



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Deploying the City's Heavy Urban Search And Rescue (HUSAR) Team outside Ontario

Date:	January 2, 2007
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Toronto Fire Services
Wards:	N/A
Reference Number:	p:\2007\ClusterB\FIR\ec07001.doc

SUMMARY

Toronto Fire Services has a Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) team that can respond to large-scale structural collapse and other urban emergencies in an organized and timely way. Right now, the Province pays for equipment and training to respond to emergencies in Toronto and throughout Ontario as needed. The proposed agreement will allow the HUSAR team to offer help outside the province, when needed.

Council's approval of this agreement with the Federal Government and Province will ensure full cost recovery when the Toronto HUSAR team deploys anywhere in Canada outside Toronto boundaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Toronto Fire Services recommends that:

1. City Council authorize staff to draw up an agreement with Ontario's Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the federal Department of Public Safety. The agreement will enable the City to deploy a HUSAR team anywhere in Canada, when needed. The Department of Public Safety will reimburse the City for all costs associated with heavy urban search and rescue.
2. City Council authorize the Fire Chief to deploy the team internationally if this is approved by both Canadian and international authorities.
3. The Fire Chief and the City Solicitor ensure that the agreement is satisfactory.

4. City Council authorize the Fire Chief to sign the agreement and any related documents on behalf of the City.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If there is a need to deploy the HUSAR team outside Toronto, there will be no financial impact on Toronto Fire Services. The federal Department of Public Safety will reimburse all costs of deploying the team, including replacing or repairing supplies and equipment.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

In April 2002, Council approved an initial agreement with the Public Safety Division of the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General. The ministry agreed to pay up to \$300,000 a year to set up, train, and equip a HUSAR team and keep them in a state of readiness.

City Council renewed this agreement with the Province at its September 2006 meeting.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

HUSAR is a multi-disciplinary team that specializes in saving lives and reducing the impact on property and the environment when there is an urban emergency, such as a building collapse or flooding from extreme weather.

The Province provided the funding to train and equip the Toronto HUSAR team. The team is ready to respond outside Toronto boundaries when local services ask for help.

COMMENTS

Scope of the agreement

The new agreement with the provincial and federal governments will ensure the Toronto HUSAR team can respond to emergencies anywhere in Canada when needed. It sets up a framework for co-ordinating an effective response among the three levels of government and for covering costs.

To the extent possible, the team may also be deployed internationally, in support of Canadian humanitarian assistance policy. This would need the approval of Canadian and international authorities.

Any of the three parties in the agreement can withdraw after they give 60 days of written notice to the other parties.

Financial framework

The agreement will set out a financial and administrative framework to mobilize and demobilize the team during out-of-province emergencies. This is only possible with co-operation among all three levels of government.

Wages

The Department of Public Safety will cover the costs of backfilling the salaries and benefits of the HUSAR team while they are deployed elsewhere. This will ensure that Toronto's services stay at their mandated levels. The reimbursement will be based on the deployed team member's actual salary and benefits.

Insurance

The Federal Department of Public Safety will pay for life, property, and liability insurance for the HUSAR team members to at least the level of benefits available for City of Toronto employees. In addition the Federal Department of Public Safety will indemnify the HUSAR team against costs incurred for life, property and liability claims. This will apply while the team is deployed and for the whole demobilization period.

The Province of Ontario will indemnify the City of Toronto against costs of Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims and death benefits for the whole period of deployment.

Relief supplies

The reimbursement agreement will include the cost of items such as generators, food, and water that the team assembles with the agreement of all participants.

Administrative framework

Alert Process

When there may be a need for the HUSAR team outside Toronto, parties to the agreement will follow this process:

1. The Department of Public Safety will notify the Toronto HUSAR team.
2. The Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services will verify that the team is not needed in Toronto or in the province.
3. The City of Toronto will confirm that team members are available for deployment.

Activating the team

The Toronto HUSAR team will maintain a suitable state of readiness for short notice air deployment out-of-province. The time to readiness for deployment should be as soon as possible, but generally within six hours.

The agreement will authorize the Toronto team to spend up to \$10,000 on short notice to gather relief supplies such as water, food, fuel, and batteries. HUSAR will record further

spending against a project tracking number issued by the Department of Public Safety for reimbursement.

Public Safety will arrange for and cover transportation expenses, or authorize the use of local resources if that is more effective.

Demobilization

The Department of Public Safety will coordinate demobilization through written instructions to:

- The City of Toronto.
- Officials in the area affected by the emergency.
- The Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

The Toronto HUSAR team will prepare a demobilization report for the Department of Public Safety. The report will list equipment and supplies used, lost, or damaged. The Department will either replace the items or cover their replacement costs.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE



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