

**Serge Beaudoin - Re: FOR URGENT RO SADM APPROVAL - FUP QAs: Pelican Narrows/Peter Ballantyne Fatal Fire**

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**From:** Serge Beaudoin  
**To:** Matchim, Angela <Angela.Matchim@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca>; Leclair, Daniel <Dan...>  
**Date:** 1/22/2014 4:22 PM  
**Subject:** Re: FOR URGENT RO SADM APPROVAL - FUP QAs: Pelican Narrows/Peter Ballantyne Fatal Fire  
**CC:** Gravelle, Roxanne <Roxanne.Gravelle@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca>; Harvey, Rob <Rob...>

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Approved. Agreed.

>>> Angela Matchim 1/22/2014 3:30:11 PM >>>  
Serge:

For urgent approval as A/SADM. Min is pressing for approved responses. Media have follow-up questions on SK fire protection funding levels.

Only the following are for approval (Q4-6). All else is previously approved.

My comments:

Q4-I recommend deleting or changing the following line: "AANDC does not always know how much each individual sub community receives." To read to the effect that the funding agreement affords the recipient the flexibility to allocate the funds among the sub-communities"

Q5-the answer opens us up to more questions. Can we simply provide the lists (46FNs, 21FNs and remaining 11FNs).

Q6-i recommend deleting the line "Funding to help build infrastructure in First Nation communities is allocated from the Capital Asset Inventory System (CAIS)". It will have little meaning to an outside reader and is confusing.

Angela

FOR APPROVAL:

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Q4) How much money annually is the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation given for fire protection?

A4) Our funding agreement is with the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Pelican Narrows is a sub community of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. The First Nation determines how funding is allocated between sub communities. AANDC does not always know how much each individual sub community receives. For an explanation on how these funds are allocated, media should contact the First Nation directly.

For 2013-2014, Peter Ballantyne received \$18,109 for Operations and Maintenance of fire equipment and infrastructure, and received \$69,918 in Band Based Capital.

Pelican Narrows received \$18,109 for the operations and maintenance of their fire equipment and infrastructure. In addition, Pelican Narrows received \$31,849 for Fire Protection Capital, which was allocated from Peter Ballantyne's Band Based Capital of \$69,918.

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**Questions and answers:**

**Q1) What is AANDC's role in assisting First Nations with fire protection services on reserve?**

**A1)** AANDC provides core capital funding to First Nations on an annual basis. In 2012-2013, approximately \$30.6 million was targeted nationally to fire protection priorities, including:

- Operations & Maintenance;
- Acquisition of equipment and construction of fire protection services infrastructure; and
- Fire protection services training.

AANDC also provides annual funding to the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada (AFAC). In 2012-2013, AANDC provided the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada with \$238,000 in support of a number of fire prevention and awareness activities, including the annual National Aboriginal Firefighters Competition and the National Fire Safety Poster Contest for school-aged children and youth, conducting regional information and training sessions, and participating in the implementation of the First Nations Fire protection services Strategy.

**Q2) How many Saskatchewan First Nations have Municipal Type Agreements with local municipalities for fire protection services?**

**A2)** First Nations can enter into a Municipal Type Agreement (MTA) with a local municipality. This type of arrangement makes it possible for First Nations communities to receive firefighting assistance from nearby municipalities.

A total of \$213,620 is provided to Saskatchewan First Nations to enter into MTAs with Town and Regional Fire Authorities to purchase Fire Protection Services. These services are purchased by 21 First Nations, 6 of which also have halls and trucks on some of their reserves.

An additional \$732,719 is provided as Operation and Maintenance funding to 46 First Nations who have constructed/purchased Fire Halls and Trucks for their Reserves.

**Q3) How many volunteer on-reserve fire fighters are there in Saskatchewan? How many First Nations have their own volunteer on-reserve fire departments?**

**A3)** These are numbers the department does not track.

**Q4) How much money annually is the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation given for fire protection?**

A4) Our funding agreement is with the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Pelican Narrows is a sub community of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. The First Nation determines how funding is allocated between sub communities. AANDC does not always know how much each individual sub community receives. For an explanation on how these funds are allocated, media should contact the First Nation directly.

For 2013-2014, Peter Ballantyne received \$18,109 for Operations and Maintenance of fire equipment and infrastructure, and received \$69,918 in Band Based Capital.

Pelican Narrows received \$18,109 for the operations and maintenance of their fire equipment and infrastructure. In addition, Pelican Narrows received \$31,849 for Fire Protection Capital, which was allocated from Peter Ballantyne's Band Based Capital of \$69,918.

**Q5) How many reserves in Saskatchewan have fully equipped fire stations with people trained in how to fight fires? How many do not?**

A5) There are 72 First Nation communities in Saskatchewan. 46 First Nations receive a total of \$732,719 in Operations and Maintenance funding for their fire protection equipment and infrastructure. These First Nations have fire halls and fire trucks on their reserves. For information on their capabilities and state of readiness to provide fire protection services, as well as their ability and the training levels of their (volunteer) staff to combat fires, the First Nations should be contacted directly.

21 First Nations have Municipal Type Agreements with their local municipality for fire protection services. Of these 21, 6 also have a fire hall and fire truck on reserve (accounted for in the 46 mentioned above).

The remaining 11 First Nation communities may either have informal agreements with neighbouring communities and/or First Nations for fire protection services, or pay for fire protection services directly to their local municipality when fire protection services are needed.

**Q6) How much would it cost to buy a new fire truck? And can you tell me about the program in which Aboriginal Affairs would pay for half (if that is correct?)**



A6) The cost of a new fire truck is about \$300,000. Most First Nations buy used trucks, which cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Funding to help build infrastructure in First Nation communities is allocated from the Capital Asset Inventory System (CAIS). Capital projects are cost shared and planned and budgeted as part of a national five-year plan.

and ensure that the community has the support it needs.

- Our thoughts are also with all the community members, emergency responders and First Nation leaders who worked so hard to respond to this tragic event, and continue to provide much needed support to the community.
- The RCMP and the provincial fire commissioner's office are responsible for investigating the cause of the fire and are in a better position to comment on the ongoing investigation.
- AANDC supports First Nations in delivering services by providing funding for fire protection infrastructure, operations and maintenance, and fire protection training.
- In the case of Pelican Narrows, AANDC provided \$18,109 in both 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. AANDC also provided \$31,849 to Pelican Narrows for Fire Protection Minor Capital.

***If asked about First Nation Fire Services:***

- First Nations manage fire protection services on reserve using their core capital allocation, which they prioritize to meet the needs of their communities, including those related to fire services. AANDC provides funding to First Nations to support this responsibility.
- First Nations may establish their own fire departments, or contract fire protection services from nearby communities through Municipal Type Agreements (MTA).
- For more information on Pelican Narrows' fire services, please contact the First Nation directly.

***If pressed on whether there is an overall strategy in place to train First Nation community members to provide fire response services in their communities:***

- Saskatchewan Region provides \$120,000 to the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) to provide fire protection training to their member First Nations, including Pelican Narrows. Saskatchewan Region also provides \$200,000 to the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) annually to train on-reserve volunteer fire fighters (and which are not PAGC member First Nations).

**BACKGROUND**

On Jan. 18, 2014, two children died in a house fire in Pelican Narrows, a small community on the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Two boys, ages 9 and ten, died in the fire. A 10-year-old girl was sent to Flin Flon with second and third-degree burns to more than 50 percent of her body. She was later transferred to hospital in Winnipeg for further treatment.

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**Questions and answers:**

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**Q2) How many Saskatchewan First Nations have Municipal Type Agreements with local municipalities for fire protection services?**

**A2)** First Nations can enter into a Municipal Type Agreement (MTA) with a local municipality. This type of arrangement makes it possible for First Nations communities to receive firefighting assistance from nearby municipalities.

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**QUESTION**

What is the government doing nationally to ensure that First Nations communities have access to dependable fire protection services?

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**SUGGESTED RESPONSE**

- **The Government of Canada has an ongoing commitment to the safety and well-being of First Nations communities.**
- **The loss of life is a great tragedy, especially when the lives of children are lost. Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and community.**
- **AANDC provides core capital funding to First Nations on an annual basis. First Nations prioritize their spending to meet the needs of their communities, including fire protection services.**
- **In 2012-2013, AANDC provided approximately \$30 million for fire protection services, including funding for equipment and infrastructure, operations and maintenance, and firefighter training.**



- **In the case of Pelican Narrows, the Department provided \$18,109 in both 2013-2014 and 2012-2013. We also provided \$31,849 to Pelican Narrows for Fire Protection through the Minor Capital Program.**
- **AANDC continues to collaborate closely with the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada to deliver activities outlined in the First Nations Fire Protection Strategy, including fire safety education and firefighter training.**