

The motions recorded in **SRD 684/24 and 685/24** represent a vital legislative step toward modernising fire protection for **Electoral Area D**. By directing staff to update the **2021 Aegis Risk Management Ltd. study**, the Board is addressing nearly five decades of reliance on an aging service model and preparing to protect rural residents from looming urban infrastructure costs.

1. Technical Context: Updating the 1979 Framework

The current fire protection agreement with the City of Campbell River dates back to **1979**. While this contract provides a high level of hybrid response, its costs have escalated significantly, with the tax requisition contribution growing to **\$695,757 by 2024** due to rising operational expenses and capital reserve requirements.

- **Feasibility of Independence:** The update to the Aegis study will re-evaluate the feasibility of Area D establishing its own **independent fire service and fire hall**.
- **Service Delivery Options:** The original study explored several paths, including a pure volunteer department, a composite model with a full-time Fire Chief, or renegotiating the existing contract to establish a fixed "fee-for-service" formula to stabilize annual fluctuations.

2. Fiscal Pressure: The \$21 Million Liability

A primary driver for motion **SRD 685/24** is a major capital project within the City of Campbell River: the **\$21,000,000 Fire Hall No. 1 replacement** scheduled for 2025–2026 6.

- **The 7% Burden:** Under the existing regional assessment structure, Area D residents are responsible for approximately **7% of the capital costs** for City fire infrastructure.
- **Preventing Tax Spikes:** Updating the study allows the Board to investigate alternative service models *before* these massive capital costs hit local property tax requisitions, ensuring that Area D residents are not disproportionately funding urban infrastructure.

3. Regulatory Drivers: The Fire Safety Act

The provincial government has passed a new **Fire Safety Act** that will remove previous exemptions for regional districts.

- **Mandatory Inspections:** Once in force, the Act will require the SRD to handle mandatory fire inspections for all public assembly spaces.
- **Planning for Compliance:** Updating the fire study ensures the Regional District has a clear timeline and operational plan to meet these new legal obligations, which are currently managed by the City on the SRD's behalf .

In summary, carrying motions **SRD 684/24 and 685/24** initiates the professional analysis required to ensure Area D's fire protection is efficient, modern, and fiscally sustainable for the next generation 1, 6.