

CAFC PRE-BUDGET SURVEY: 2010

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance has scheduled pre-budget hearings for this autumn. Again this year, CAFC intends to file a pre-budget submission and to seek an opportunity to testify before the Standing Committee on the pre-budget concerns of the Canadian Fire Services.

This is an important opportunity for the members of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs to provide the Government of Canada with their views on the budget priorities of the Fire Services across Canada. Don't miss this chance to have your say! Please take a few moments to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to the CAFC office no later than Friday, July 16th. You have the option of completing the survey on-line by clicking on the link provided, returning it electronically to blater@primus.ca or by faxing your reply to CAFC at 800-775-5189.

1. Please indicate the following information about your Fire Department.

Name of community _____

Name of Province/Territory _____

Size of population served
by your Department _____ (# of permanent residents).

Area served by your
Department _____ (square kilometers)

2. Please indicate the type of your Fire Department (check one).

Full-time _____ Composite _____ Volunteer _____

3. How many Fire Services officers and firefighters are members of your Fire Department?

Full-time career (#) _____ Volunteer (#) _____

4. Which of the three following words best describe the community that your Fire Department serves? Check as many options as apply.

Urban _____ Rural _____ Remote _____

5. Do you believe that the federal government has a financial role to play in ensuring that all Canadians have the right to a basic level of protection against fire and other perils? (check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Unsure _____

6. CAFC's *Statement of Policy* manual contains several items that require changes to the federal taxation system. They are listed below. Please rate each of them, using the following scale.

4 = Very Important 3 = Somewhat important 2 = Somewhat unimportant
 1 = Unimportant

Level of Importance

POLICY

4 3 2 1

A) Volunteer firefighters who have performed at least 200 hours of service in a taxation year should be able to deduct \$3,000 from their taxable income from any source. The 200 hours includes time spent in related duties and in training to recognized standards.

B) Employers should receive a \$500 tax credit for each employee actively serving as a volunteer firefighter or officer.

C) The federal tax regime should be amended to encourage owners of existing non-residential buildings and existing high-rise residential buildings to install automatic sprinkler systems.

D) The Income Tax Act should be amended to permit owners of low-rise residential structures to partially deduct from their payable taxes the costs of equipping their homes with automatic sprinkler systems.

Which of the above four items do you rank as the most important (check one)

A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____

7. In the autumn of 2009, the Auditor General of Canada published the results of its audit of Public Safety Canada. One direct quotation from that report reads as follows:

Although the 2004 National Security Policy called for first responders' equipment and communications to be interoperable, key gaps remain for voice communications. This limits the ability of fire, police and ambulance services to work together and with other jurisdictions in an emergency. The Department (of Public Safety) has directed little or no funding toward standardizing equipment.

Please indicate how you feel about that quotation (check one)

Agree strongly _____ Agree somewhat _____
 Disagree _____ Not important to my Department. _____
 No opinion _____

8. CAFC's *Statement of Policy* manual contains several items that, if implemented, would entail increases to federal program spending. They are listed below. Please rate each of them, using the following scale.

4 = Very Important 3 = Somewhat important 2 = Somewhat unimportant
 1 = Unimportant

	Level of Importance			
POLICY	4	3	2	1
A. The Government of Canada should be financially responsible for ensuring that all rural and remote communities are able to provide basic fire protection.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. The Government should provide four more years of funding for the purchase of CBRN equipment.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. The annual level of funding for the purchase of CBRN equipment should be doubled to \$10 million.	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. The Government should share the cost of equipping the entire first responder community nationwide with handheld communications devices.	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Public Safety Canada should increase its JEPP funding grants and reduce funding limitations in the JEPP process	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. The federal government should establish a National Incident Management System and provide training for such a system to first responder agencies.	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. The federal government should provide funding and support to the Canadian Fire Services preparation for, and response to, acts of terrorism.	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. The Secretariat of the Canadian Fire Advisor should be established within Public Safety Canada	_____	_____	_____	_____

NOTE: Key roles of the Canadian Fire Advisor would include: (a) national coordinator for Fire Services emergency preparedness; (b) develop strategies at the national level for fire prevention in Canada; (c) coordinate a national Fire Services response to emergencies, both domestic and international; (d) ensure national fire-related statistics are compiled and distributed in a timely and standardized manner.

Which of the above eight policy items do you rank as the most important (check one)

A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____

E _____ F _____ G _____ H _____

9. Should tax reductions or program spending increases be the more important priority for the next federal budget (check one)?

Tax reductions _____ Program spending increases _____