



Corporate Report

DEPARTMENT/ DIVISION	City Manager's Office Emergency Medical Services	REPORT NO.	2002.088
DATE PREPARED	March 13, 2002	FILE NO.	
MEETING DATE	April 22, 2002		
SUBJECT	Assumption of EMS Provision in Nakina		

REPORT SUMMARY

To provide information related to the direct delivery of Emergency Medical Services (Land Ambulance) in Nakina by the City of Thunder Bay.

BACKGROUND

Nakina Ambulance was operated by the Municipality of Nakina until July 30th 1999, when the Nakina Council gave a 90 day notice to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to cease operations. The Ministry in turn asked Geraldton Emergency Services (G.E.S.), a private service provider operating ambulance services in Geraldton and Schreiber, to assume responsibility for Nakina as they were the closest service. The transfer occurred on August 1, 1999.

The City of Thunder Bay was designated as the Delivery Agent for land ambulance services in the District of Thunder Bay on January 1, 2000. A two-year contract was signed with G.E.S. to provide service in Nakina and Geraldton. On January 8, 2002, G.E.S. advised Superior North EMS that, due to a loss of staff, the company was no longer capable of meeting their contractual obligations and would cease to provide ambulance services in Nakina, effective March 1, 2002. Negotiations were initiated with another service provider in the region to assume responsibility for Nakina on a temporary basis. All indications were positive for a smooth transition, until February 25th, 2002, when the alternative service provider indicated a clause in the collective was identified which was unacceptable to the new operator and Superior North EMS was advised that they would not proceed with the planned takeover of Nakina EMS.

A second area service provider was approached and they indicated an interest in assuming responsibility for delivery of EMS in Nakina. Negotiations began immediately. On February 26th a letter was received from this second potential service provider asking for conditions which were in violation of The Ambulance Act. Superior North EMS could not legally agree to such conditions or other requested guarantees.

COMMENTS

On March 1, 2002, Superior North EMS, under the City of Thunder Bay's authority as Designated Delivery Agent, assumed direct responsibility for the provision of Emergency Medical Services (Land Ambulance) in Nakina. An emergency assumption plan was introduced and integration of Nakina into the organization is proceeding. Staff who had been laid off by G.E.S. were interviewed and two were offered work, one as a Supervisor to assume responsibility for day-to-day operational matters and one as casual/part-time. Further recruitment is required to continue providing the existing level of service in Nakina. All costs associated with this service will be covered using funds previously provided to the private operator. No additional costs will accrue to the City. Any staff hired to work in Nakina can be accommodated within Superior North EMS in the event that the Nakina service is contracted out and the new operator hires new staff.

There is a need to address on a broader basis the Service Delivery Model used in the District. Since last December, two other service providers in the District have indicated they did not wish to continue providing services on a contract basis and a third is considering ceasing operations. One has since reconsidered and is now committed to continuing to provide this service under contract.

A review is currently underway to explore service delivery options and evaluate various alternatives. A report will be presented to City Council in April. Contract renewals across the District are due on July 15, 2002.

CONCLUSION

As the Designated Delivery Agent for the District of Thunder Bay, the City was obligated to provide EMS to Nakina region on March 1, 2002 by becoming Direct Service Provider as per The Ambulance Act and Regulations. With contract renewals across the District due on July 15, 2002, there is a need to undertake a review of service delivery models to ensure that an effective long-term strategy is in place.

RECOMMENDATION

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

None.

PREPARED BY: Jocelyn Bourgoïn, Director

This report signed and verified by Robert Petrie, Acting City Manager, City of Thunder Bay on April 3, 2002