



## Corporation of the Township of Brock

### Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Rick Harrison

**Position:** Fire Chief/CEMC

**Title / Subject:** Alerting and Dispatching Services Agreement

**Date of Report:** April 15, 2025

**Date of Meeting:** April 28, 2025

**Report No:** 2025-PS-004

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#### 1.0 Issue / Origin

Alerting and Dispatching Services Agreement with the City of Oshawa (Fire Services).

#### 2.0 Background

Communications is an integral component of the Fire Service and can be broken down into three parts:

- Call-taking
- Alerting
- Dispatching

Call-taking describes the role of a 9-1-1 communicator; when a 9-1-1 call is placed, a 9-1-1 communicator takes the details of the call.

The next step is Alerting; this is when the appropriate agency is alerted (paged) to the response.

The final part is Dispatching; this encompasses all communications that happen after being alerted (paged), including responding fire trucks, incident commander, and requests for assistance of additional resources and/or agencies, etc.

### **3.0 Analysis**

#### **History**

Historically, call-taking and alerting services have been provided by Oshawa Fire Services as per a municipal fire agreement for an annual cost of \$34,857 in 2024 and an annual cost of \$41,800 scheduled in 2025. This does not include Dispatch costs.

An individual having an emergency incident would call 911 and be connected to Oshawa Fire Communications Centre. The communicator would receive all information and notify Brock Township Fire Department via a paging system with the emergency details. Once a firefighter arrives at the fire station, that firefighter would contact Oshawa Fire Communications Centre to confirm the information. From that point on, the firefighter would assume the responsibility for all remaining communications (dispatching) until the conclusion of the incident. The responsibilities included maintaining reports, recording the incident details, radio communications, notifying other agencies and maintaining oversight of any other responsibilities during an emergency.

#### **Current Challenges**

Current challenges include changes to technology, mandatory training requirements and staff shortages.

##### **Technological changes:**

There are consistent changes in technology, including NG-9-1-1 and Computerized Aided Dispatch (CAD) programs, that bring tremendous amounts of costs in infrastructure and training to utilize proficiently.

##### **Mandatory training requirement:**

Provincial Mandatory Certification requirements for Fire Services and firefighters go into full effect July 1, 2026, and include communications. All our firefighters current and future, would have to achieve NFPA certification as communicators to be able to continue with our current in-house dispatching model. With a Volunteer Fire Department, this would require ongoing training with a considerable expense, both in cost and time.

##### **Staff shortage:**

The ability to have large numbers of available firefighters to respond to emergency incidents is becoming more difficult. There is considerable pressure put on our personnel, in their home/personal lives as a firefighter, that having all available personnel respond to the emergency is paramount, instead of requiring an available firefighter to remain at the station to perform communications/dispatch duties.

## **Resolution**

Following discussions with Oshawa Fire Services, it has been determined that Oshawa Fire Services has the capacity to provide full communication services, including alerting and dispatching, for the Township of Brock Fire Department.

Brock Township would be required to maintain the infrastructure needs to remain within the Regional Radio System and other dispatching programs. With the change, we would have certified Emergency Communicators who would be responsible for all the communication requirements for the emergency incident, allowing us to free up an additional firefighter to respond to the emergency incident.

By the end of 2024, all 5 of the southern municipalities in Durham Region (Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa and Clarington) have moved in this direction. The Townships of Brock and Scugog would be joining in 2025, and it is anticipated that Uxbridge would join in 2026. Therefore, Oshawa Fire Services would potentially be the Communications Centre for all the Fire Services located in Durham Region by 2026.

A revised, expanded Fire Agreement has been prepared by Oshawa Fire Services to permit Brock Township to transfer all communications, including alerting and dispatching to Oshawa Fire Services. The timing of the change is scheduled to coincide with the technological changes to the CAD program this spring.

The term of the agreement is for a period of 10 years, with the one-year early termination notice period for any reason, and 10-day termination notice period if Oshawa fails to provide the agreed upon services for a period of 5 days or more. Both parties are required to carry commercial general liability insurance in the amount of \$5M, and name each other as additional insured.

The Fire Chief and Clerk will review the final version of the agreement to ensure it meets the requirements of the Township and the budget noted below before it is executed by the Mayor and Clerk.

### **4.0 Related Policies / Procedures**

Brock Township Fire Department Standard Operating Policies  
Oshawa Fire Services Communications Policies

### **5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment**

The 2025 annual service fee shall be \$62,700, prorated to the actual start of the agreement.

For each additional calendar year of the term thereafter, the annual service fee shall increase by the greater of the following: three percent (3%); or the previous years' increase of the annual Canadian Consumer Price Index.

The cost to implement the Alerting/Dispatching Agreement has been included within the approved 2025 Fire Department Operating Budget.

## **5.1 Asset Management**

N/A

## **6.0 Climate Change Impacts**

N/A

## **7.0 Communications**

N/A

## **8.0 Conclusion**

Entering into the Alerting/Dispatching Services Agreement with the City of Oshawa (Fire Services) will enhance the Communications and Response capabilities of Brock Township Fire Department.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report 2025-PS-04, "Alerting and Dispatching Services Agreement" be received for information;

AND THAT staff proceed with the appropriate procedure in executing the agreement.