Accreditation (March 2010)

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) is a non-profit organization committed to assisting and improving fire and emergency service agencies around the world in achieving organizational and professional excellence; to provide continuous quality improvement and enhancement of service delivery to the community. CFAI is governed by an 11-member commission representing a cross-section of the fire service industry, including fire departments, city and county management, code councils, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the International Association of Firefighters.

Their goal is to transform fire departments from tactical agencies to strategic agencies. In order to become accredited, Edmonton Fire Rescue Services had to develop three documents:

1. The Community Driven Strategic Plan; which was based on feedback from internal and external stakeholders and set out future goals and direction for Edmonton Fire Rescue Services.
2. A Standards of Cover document; which reviewed Edmonton Fire Rescue Services operational processes and set of benchmarks and performance measures, and
3. A Self Assessment of the branch to look at how Edmonton Fire Rescue Services manages its business, its relationships and its personnel and how well these systems work.

Once complete, a group of peers from other departments across North America was assembled by CFAI to conduct an external peer assessment. This was the final step towards accreditation.

On March 9, 2010, CFAI granted Edmonton Fire Rescue Services status as an accredited agency, making Edmonton the third municipality in all of Canada to receive this official recognition. Currently, there are 143 accredited agencies throughout North America (including five now in Canada). As a third-party, external organization, CFAI validated the work we have been doing to accomplish our mission.

The process demonstrated that Edmonton Fire Rescue Services is on the path to becoming a world-class fire service. The accreditation is also a testimony to each member's efforts to make Edmonton a safer place to live.

Since accreditation, some of the changes to Edmonton Fire Rescue Services' operations which have resulted in improved responses include:

- Redeployment of Edmonton Fire Rescue Services apparatus to better suit resources to response requirements.
- Implementation of Quick Accept through our Dispatch section resulting in a 33 second improvement in overall response times.