



NATIONAL INDIGENOUS FIRE SAFETY COUNCIL PROJECT (NIFSC)

indigenousfiresafety.ca

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Coming Soon! NIFSC Project Dashboard

It is important that the NIFSC project team is accountable to all those who have an interest in the project, including showing the timely and quality implementation of the work. To meet our commitment to report on our progress, a project dashboard is being developed for the website. This dashboard will present up-to-date data on key project performance metrics that are of significance to the partners. Updates will be posted on a regular basis and will help visitors to the website quickly identify and locate new and updated information. Examples of metrics that can be presented on the dashboard are delivered programs, progress of research studies, and corporate development progress.



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Read our covid-19 response at nationalindigenousfiresafety.ca/covid-19



Project Plans: Program Delivery Update

The NIFSC project team met in late April and early May to develop a detailed plan for program delivery to begin in 2020 and early 2021. By the end of September 2020, our goal is to collaborate with communities (delivery methodology subject to COVID-19 parameters) to deliver a wide variety of programs, including the following:

- > Getting to Know Fire
- > Learn Not to Burn
- > Close Before You Doze
- > Youth Fire Setter
- > Smoke Alarm/Carbon Monoxide Safety
- > Home Safety Assessments (HSA)
- > Wood Heating Safety
- > Community Fire Safety Assessments (CFSA)
- > Fire Department Assessments (FDA)

Additional programs will continue to be developed and rolled out through the remainder of the year.



NIFSC Project Goes Virtual During COVID-19

While the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that people go about their lives, the NIFSC project team has made use of a virtual environment. During these challenging times of COVID-19 restrictions, the NIFSC Project Team is working to move the project forward on schedule. Restrictions such as physical distancing requirements, interprovincial travel restrictions, and limits on the size of groups that may gather have forced the project team to adapt its approach. As it is not possible to visit communities or participate in conferences or in-person meetings at this time, the program focus is on deliverables that can be managed virtually.

Key to being able to work effectively while taking the necessary health and safety precautions is establishing a virtual environment for team collaborative work. Various tools and applications will be employed to allow work to proceed in a timely manner. Person-to-person and group discussions are being undertaken by phone and through video conferencing. To communicate in non-real time, the team will use email and collaborations. Project management software will be used to plan the project and monitor progress. These virtual tools will also be used to continue engagement with partners to honour the commitments to provide timely information on project development and delivery that were made during the 2019 engagement sessions.





Director of Research: Len Garis

Len Garis joins the AFAC as the NIFSC project Director of Research. Len brings four decades of experience in fire services leadership and academia to the project. With a speciality in evidence-based decision making, Len will be managing all aspects of the approved research program, ensuring academic rigour, while looking for opportunities to enhance the mission of the organization through research and evaluation.



Corporate Development Consultant: Harmony Johnson

In May and June 2020, a plan is being developed to implement the components of corporate development, including legal corporate structure, organizational structure, associated people and physical assets. Harmony Johnson, from the Tla'amin Nation in BC, joins the NIFSC project to undertake this work. Harmony comes to the project with significant experience in supporting the establishment of non-profit First Nations institutions and organizations, as well as more than 15 years of experience in executive and senior roles in BC First Nations organization, with a focus on policy, planning, intergovernmental relations, health, and governance. In her role as a consultant, Harmony is developing a corporate plan to describe mandate development, and organization design for the developing NIFSC project.



NIFSC Project Program Delivery – How it's Done

For a program to be implemented, it goes through the three phases of development, testing, and delivery. During development, programs are either created from scratch or existing programs are adapted to meet new needs. Once a program has been developed, the testing phase confirms that the program meets both the technical requirements and the requirements of the communities. Testing is done in a variety of ways, including for example user evaluations and technical tests. Once all the tests have been passed, the program is ready for delivery. Depending on the nature of the program, delivery can happen in a variety of ways including for example:

- > A NIFSC project team member visits a community to deliver the program on site;
- > The program content is downloaded from the website and delivered by a member of the community; or
- > Training is provided to a member of the community who then delivers the program to the community.



for us, by us This is our guiding philosophy. It means:

- > Indigenous-created organization to serve Indigenous communities.
- > Indigenous governance structure developed in collaboration with Indigenous leadership.
- > New, ongoing funding, free of political interference.
- > Fire service careers for Indigenous Peoples.
- > An organization accountable to Indigenous communities through transparent reporting.



Project Plan Update

In our recently released Project Update (April 2020), we presented a high-level project plan that outlines the current and forecasted state of various NIFSC project components. We are currently hiring and onboarding personnel for the development and delivery of more programs. Our key focus in these early stages is on fire prevention and public education programs which are proven to have the greatest impact on fire safety. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 restrictions, we have made some important progress in several areas.

National Incident Reporting System

The Incident Database will collect information about the cause, origin, and circumstances when fires occur. For example, if the data shows that kitchen fires are a regular event, the information collected can be analyzed to pinpoint the most frequent cause and fire prevention messaging can be created to raise awareness of the issue and highlight ways to prevent those fires. With human behaviour being a significant factor in the start of fires, understanding what led up to that fire is key to developing fire prevention programs that will have the most impact on reducing the number of fires. A good example is the introduction of smoke alarm campaigns that resulted from research showing that a lack of earlier warning was contributing to people frequently becoming overcome by smoke or trapped by fire spread.

We are collaborating with the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the province of British Columbia to put in place an interim Incident Database and we have recently begun the hiring process to fill the position of Incident Database Coordinator.

Research

To ensure that the programs that are being developed have a solid, evidence-based foundation, the NIFSC project is undertaking research in a variety of areas:

- > In March 2020, an examination of the feasibility of creating a new baseline for deaths and injuries due to fire-related events in Indigenous communities in Canada was completed.
- > Research and reporting using existing data to create a demographic profile of at-risk populations and places in Indigenous communities in Canada. This work will be used to prioritize programs and services geographically in Canada.

- > Creation of an evaluation instrument to measure program delivery and outcomes will occur in the second to third quarter of 2020.
- > Research on fire-related mortality and morbidity and the creation of an operational report will occur before the end of the first quarter of 2021.
- > Research and reporting of fire risk analysis associated with the grading and costs of home and commercial insurance.
- > Research and reporting on a business plan for retrofitting residential fire sprinklers and working smoke alarms.

Read the full April 2020 Project Update here: indigenousfiresafety.ca/reports