

AFCA: A year of action and partnership

Update to the Alberta Industrial Fire and Emergency Management Association

Chief Drayton Bussiere | President, Alberta Fire Chiefs Association





The year at a glance

Strategic direction

Adopted the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan

Provincial voice

Expanded participation across PFLC and provincial advisory tables

Evidence

Completed the Fire Services Data Ecosystem Evaluation

Readiness

Advanced Core Competency modules, including Industrial Response

Advocacy

Engaged ministers on EHS, training, roadside safety, pensions and wildfire

National reach

Contributed to CAFC and the National Advisory Council



AFCA's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan

A four-year plan that connects member value, organizational strength and provincial leadership

Member engagement and value

Grow membership, improve the website experience, expand learning opportunities, strengthen chief officer support and clearly demonstrate the value of membership.

Organizational sustainability

Strengthen governance, diversify revenue, align staff and committee capacity, review reserves and investments, and maintain an effective committee structure.

Influence and partnerships

Build trusted government and stakeholder relationships, lead evidence-based advocacy and connect fire-service expertise to provincial and national decisions.

The strategic plan now guides committee mandates and AFCA's tactical work plan.



Stronger services for members and chiefs

- Expanded Lunch and Learn programming at no cost to members
- Chief Officer Training and Support focused on leadership, administration and operational resources
- Improved member communications through the AFCA app and website
- Legal-support access
- Committee renewal to broaden expertise and regional representation

The practical test

Does this help a fire chief make a better decision, lead more effectively or protect their people?

AFCA's voice across the PFLC network



Provincial Fire Liaison Committee

Highway Traffic Safety

Incident reporting, responder awareness and safer roadside practices

Level of Service

Clearer risk-based service decisions and community expectations

Public Education & Prevention

Coordinated public education and prevention resources

Recognition

Provincial recognition, including consideration of additional levels of recognition.

Recruitment & Retention

Recruitment, retention and recognition of diverse service models

Training

Training needs, access, standards and provincial coordination



EHS advocacy produced a more collaborative path

March

EHS announced a procurement process affecting most ground-ambulance contracts



June

Minister LaGrange paused procurement for seven integrated Fire/EHS communities



July

AFCA and fire chiefs met with the Minister on funding, MFR, driving and cancer screening



Now

AFCA is participating in the independent benchmark review and AEMSSC work

The goal: sustainable, patient-focused service without downloading unsupported costs to municipalities.



What AFCA asked Ernst & Young to test

Actual availability

Compare staffed operational hours and unit shutdowns, not scheduled capacity alone

Comparable operations

Account for call volume, acuity, geography, workload and readiness obligations

Full workforce cost

Include wages, benefits, relief staffing, training, clinical support and supervision

Lifecycle cost

Include facilities, fleet, equipment, spares and capital replacement

Municipal support

Recognize HR, IT, finance, procurement, records, risk and executive oversight

Integrated value

Consider continuity, local coordination, workforce flexibility and broader resilience

Roadside incident reporting turns close calls into evidence

Report the incident

Near misses
Struck vehicles
Responder injuries
Unsafe passing
Traffic-control concerns

Why it matters

- Builds an Alberta-specific evidence base
- Identifies recurring locations, behaviours and conditions
- Supports public education, enforcement and policy advocacy
- Helps AFCA improve the tool through its annual review



<https://afca.ca/Advocacy/roadside-safety-incident-reporting/>

Please report every incident and near miss.



AFCA expertise is embedded in provincial decisions

WUI Advisory Committee

Municipal fire-service experience informs wildfire and interface readiness

Safety Codes Council

Representation on the Building Technical Council and Fire Technical Council

AFRRCS Governance

Operational input into Alberta's public-safety radio system

EHS tables

Fire-service representation in provincial EMS advisory and standing committees

AFRRCS: AFCA is exploring best-practice guidance. Speak with Drayton if you want to contribute or learn more.



The Core Competency Framework keeps growing

A risk-based planning tool owned by AFCA

- Starts with local hazards and service expectations
- Connects capabilities to training and readiness requirements
- Produces a clear report for chiefs, councils and administrators
- Supports consistent conversations without prescribing one service model

**Medical First
Response**

Medical Co-Response

**Structural and
Wildland**

**Wildland Urban
Interface**

**Incident Command
and Safety**

Industrial Response

<https://abfirechiefs.ca/>



Industrial Response clarifies capability before an incident

Municipality + industrial partner + shared risk picture

Key conversations

Hazards, response expectations, notification, command, access, water, foam, specialized resources and recovery

Mutual aid planning

Capabilities, response times, interoperability, training, exercises, communications and resource ordering

MOUs and accountability

Who is responsible for what, under which conditions, with what authority, cost and review cycle

The module helps municipalities assess and plan around industrial capabilities. It does not replace site-specific plans or agreements.



Alberta needs an all-hazards fire data system

AFCA completed the Fire Services Data Ecosystem Evaluation in February 2026



- Commercial, off-the-shelf SaaS with a hybrid centralized and federated model
- Clear ownership, stewardship, privacy, access and retention rules
- Phased rollout, system support, participation incentives and no unfunded municipal downloading

Wildfire and WUI readiness remain provincial priorities



Municipal structural fire services now operate at the interface more often and for longer durations.

Provincial advisory work

AFCA represents municipal operations on the WUI Advisory Committee

Training alignment

Core Competency WUI module and coordination with AEMA training development

Mitigation

Continued advocacy for transparent, adequately resourced FireSmart delivery

National connection

CAFC work on wildfire readiness, training and climate emergencies



AFCA's advocacy agenda reflects local operational pressure

Training grants

A permanent increase and a funding formula that responds to demand and fiscal capacity

Volunteer tax credit

A meaningful provincial credit aligned with the federal service-hours model

Pension reform

Reduce the pension factor and explore an optional approach for volunteer firefighters

Roadside safety

Blue lights, Slow to 60, adjacent-lane protection, enforcement and awareness

MFR sustainability

Funding, equipment, training, dispatch, local contacts and reciprocal data

FireSmart and WUI

Sustained mitigation capacity, training and transparent program delivery



A national voice through CAFC and the NAC

AFCA connects Alberta priorities to national evidence and advocacy

Great Canadian Fire Census

The national evidence base for call volume, people, equipment, wildfire, housing and dangerous goods

Federal emergency leadership

CAFC advocates for a national fire and emergency advisor or liaison and municipal operational input

Cancer prevention

Implementation of the national framework, practical prevention resources and awareness

Codes and emerging risk

Building codes, single-egress proposals, lithium-ion batteries and rapid housing growth

Leadership and volunteers

Modernizing Beyond Hoses and Helmets and expanding leadership development

Dangerous goods and industry

Transport Canada consultations, ERG, AskRail, flammable liquids, explosives and battery risks

CAFC Website: <https://cafc.ca/default.aspx>

Join us in Edmonton for AFCA 2027



May 29 to June 2, 2027

MAY 29

Golf tournament

MAY 30

**Conference and
trade show**

MAY 31

Trade show

JUNE 1–2

**Conference
sessions**

Connect with chiefs, municipal leaders, industry partners and provincial decision-makers.



The next year depends on partnership

- Share industrial expertise with AFCA committees and consultations
- Review mutual-aid plans, MOUs and communications before the next incident
- Use the roadside incident reporting tool
- Join AFCA in Edmonton, May 29 to June 2, 2027

Questions and discussion

www.afca.ca