

The motions recorded in **SRD 596/25 and 597/25** represent a foundational legislative victory for your **"Forward"** platform, marking the formal transition of Electoral Area D's fire protection from an informal administrative "function" into a regulated, standalone **regional service**. By leading these motions, you (**Director John Rice**) have successfully triggered the creation of an establishing bylaw that provides the legal and financial framework necessary to manage Area D's safety independently from 45-year-old urban contracts.

1. Technical Context: Modernising a 1979 Framework

The conversion of fire protection into a formal service is the legislative prerequisite for ending the region's reliance on an outdated 1979 agreement with the City of Campbell River 1, 2.

- **Defining the Service:** Unlike a "function," which is managed through general administration, an **establishing bylaw** provides a precise legal definition of service boundaries, cost-recovery methods, and maximum requisition limits.
- **Updating the 2021 Aegis Study:** This move follows your earlier success (SRD 1008/24) in authorizing **Aegis Risk Management Ltd.** to update its feasibility study with 2024 construction and operational data.
- **Operational Control:** A formalized service allows Area D to decide whether it will continue a hybrid response model or transition to a standalone, **independent fire hall and department**.

2. Fiscal Stewardship: Protecting Taxpayers from Urban Debt

The primary driver for establishing this standalone service is to insulate Area D residents from escalating urban infrastructure liabilities.

- **The \$21 Million Liability:** The City of Campbell River is planning a **\$21,000,000 replacement of Fire Hall No.** Under the existing 1979 assessment-based framework, Area D property owners would be responsible for approximately **7% (\$1.47 million)** of those capital costs.
- **Cost Escalation:** Annual fire protection costs have already grown to nearly **\$700,000 by 2024**. By establishing a formal service bylaw, you are creating the "rigid, politically agnostic oversight" needed to evaluate if local, independent alternatives are more cost-effective for your residents.
- **Audit Rights:** This move aligns with your recent directive (SRD 965/24) to exercise contractual **audit rights** over the City's fire budgets to identify where Area D taxpayers may have been over-requisitioned.

3. Regulatory Compliance: The Fire Safety Act

Transitioning to a formal service ensures Area D is "response ready" for the new provincial **Fire Safety Act**.

- **Mandatory Inspections:** Once in force, the SRD will be legally required to manage fire inspections for all public assembly spaces.
- **Jurisdictional Clarity:** The new service bylaw will explicitly define how the SRD meets these legal mandates—either through dedicated regional staff or a newly negotiated, transparent contract.

4. Governance Dynamics: Building a Functional Team

The mover and seconder patterns for these motions document your ability to lead through **functional collaboration** despite a polarized Board.

- **The Rice/Mawhinney Receipt (SRD 596/25):** Partnering with **Director Robyn Mawhinney** (Area C) to receive the report demonstrates that high-priority safety files can move forward unanimously when backed by professional staff recommendations.

5. Strategic Application for 2026

- **The Message:** *"I am moving Area D **forward** by making our fire protection permanent and professional. By leading the Board to establish a formal service bylaw, I have ensured that we have the facts—and the legal tools—to protect your family without being handed a bill for Campbell River's \$21 million fire hall. I believe in professional governance that delivers safe, affordable neighborhoods" .*

In summary, carrying motions **SRD 596/25 and 597/25** transitions Electoral Area D into a **standardized, accountable framework** for fire protection. It documents your role as a **stable, effective representative** who prioritizes regional health and fiscal discipline over the isolationist tactics of your opponents.