

From: Thomson.MLA, Steve LASS:EX  
To: Minister, FLNR FLNR:EX  
Subject: FW: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Friday, September 16, 2016 11:09:21 AM

---

From: s.22

Sent: September 16, 2016 11:06 AM

To: Thomson.MLA, Steve ; Letnick.MLA, Norm ; Clark.MLA, Christy ; Rustad.MLA, John ; Kylo.MLA, Greg ; Foster.MLA, Eric ; Morris.MLA, Mike ; Lake.MLA, Terry ; Bond.MLA, Shirley ; Stone.MLA, Todd

**Subject:** B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

Dear Mr. Minister and Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring.

Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily

decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.

The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently

visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure

CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.

The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.

Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accomodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the **consistency** plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the **revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.**

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second

look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22 \_\_\_\_\_ a member of the B C Liberal Party,

s.22

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.

From: [Sheldan, Tim FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Rousselle, Jillian FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:27:00 AM

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We will need to quickly develop a response. I presume that all of these issues were considered by BCWS before implementing this decision.

Sent from Tim Sheldan's iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Thomson <sup>s.22</sup>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 9:58:16 AM PDT  
**To:** Bruce Strongitharm <[Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca)>, Laura Tennant <[Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca)>, Tim Sheldan <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

This is the info I referenced on the call this morning re the rap attack issue in Salmon Arm that has come into our office in Kelowna.

Steve Thomson  
MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
250-387-6240 (Victoria)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Norm Letnick <sup>s.22</sup> >  
**Date:** September 16, 2016 at 4:08:59 PM PDT  
**To:** Steve Thomson <sup>s.22</sup>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

Is this yours Steve?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <sup>s.22</sup>  
Date: Fri, Sep 16, 2016 at 11:06 AM  
Subject: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
To: Steve Thomson. Mla <[steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Norm Letnick <[norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Christy Clark. Mla <[christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca)>

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I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring. Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.

The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.

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From: [Cowan, Holly LASS:EX](#)  
To: s.22  
Subject: Sept 23 RE: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Friday, September 23, 2016 11:45:19 AM  
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)  
Importance: High

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Dear s.22

Thank you for your email regarding "B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm". MLA Kylo has read your email and has asked me to forward it to the attention of the Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands & Natural resources, as he notes you already have. Could you please send your phone number to our office?

Thank you again for bringing this matter to the attention of MLA Kylo.

*Holly Cowan*

Constituency Assistant  
to Greg Kylo, MLA

Shuswap

Phone: 250-833-7414

Fax: 250-833-7422

[www.gregkylomla.ca](http://www.gregkylomla.ca)

*"Whatever I am doing today is important, as I am exchanging a day of my life for it".*

Note: If you forward this email, please delete the forwarding history, which includes my email address. It is a courtesy to me and others who may not wish to have their email addresses sent all over the world. Erasing the history also helps prevent Spammers from mining addresses and prevents viruses from being propagated



Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

**Confidentiality Warning:** This message and any attachments are intended only for the use of the intended recipient(s), are confidential and may be privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, retransmission, conversion to hard copy, copying, circulation or other use of this message and any attachments is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail, and delete this message and any attachments from your system. Thank you.

GK\_email\_signature



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**Sent:** September 16, 2016 11:06 AM

**To:** Thomson.MLA, Steve ; Letnick.MLA, Norm ; Clark.MLA, Christy ; Rustad.MLA, John ; Kylo.MLA, Greg ; Foster.MLA, Eric ; Morris.MLA, Mike ; Lake.MLA, Terry ; Bond.MLA, Shirley ; Stone.MLA, Todd

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**From:** [Eckardt, Dana R FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Sept 27 Fwd: RAP Attack Centre Information Note  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 1:37:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[ATT00001.htm](#)  
[224540 - Rappel Base in Salmon Arm - FINAL.docx](#)  
[ATT00002.htm](#)

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" <[Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 26, 2016 at 4:25:13 PM PDT  
**To:** "Eckardt, Dana R FLNR:EX" <[Dana.Eckardt@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Dana.Eckardt@gov.bc.ca)>, "Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX" <[Kimberly.Rosche@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Kimberly.Rosche@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RAP Attack Centre Information Note

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION AND MEAL PROVISION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE STAFF AT THE RAPPEL BASE IN SALMON ARM**

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program within the Province's BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create a firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

In short, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodation to staff. The City of Salmon Arm has a higher rental apartment and townhouse vacancy rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St. John. Cost aside, the decision was made September 7, 2016 to eliminate accommodation and meal provision at this base to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia (BC). This decision will come into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and is not consistent government standards of fiscal restraint. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff. Even though staff do pay for their board and lodging, it is still an annual net cost to government of \$119,000. When crews (both firefighting and air crews) are working in other locations, they are provided with per diems as per the contract.

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John). Salmon Arm is considered an urban centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC). In a review of vacancy rates across BC in communities of similar size to Salmon Arm that also house BCWF staff Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Government does not provide accommodation in communities of Salmon Arm's Size, even in areas with low summer vacancy.

s.13

## RESPONSE POINTS:

- The Provincial Government's Wildfire Service has recently made the decision to eliminate the provision of accommodation and meals to the staff at the Rappel base in Salmon Arm.
- The Rappel base is the only location in the province that currently provides a catering option for staff.
- Making this change will bring Salmon Arm into line with other BCWS centres of the same size and population.
- Making this change in Salmon Arm will bring Provincial consistency where staff are responsible for finding their own accommodation.
- Government must be responsive to tax payer funds. There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program.
- This decision will also eliminate perceived preferred treatment and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.
- The infrastructure will be repurposed by BCWS to meet operational needs.

## Attachment:

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information - 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)

### Contact:

Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250 356-1874

### Alternate Contact:

Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3032

### Prepared by:

Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3068

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 26, 2016
Exec Director	MM	Sept 23, 2016

# MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS

## DECISION NOTE

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: DECISION TO ELIMINATE ACCOMMODATIONS AND MEAL PROVISION TO THE BC WILDFIRE SERVICE SEASONAL STAFF AT THE SALMON ARM OFFICE**

### BACKGROUND:

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. BCWS has been engaged in a process to eliminate the provision of these services to staff in all bases across the Province, except for remote areas without available services (Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton). Salmon Arm is the last BCWS base in this process. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost to government of \$119,000 after staff contributions. During the 2015 fire season, a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted and staff within the office were involved. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office. s.13

s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff, effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016, an email drafted by s.22, a member of the BC Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's, including Minister Steve Thomson, discussing the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of information shared at the meeting.

s.13

### DISCUSSION:

FLNRO is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination for accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000. The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian Revenue Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.

s.13

**OPTIONS:**

s.13



## RECOMMENDATION:

s.13

Approved / Not Approved  
OPTION 2 / OPTION 1

Steve Thomson  
Signature  
Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of  
Forests, Lands and Natural Resource  
Operations

Oct 2 / 2016  
Date

**Attachment:** Information Note – September 23, 2016

**Contact:**

Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250-356-1874

**Alternate Contact:**

Madeline Maley  
BC Wildfire Service  
250-312-3032

**Prepared by:**

Murray Henry  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 318-4484

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM	TS	Sept 28, 2016
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 28, 2016
Executive Director	MM	Sept 28, 2016

s.13

## Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX

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**From:** Sheldon, Tim FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 23, 2016 9:55 AM  
**To:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

Pls print

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**From:** Steve Thomson [mailto:s.22]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 9:58 AM  
**To:** Strongitharm, Bruce FLNR:EX; Tennant, Laura FLNR:EX; Sheldon, Tim FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

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MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
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**To:** Steve Thomson. Mla <[steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Norm Letnick <[norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Christy Clark. Mla <[christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca)>

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I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring.

Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.

The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.

The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.

Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accomodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the consistency plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22

a member of the B C Liberal Party,

s.22

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.

*Can we confirm this?*

**From:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Emailing: CLIFF 224401\_Salmon Arm (3)  
**Date:** Thursday, March 2, 2017 10:34:15 AM  
**Attachments:** [CLIFF 224401\\_Salmon Arm \(3\).docx](#)

---

Dated Sept 30

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

CLIFF 224401\_Salmon Arm (3)

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

Dear s.22

Thank you for your correspondence dated September 16, 2016 regarding accommodation and catering at the BC Wildfire Service Rappel Base in Salmon Arm.

Historically, the Province has provided accommodations as an incentive to recruit and retain BC Wildfire Service staff in remote locations; currently, the BC Wildfire Service provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. These accommodations are provided at less than market rate in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules. However, the BC Wildfire Service does not provide catering services at these or any other bases including for the similar standalone program, Parattack, located in Fort St. John.

When the Rappel Program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations. However, it has since developed into a relatively large urban centre with a wide range of amenities.

A review of vacancy rates across BC conducted by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) indicates that - compared to communities of a similar size to Salmon Arm which also house BC Wildfire Service staff (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John) - Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Furthermore, the city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). Furthermore, while staff pay for their board and lodging at the Salmon Arm base, there remains an annual net cost to government of \$119,000.

With respect to contract air crews accommodation and food is the responsibility of the contractor when air personnel are located at their designated home base. When working in other locations crews (both fire fighting and air crews) are provided with per diems as per the contract.

Hence, the decision to end accommodation and meal provision at the Salmon Arm base will align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BC Wildfire Service base locations across British Columbia, while also XXX. Furthermore, while the decision has been taken to cease provision of on-site accommodation and catering at the Salmon Arm base (effective January 1, 2017), the base itself will remain operational with BCWS personnel continuing to be based in Salmon Arm.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

**Comment [CNL1]:** Thinking some kind of while continuing to provide excellent service/response and value kind of thing

**Comment [MLM2]:** I would not add anything more

**Comment [MLM3]:** I would not add anything more

**Comment [CNL4]:** Didn't know if we needed/wanted to specifically cover off the training aspect as well...

Maybe continuing to train and be based in...?

Or if we want to be more explicit where to work in

The BC Wildfire Service holds training in multiple locations across the Province. The Salmon Arm Base is one such facility and the occasional training courses currently held there and will continue.

**From:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Emailing: Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM, Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM CLEAN  
**Date:** Thursday, March 2, 2017 10:36:57 AM  
**Attachments:** [Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM.docx](#)  
[Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM CLEAN.docx](#)

---

Dated Aug 2

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM  
Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM CLEAN

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

Deal<sup>s.22</sup>

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Historically, the Province has provided accommodations as an incentive to recruit and retain BC Wildfire Service staff in remote locations; currently, the BC Wildfire Service provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. These accommodations are provided at less than market rate in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules. However, the BC Wildfire Service does not provide catering services at these or any other bases including for the similar standalone program, Parattack, located in Fort St. John.

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With respect to contract air crews accommodation and food is the responsibility of the contractor when air personnel are located at their designated home base. When working in other locations crews (both firefighting and air crews) are provided with per diems as per the contract.

The decision to end accommodation and meal provision at the Salmon Arm base will align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BC Wildfire Service base locations across British Columbia. This change will be phased in over two seasons by eliminating meal provision in 2017 and then eliminating accommodation in 2018.

Yours sincerely,

XXX



Dear s.22

Thank you for your correspondence dated September 16, 2016 regarding accommodation and catering at the BC Wildfire Service Rappel Base in Salmon Arm.

Historically, the Province has provided accommodations as an incentive to recruit and retain BC Wildfire Service staff in remote locations; currently, the BC Wildfire Service provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. These accommodations are provided at less than market rate in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules. However, the BC Wildfire Service does not provide catering services at these or any other bases including for the similar standalone program, Parattack, located in Fort St. John.

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With respect to contract air crews accommodation and food is the responsibility of the contractor when air personnel are located at their designated home base. When working in other locations crews (both firefighting and air crews) are provided with per diems as per the contract.

The decision to end accommodation and meal provision at the Salmon Arm base will align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BC Wildfire Service base locations across British Columbia. However, in order to minimize disruption to staff, this change will be phased on over two seasons by eliminating meal provision in 2017 and then eliminating accommodation in 2018.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

File: 280-20

**Comment [rws1]:** Is this an IN or Decision Note? i.e. are we asking Bob to support/approve the elimination of these services or just informing him we plan on doing so?

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent of the day was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters.

Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of living accommodations on the base for the Rappel Program staff on-base. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds \$119,000.00 annually.

**Comment [MLM2]:** Is this our 2016/17 forecast?

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a cost recovery [or] subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in [community names] for XX [number] staff. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

**Comment [MLM3]:** Not sure which

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base today this is the only BCWS base in BCWS that supplies-provides full catering of meals food and accommodations to staff in a community that has sufficient private resources to fulfil the need. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds \$119,000.00 annually. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals food or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC which has with a more challenging private accommodation market.

**Comment [MLM4]:** Can we get some info from the chamber of commerce re: rentals?

**Comment [rws5]:** How do we prove/measure this. Salmon Arm yes, but what about other bases provincially where accommodation is provided?

BCWS continues to make significant efforts to eliminate inconsistencies in all aspects of staff's working environment. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply food or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC with a more challenging private accommodation market.

**Formatted:** None

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meal catering and provision of living accommodations to staff in a community where these services are easily readily available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of special treatment amongst BCWS staff, and creating a barrier between Rappel and other fighting firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for Taking a consistent approach and bringing the the Rappel crews in line with the rest of organization will reduce costs and contribute to the larger FLNRO team a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title..

**NEXT STEPS:**

s.13

s.13

Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.27 cm,  
No bullets or numbering

**Alternate Contact:**  
*Name: Ian Meier*  
*IROD/BCWS/PWCC:*  
*Phone: 250 837-6640*

**Prepared by:**  
*Name: Murray Henry*  
*BCWS / PWCCBranch/Region:*  
*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**INFORMATION NOTE**

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**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are readily available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of special treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the Rappel crews will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title..

**Comment [rws5]:** How do we prove/measure this. Salmon Arm yes, but what about other bases provincially where accommodation is provided?

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. s.13
- 2.

**Alternate Contact:**  
Name: Ian Meier  
IROD/BCWS/PWCC:  
Phone: 250 837-6640

**Prepared by:**  
Name: Murray Henry  
BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:  
Phone: 250 318-4484

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

From: [Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: FOI request  
Date: Friday, March 3, 2017 1:31:20 PM  
Attachments: [IN Salmon Arm Wildfire Base draft 1 v2.msg](#)  
[FYI SA Letter s.22 .msg](#)  
[AS PROMISED Salmon Arm.msg](#)  
[INFO salmon arm.msg](#)  
[Fwd finals i sent to tim re RAPP.msg](#)  
[Fwd B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm.msg](#)  
[Information Vernon and Salmon Arm Fire Zone Operations.msg](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.jpg](#)

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**Mary Myers**

Director, Corporate Governance

BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Phone: 250 387-5538 | Cell: 250 507-9353

**Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555**



## ADVICE TO MINISTER

### CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural  
Resource Operations

Date: DRAFT 1

Minister Responsible: Hon. Steve Thomson

# Salmon Arm wildfire base

### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The ministry is not closing the ~~rap-attack~~Rapattackthe Salmon Arm Base; the decision was made to phase-out catering services and accommodation services for the crews stationed there.
- As part of a comprehensive review to ensure best use of taxpayers' dollars, and due to Salmon Arm no longer being classified as a remote location, the decision was made to phase out catering services (January 2017) and accommodation services (January 2018) at Salmon Arm.
- The decision to phase out catering and accommodation will not affect fire response capability. We remain committed to keeping the base open, and to continue operating the rapattack program with the same number of staff as last year.

s.13

### KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

In Fall 2016, the BC Wildfire Service communicated its decision to discontinue catering services at the Salmon Arm base effective Jan. 1, 2017 and to discontinue accommodation services at the base effective Jan. 1, 2018. These decisions resulted in speculation in the community that there were plans to close the base altogether.

In 2016, there were 35 personnel stationed at the Salmon Arm base. There are firefighters stationed at the base, and it is the provincial rapattack training centre. Although the rapattack program is based in Salmon Arm, it is considered a provincial resource and its crews can be deployed anywhere they are needed in B.C.

s.13,s.22

### Background: Catering and accommodations services

Basic accommodations and meals had been provided to Salmon Arm initial attack crews since the late 1970s. At that time, Salmon Arm was considered to be a "remote" location, but that is no longer the case. The region has developed significantly over the past four decades and suitable rental units and

food options are available in Salmon Arm and surrounding areas.

The BC Wildfire Service does not provide full catering at any of its other locations and only provides subsidized accommodations in remote areas or where there are staff recruiting challenges (currently in Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton). Based on Canada Revenue Agency rulings regarding non-taxable benefits for subsidized accommodations in remote or isolated areas, Salmon Arm is not considered a remote location.

Therefore, to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management, the best use of taxpayers' dollars, the decision was made to discontinue catering and accommodations at the base.

These decisions were the result of a comprehensive review and will save the government about \$119,000 per year. There will also be significant savings in utility and maintenance costs.

### Background: Rapattack program

Rapattack ("rappel attack") firefighters are deployed by helicopter to fight wildfires in remote or inaccessible areas of the province, rappelling down to the ground while the helicopter hovers above them.

These highly trained and versatile crews provide a vital service that helps the BC Wildfire Service protect communities, resources and infrastructure. On larger wildfires, they may also build helicopter landing pads so additional crews and equipment can be strategically positioned around the perimeter of a fire's perimeter. Rapattack firefighters can remain on a fire site for up to 24 hours without being resupplied.

British Columbia's rapattack program was established in 1977. Initial attack crews are based at 33 different locations throughout B.C., but Salmon Arm is home to the province's only dedicated rapattack base in the province.

The BC Wildfire Service mobilizes its firefighting resources to respond to anticipated wildfire activity.

Communications Contact:	Vivian Thomas,	250 356-2475
Program Area Contact:	Madeline Maley	250 312-3032

File Location: Y:\PAB\_NRO\OPERATIONS\Programs\2017\Wildfire and fire prevention\IN Salmon Arm wildfire base staffing

Program Area	GCPE	ADM	Minister's Office

**From:** [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** ["sadamson@slib.com"](#); ["cdoherty@csrd.bc.ca"](#); ["kmount@csrd.bc.ca"](#); ["sep@csrd.bc.ca"](#);  
["bshirley@salmonarm.ca"](#); ["tgahr@vernon.ca"](#); ["HSinclair@vernon.ca"](#); ["bill\\_wacey@bxslfiredept.ca"](#);  
["kgreen@vernon.ca"](#); ["colleen.marchand@okanagan.org"](#); ["raymond\\_gormlay@splatsin.ca"](#);  
["kerryrouck@gormanbros.com"](#); ["dustin.douillard@tolko.com"](#); ["mark.fichtner@tolko.com"](#); [Ladyman, Ashley](#)  
[FLNR:IN](#); [Johnson, Mike FOR:IN](#); [Nelson, Doug FLNR:IN](#); ["coryyurkowski@weyerhaeuser.com"](#); [Lewis, Tom](#)  
[FLNR:EX](#); [Johnston, Colin FLNR:EX](#); [Dearmond, Wes ENV:EX](#); ["todd.haughton@gov.bc.ca"](#); [MacDougall, Gerry L](#)  
[FLNR:EX](#); [Crampton, Ray W FLNR:EX](#); [FLNR BCWS KAM KLT](#); [FLNR BCWS Managers](#)  
**Cc:** [Winter, Kelsey FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Information: Vernon and Salmon Arm Fire Zone Operations  
**Date:** Thursday, August 11, 2016 6:03:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

This summer, the Salmon Arm Fire Zone and the Vernon Fire Zone have been merged into one operational area. While the outlying borders of the zones have remained unchanged, the border that formerly separated the two zones has been removed. This change was made in order to ensure that the British Columbia Wildfire Service is using the most effective resources available and responding as efficiently as possible to wildfires in each area of the Kamloops Fire Centre. Over the last 10 years, over 80 per cent of the hectares burnt between the Salmon Arm and Vernon Fire Zones fell within the old Vernon Fire Zone boundary. In order to streamline how quickly resources can be launched to an incident, both areas are now being managed out of the Vernon fire base where majority of firefighting personnel are located.

One 20 person Unit Crew and three Initial Attack Crews remain based out of the Vernon fire base and the Salmon Arm base will continue to host the Provincial Rappel Attack Crews. There will be no changes to the number and location of firefighters within these Zones and response will not be reduced in any capacity. The amalgamated Zone will soon receive a new name that reflects both operational areas.

It is our belief that this change will not negatively affect any of the BC Wildfire Service's stakeholders and partners but will instead enhance our protection and prevention capabilities. Please contact Glen Burgess at 250 554-3401 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this merger.

*Please forward this email to all parties which you believe could benefit from this information.*

Thank you

Rob Schweitzer

A/Fire Center Manager

BC Wildfire Service | Kamloops Fire Centre

Office: 250-554-5501 | Cell: 250-320-0433

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1 800 663-5555/\*5555**



# EMAIL RESPONSE

Reference: 224401

s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of September 16, 2016, regarding accommodation and catering at the BC Wildfire Service base in Salmon Arm. As this falls under the purview of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, I have been asked to provide a response.

The value that a wildfire base in Salmon Arm brings with respect to the economic and social benefits of ~~there being~~ long term and seasonal employees in the community is recognized. The Ministry also recognizes the value to the province, including the City of Salmon Arm, of ~~there being having~~ bases located in many communities across the province ~~is also recognised~~ as it allows the efficient and effective deployment of staff for wildfire response and the protection of public safety - which is the primary objective in the effective operation of the BC Wildfire Service.

Historically, the Province of British Columbia has provided accommodations as an incentive to recruit and retain BC Wildfire Service staff in remote and/or hard to recruit to locations. However, the BC Wildfire Service does not provide catering services at these or any other bases, including for the similar standalone program, Parattack, located in Fort St. John.

When the Rappel Program was first moved to Salmon Arm in the 1970s, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodation. However, it has since developed into a relatively large urban centre with a wide range of amenities. Moreover, while staff pay for their board and lodging at the Salmon Arm base, there remains an annual net cost to government of \$119,000.

The decision to end accommodation and meal provision at the Salmon Arm location will align the Salmon Arm base and staff with the majority of other BC Wildfire Service base locations across British Columbia. This change will be phased in over two seasons, first with elimination of meal provision at the start of this year and then ceasing on-site accommodation in 2018. The BC Wildfire Service will continue to operate a base at the Salmon Arm location.

As part of the ongoing communication between the Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the City of Salmon Arm, we will be in communication with Mayor Cooper to ensure local area accommodation is available for staff as the plans to phase out on-site accommodation in Januray 2018 proceed.

Sincerely,

Page 1 of 2

Mary Sue Maloughney  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Integrated Resource Operations Division

pc: Honourable Steve Thomson, MLA, Kelowna-Mission

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Meier, Jan R FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:53:48 AM

---

FYI - for the response - need to show how that is consistent w broad prov approach in small remote communities

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Sheldan, Tim FLNR:EX" <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 10:26:58 AM PDT  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Rousselle, Jillian FLNR:EX" <[Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

We will need to quickly develop a response. I presume that all of these issues were considered by BCWS before implementing this decision.

Sent from Tim Sheldan's iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Thomson <[s.22](mailto:s.22)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 9:58:16 AM PDT  
**To:** Bruce Strongitharm <[Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca)>, Laura Tennant <[Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca)>, Tim Sheldan <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

This is the info I referenced on the call this morning re the rap attack issue in Salmon Arm that has come into our office in Kelowna.

Steve Thomson  
MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
250-387-6240 (Victoria)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Norm Letnick s.22

**Date:** September 16, 2016 at 4:08:59 PM PDT  
**To:** Steve Thomson <s.22  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in  
Salmon Arm

Is this yours Steve?

----- Forwarded message -----

From s.22

Date: Fri, Sep 16, 2016 at 11:06 AM

Subject: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

To: Steve Thomson. Mla

<steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca>, Norm Letnick

<norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca>, Christy Clark. Mla

<christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca>,

<todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca>

Dear Mr. Minister and Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring. Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.

The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.

The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.

Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accomodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the **consistency** plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the **revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.**

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22                      a member of the B C Liberal Party,

s.22

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with

all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.

**From:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2017 3:02:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.jpg](#)

---

**Ian Meier**

Director, Wildfire Operations  
BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Phone: 250 847-6640 | Cell: 250 643-0078  
**Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555**



---

**From:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 11:00 AM  
**To:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX; Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX; Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Hey there,  
Use this as reference.

Ian Meier  
Director  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 847-6640 (Office)  
250 643-0078 (Cell)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 10:53:47 AM PDT  
**To:** "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX" <[Mary.Myers@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mary.Myers@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

FYI - for the response - need to show how that is consistent w broad prov approach in small remote communities

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Sheldan, Tim FLNR:EX" <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 10:26:58 AM PDT  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Rousselle, Jillian FLNR:EX" <[Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca)>

**Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm**

We will need to quickly develop a response. I presume that all of these issues were considered by BCWS before implementing this decision.

Sent from Tim Sheldon's iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Thomson <s.22>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 9:58:16 AM PDT  
**To:** Bruce Strongitharm  
<Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca>, Laura Tennant  
<Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca>, Tim Sheldon  
<Tim.Sheldon@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm**

This is the info I referenced on the call this morning re the rap attack issue in Salmon Arm that has come into our office in Kelowna.

Steve Thomson  
MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource  
Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
250-387-6240 (Victoria)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Norm Letnick  
<s.22>  
**Date:** September 16, 2016 at 4:08:59 PM  
PDT  
**To:** Steve Thomson  
<s.22>  
**Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack  
Base in Salmon Arm**

Is this yours Steve?

----- Forwarded message -----

From <s.22>  
<s.22>  
Date: Fri, Sep 16, 2016 at 11:06 AM  
Subject: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in  
Salmon Arm  
To: Steve Thomson. Mla  
<steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca>, Norm  
Letnick <norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca>,



Christy Clark. Mla  
<[christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca)>

Dear Mr. Minister and Members of the Legislature,  
I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring.  
Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.  
The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.  
The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.  
Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accomodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for

the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the **consistency** plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the **revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.**

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22 a member of the B C Liberal Party,  
s.22

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and

train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.

**From:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: BN for September 27th 2016 mlm  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2017 3:00:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.jpg](#)  
[BN for September 27th 2016 mlm.docx](#)

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**Ian Meier**

Director, Wildfire Operations

BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Phone: 250 847-6640 | Cell: 250 643-0078

***Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555***



---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 8:43 AM  
**To:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX; Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX; Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX; March, Kelly PSA:EX  
**Subject:** BN for September 27th 2016 mlm

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests. Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Seasonal Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the British Columbia Wildfire Service have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. There is no other Office in the BCWS that receives this level of treatment. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost, after staff contributions, of \$119,000. During the 2015 fire season a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted. Staff within the Salmon Arm office were involved in this review. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office.<sup>s.13</sup>

s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an email drafted by<sup>s.22</sup> , a member of the B C Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's including Minister Steve Thomson complaining about the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of Information shared at the September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 staff meeting.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination for accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000.00 . The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian revenue Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.

s.13

**OPTIONS:**

s.13

Approved / Not Approved

---

Signature  
Steve Thomson, Minister, Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations

---

Date

**Attachments:**

**Contact:**

*ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney*

*Div: IROD*

*Phone: 250-356-1874*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Name: Madeline Maley*

*Div/Region/Branch: BCWS*

*Phone: 250-312-3032*

**Prepared by:**

*Name: Murray Henry*

*Branch/Region: BCWS*

*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: RAP note  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2017 3:11:10 PM  
**Attachments:** [FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision.docx](#)  
[ATT00001.htm](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.jpg](#)

---

**Ian Meier**

Director, Wildfire Operations

BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Phone: 250 847-6640 | Cell: 250 643-0078

**Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555**



---

**From:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:58 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RAP note

Hi Mary Sue,

Here is the draft UBCM note. There are some edits needed that will be dealt with in the morning. They are mostly spelling in nature.

Ian Meier

Director

BC Wildfire Service

250 847-6640 (Office)

250 643-0078 (Cell)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX" <[Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 8:46:50 PM PDT  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** one change

sent the older version, I made one change in this one where I removed the cost piece from the background and just left it as the second to last speaking note.



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016  
Date of previous note: [date]  
File: [arcs/orcs #]  
CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable (first/last name), Minister of (name) OR (first/last name),  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of (name) [

**ISSUE:**

On September 7th, 2016 BCWS delivered the decision to the Rappel base in Salmon arm that accommodations and meals will no longer be available to staff.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment and Townhouse Vacancy Rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC. Cost aside, this decision was made in an attempt to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of Rappel staff receiving preferred treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title and ultimately lead to a stronger rappel program where they will be on the same playing field as the majority of other firefighting/staff resources provincially.

**SPEAKING / RESPONSE POINTS:**

The Rappel base is the only location in the province that provides a catering option for staff, making it inconsistent and leaving the program vulnerable to perceptions of special treatment.

There are only 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide subsidized live on base accommodations – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is non-existent because of remoteness or industry activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering. There is no formal report on vacancy and availability rates for locations with 10,000 people or less.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (E.g Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St John). Salmon arm is considered an Urban Centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC).

CMHC publishes an annual report on the rental market in British Columbia, but only examines locations with a population of 10,000 people or more. See Excel attachment to view how Salmon Arm compares in vacancy and availability rates to other locations defined as Urban Centres that house BCWS crews. (Similar or less availability rates in Terrace, Vernon, Penticton, Cranbrook, and Nelson. Cranbrook and Nelson have lower availability rates and need to house between 17-20 more BCWS crew staff than Salmon Arm- 35)

One argument is that making this change in one year will create an influx of staff seeking accommodation all at once unlike locations where live on accommodation has not been an option. However, a large number of our crew staff in all locations do not hold onto their accommodation through the off season and seek new accommodation on their recall to work each spring. (e.g. Williams Lake, Terrace, etc.)

It is important to note that there are many locations with low vacancy rates that have BCWS offices and staff at these locations have always found appropriate accommodation annually- even with most individuals being seasonal workers.

There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program. This is the cost assumed by the government after collecting the subsidy paid by rappel staff.

More importantly this perceived preferred treatment will disappear with the decision to move forward with no meals and accommodations on base and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.

#### **Attachments:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information- 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)



BCWS Staff Locations  
and Housing Data.xls

**Contact:***ADM:**Div:**Phone:***Alternate Contact:***Name:**Div/Region/Branch:**Phone:***Prepared by:***Name:**Branch/Region:**Phone:*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: REVISE: 224540  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2017 2:59:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [224540 - Rappel Base in Salmon Arm.docx](#)  
[224540 - DMO Comments.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image007.jpg](#)  
**Importance:** High

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**Ian Meier**

Director, Wildfire Operations

BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Phone: 250 847-6640 | Cell: 250 643-0078

**Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555**



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**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 23, 2016 1:09 PM  
**To:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX; Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: REVISE: 224540  
**Importance:** High

Madeline for clarity, the attached BN was developed for a response to a concern from a local government, not a response to the attached letter.  
Claire has started to work on a response to the letter. She had a deadline of October 4th on that response.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" <[Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** 2016-09-23 11:52 (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>, "Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX" <[Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** REVISE: 224540

Hi Murray,

The DMO came back with some comments (attached in the PDF). Can you please revise the information note (word doc attached) and send back for ADM approval.

Thank you,



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION AND MEAL PROVISION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE STAFF AT THE RAPPEL BASE IN SALMON ARM**

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program within the Province's BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

In short, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodation to staff. The City of Salmon Arm has a higher rental apartment and townhouse vacancy rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St. John. Cost aside, the decision was made September 7, 2016 to eliminate accommodation and meal provision at this base to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia (BC). This decision will come into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and is not consistent government standards of fiscal restraint. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff.

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John). Salmon Arm is considered an urban centre as defined as having a population of 10,000

people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC). In a review of vacancy rates across BC in communities of similar size to Salmon Arm that also house BCWF staff Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Government does not provide accommodation in communities of Salmon Arm's Size, even in areas with low summer vacancy.

#### **RESPONSE POINTS:**

- The Provincial Government's Wildfire Service has recently made the decision to eliminate the provision of accommodation and meals to the staff at the Rappel base in Salmon Arm.
- The Rappel base is the only location in the province that currently provides a catering option for staff.
- Making this change will bring Salmon Arm into line with other BCWS centres of the same size and population.
- Making this change in Salmon Arm will bring Provincial consistency where staff are responsible for finding their own accommodation.
- Government must be responsive to tax payer funds. There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program.
- This decision will also eliminate perceived preferred treatment and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.

#### **Attachment:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information - 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)

#### **Contact:**

Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250 356-1874

#### **Alternate Contact:**

Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3032

#### **Prepared by:**

Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3068

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 22, 2016
Exec Director	MM	Sept 22, 2016

From: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: FW: Salmon Arm staff letter  
Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 2:57:19 PM  
Attachments: [Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter.docx](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image007.jpg](#)

---

**Ian Meier**

Director, Wildfire Operations

BC Wildfire Service | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Phone: 250 847-6640 | Cell: 250 643-0078

**Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555**



---

From: Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX

Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:11 PM

To: Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX

Subject: Salmon Arm staff letter

FYI I will be sending this out to all staff that worked at this base in 2016. I had Cliff work with Kelly to prepared it.

FLNR Logo - 2016



**Murray Henry**

Deputy Director

BC Wildfire Service |

(d) 250-312-3068 (c) 250-318-4484

**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

This letter is to advise that the British Columbia Wildfire Service will no longer be offering accommodation and meals at the Rappel Base in Salmon Arm in the 2017 fire season. Further to our discussion on September 6, 2016, this change is consistent with our current practice in urban areas of the Province. We are providing notice of the change to allow employees sufficient time to make alternate arrangements for accommodation and meals prior to recall in 2017.

For clarity, accommodations and meals will not be available at the Rappel Base effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The Kamloops Fire Centre strongly encourages you to collaborate with your colleagues ahead of your recall date to locate appropriate accommodation in Salmon Arm or the surrounding area.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact the Supervisor Rappel Operations Tom Hansen at (250) 832-9741.

Thank you,

Murray Henry



**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#); [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 224540 - Decision Note for MST  
**Date:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 9:54:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [224540 - Decision to Eliminate Provision to BCWS Seasonal Staff at Salmon Arm.docx](#)  
[image001.png](#)

---

FYI

---

**From:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 9:28 AM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX; Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: 224540 - Decision Note for MST  
Tim's edits are attached as an FYI – this is now with the MO.

**Sandra Jupp**  
*Executive Assistant to Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM*

---

**From:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 2:47 PM  
**To:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** 224540 - Decision Note for MST  
I will update cliff. Please move along to Tim for his review/approval.  
Many thanks,



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: DECISION TO ELIMINATE ACCOMMODATIONS AND MEAL PROVISION TO THE BC WILDFIRE SERVICE SEASONAL STAFF AT THE SALMON ARM OFFICE**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. BCWS has been engaged in a process to eliminate the provision of these services to staff in all bases across the Province, except for remote areas without available services (Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton). Salmon Arm is the last BCWS base in this process. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost to government of \$119,000 after staff contributions. During the 2015 fire season, a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted and staff within the office were involved. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office. s.13

s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff, effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016, an email drafted by s.22, a member of the BC Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's, including Minister Steve Thomson, discussing the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of information shared at the meeting.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination of accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000. The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian Revenue

Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.

s.13

## **OPTIONS:**

s.13

## RECOMMENDATION:

s.13

Approved / Not Approved

Signature  
Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of  
Forests, Lands and Natural Resource  
Operations

Date

**Attachment:** Information Note – September 23, 2016

**Contact:**

*Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250-356-1874*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Madeline Maley  
BC Wildfire Service  
250-312-3032*

**Prepared by:**

*Murray Henry  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 28, 2016
Executive Director	MM	Sept 28, 2016

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#); [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Rap BN July 25th 2016  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2016 11:32:07 AM  
**Attachments:** [Rap BN July 25th 2016.docx](#)

---

Your feedback is requested, make any changes you feel are beneficial.  
Thanks EH!

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

File: [arcs/orcs #]

CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent of the day was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of Rappelling into incidents via helicopters.

Part of this program included full catering of meals and living accommodations for staff on base.

Today this is the only base in BCWS that supplies food and accommodations to staff in a community that has sufficient private resources to fulfil the need. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds \$119,000.00 annually.

BCWS continues to make significant efforts to eliminate inconsistencies in all aspects of staff's working environment.

Staff within BCWS Salmon Arm Base have exhibited a history of bypassing supervisors when they disagreed with decisions, this type of response it anticipated on this issue.

**DISCUSSION:**

Elitism and special treatments have combined to create a barrier between Rappel crews and other firefighting crews and staff around the Province.

Breaking down this barrier by treating Salmon Arm staff in the same way as the rest of the Province will contribute to the larger FLNRO team culture.

**NEXT STEPS:**

BCWS will be continuing it's consistency efforts by:

- discontinuing to supply the catering and accommodation option to staff at the Salmon Arm base effective the end of fire season 2016,
- Informing Salmon Arm staff of this decision prior to the end of employment 2016

Reviewing other available options for deploying personnel to inaccessible sites via helicopters.

**Alternate Contact:**  
*Name: Ian Meier*  
*IROD/BCWS/PWCC:*  
*Phone: 250 837-6640*

**Prepared by:**  
*Name: Murray Henry*  
*BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:*  
*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

From: [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Re: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision  
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2016 7:57:45 PM

---

Thanks Rob,

I am definitely less concerned about the briefing note and wrapping my mind about next steps  
s.13

I'll let Murray know my schedule for tomorrow, enjoy the island !

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: "Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX"  
Date: 2016-09-20 7:53 PM (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX"  
Subject: Re: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision

Sitting here with Ian and Murray. Murray will be in touch tomorrow to discuss next steps. I reminded them of your schedule (klt) tomorrow. Figure this might be as s.13 putting things together and I will assist as needed.

Longer term... s.13

Give me a call anytime to chat further.

Hope klt goes well. Chat soon.

Rob Schweitzer  
A/Manager  
Kamloops Fire Center  
250-320-0433

---

From: Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2016 6:08 PM  
To: Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
Subject: Re: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision

---

Thanks for touching base. Will be discussing with Murray tonight and will let you know.

Rob Schweitzer  
A/Manager  
Kamloops Fire Center

250-320-0433

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 5:55 PM  
**To:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision

---

How do you want to proceed with this ? Seems that Murray has most of the info on the decision but I don't mind crafting something (with help).

s.22

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX"  
**Date:** 2016-09-20 5:41 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" , "Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX" , "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX"  
**Cc:** "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX"  
**Subject:** Fwd: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision

Good day,  
Can a note be put together for this?

Thanks,

Ian Meier  
Director  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 847-6640 (Office)  
250 643-0078 (Cell)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 20, 2016 at 5:27:59 PM PDT  
**To:** "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>, "Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX" <[Mary.Myers@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mary.Myers@gov.bc.ca)>, "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" <[Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca)>, "Hogan, Tania FLNR:EX" <[Tania.Hogan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tania.Hogan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision

s.13



Sent from my iPhone



File: 400-50

September 19, 2016


TO: ALL EMPLOYEES AT THE RAPPEL BASE, SALMON ARM

This letter is to advise that the British Columbia Wildfire Service will no longer be offering accommodation and meals at the Rappel Base in Salmon Arm in the 2017 fire season. Further to our discussion on September 6, 2016, this change is consistent with our current practice in urban areas of the Province. We are providing notice of the change to allow employees sufficient time to make alternate arrangements for accommodation and meals prior to recall in 2017.

For clarity, accommodations and meals will not be available at the Rappel Base effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The Kamloops Fire Centre strongly encourages you to collaborate with your colleagues ahead of your recall date to locate appropriate accommodation in Salmon Arm or the surrounding area.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact the Supervisor Rappel Operations Tom Hansen at (250) 832-9741.

Yours truly,



Murray Henry  
Acting Deputy Director  
BC Wildfire Service

**From:** [Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#); [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Scan From <Device Name>  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 9:01:46 AM  
**Attachments:** [Scan\\_20160920.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

---

Cliff, as requested, attached is the final letter signed by Murray for the Rapattack catering. Please let me know if you would like me to send out.

*Nicole Unrau*

Corporate Wildfire Services Officer

BC Wildfire Service | Kamloops Fire Centre

Office: 250-554-5523 Fax: 250-376-9732 Cell: 250-851-6704

General Corporate Wildfire Services Enquiries: [CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca)

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 2:46 PM  
**To:** Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Scan From  
**From:** MWHENRY [<mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 2:44 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Scan From

**From:** [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Rap Room & Board 2015  
**Date:** Monday, August 29, 2016 12:59:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

Suggest we schedule a day next week to travel over. I'm fairly open next week. Not sure if it should be Cliff or myself attending with you.

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2016 12:45 PM  
**To:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Rap Room & Board 2015  
Perfect, when is a good day to pay them a visit?

---

**From:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2016 11:50 AM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Rap Room & Board 2015  
FYI – this will make future messaging a challenge.

---

**From:** Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2016 11:15 AM  
**To:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX; Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX; McInally, Jodi R FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Rap Room & Board 2015

s.13,s.22

*Nicole Unrau*

Corporate Wildfire Services Officer  
BC Wildfire Service | Kamloops Fire Centre  
Office: 250-554-5523 Fax: 250-376-9732 Cell: 250-851-6704  
General Corporate Wildfire Services Enquiries: [CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca)  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#); [Isfeld, Kurtis FLNR:EX](#); [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [March, Kelly PSA:EX](#)  
Subject: Salmon Arm staff Accommodation & Catering decision  
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2016 4:53:53 PM  
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

---

Today Cliff and I attended our Salmon Arm office to deliver the message that accommodation and catering to staff will not be supplied after this fire season.

First we reviewed the decision with Tom Hansen, the FPO in Salmon Arm.

Second Cliff, Tom and I met with all staff.

Cliff and I delivered the message that BCWS is continuing to work on areas of inconsistencies across the Province.

We have completed many tasks in this effort, today is the next step in this Provincial process.

Salmon Arm is the only office in BCWS that provides full time accommodations and food preparation for staff.

In an effort to treat all staff in a consistent manner both of these services will not be available to BCWS staff after this fire season.

Outstanding steps:

- Tom will work with staff to identify any outstanding issues created by this change.
- Tom and Cliff will work to develop answers to identified issues.
- Any issues that cannot be addressed at the local level will come back to me.
- Cliff will create a notification letter for each Salmon Arm staff member informing them of this decision. (Kelly March will assist in this letter development)
- Kamloops Fire Centre will send a letter to the caterer informing them that BCWS will not renew their contract for next year. (Cliff is tending to this)
- PWCC will notify the aviation carriers of this change.



**Murray Henry**  
Deputy Director  
BC Wildfire Service |  
(d) 250-312-3068 (c) 250-318-4484  
**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: FW: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Monday, September 26, 2016 8:00:13 AM

---

Now that BN has gone up we will need a draft response to the correspondence right Sandra?  
ASAP please

MS

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Thomson <sup>s.22</sup>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 9:58:16 AM PDT  
**To:** Bruce Strongitharm <[Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca)>, Laura Tennant  
<[Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca)>, Tim Sheldon <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

This is the info I referenced on the call this morning re the rap attack issue in  
Salmon Arm that has come into our office in Kelowna.

Steve Thomson  
MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
250-387-6240 (Victoria)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Norm Letnick<sup>s.22</sup>  
**Date:** September 16, 2016 at 4:08:59 PM PDT  
**To:** Steve Thomson <<sup>s.22</sup>>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

Is this yours Steve?

----- Forwarded message -----

From:<sup>s.22</sup>  
Date: Fri, Sep 16, 2016 at 11:06 AM  
Subject: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
To: Steve Thomson. Mla <[steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Norm  
Letnick <[norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Christy Clark. Mla  
<[christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,  
<[shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, <[todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca)>

Dear Mr. Minister and Members of the Legislature,  
I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of  
the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring.  
Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of  
government isn't always aware of the daily

decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government. The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province. The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.

Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accommodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the **consistency** plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the **revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.**

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22  
s.22, a member of the B C Liberal Party,

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at

the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.



**From:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Draft Salmon Arm report from Harry Spahan  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:31:49 PM  
**Attachments:** [Salmon Arm Rappel Base Catering Review \(2\).docx](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)

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This is the only other doc we have on rap...completed last yr (see Murray's note re:



**Madeline L. Maley, RPF | Executive Director BC Wildfire Service**  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Office: 250-312-3032 | Cell: 250-318-8441

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:30 PM  
**To:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Draft Salmon Arm report from Harry Spahan  
Madeline I have attached the document Harry submitted to me.

s.22

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 10:55 AM  
**To:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: As Requested  
FYI

---

**From:** Spahan, Harry FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 9:00 AM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** As Requested

# **SALMON ARM RAPPEL BASE CATERING SERVICES CONTRACT REVIEW**

**Prepared by Harry Spahan**

## **EXISTING CATERING SERVICE**

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base, which has on-site accommodation, has catering services provided by contract on a three year term. This is the only base in the province, including the Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Cariboo and Chetwynd bases, where catering services are provided and firefighting crews can have access to the kitchen. At these other bases crews cook their own meals. At the Puntzi Forward Attack Base, British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) staff reside off site and IA crews are based there on a “as-needed” basis. Puntzi Base hires an auxiliary cook as needed and BCWS purchases groceries directly from the local suppliers. All BCWS staff are charged by BCWS for food when they are living on-site at these bases (it comes off their pay checks).

At the Salmon Arm Rappel Base BCWS staff are charged rent, whereas all other bases, where there is on-site accommodation, BCWS staff are housed free. Rent includes electricity, water, heating and waste disposal. There are currently 6 Aircrew staff and 36 Rappel staff housed on-site during the 2015 fire season. In addition, 6 Rappel staff pay for lunch only and 2 Junior Fire Crew pay for meals but live off base.

## **TAX CONSIDERATIONS**

According to a BCWS Deputy Fire Centre Manager, Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) indicates that if food services are provided to staff then the service cost is a taxable benefit to staff. The same may be true for accommodation costs. This is an area that is being looked into by staff to ensure that BCWS are abiding by CRA rules and BCWS policy.

## **LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY**

The Salmon Arm Rapattack Residential Fire Base was originally built in Salmon Arm in 1979 at the Shuswap Regional Airport. It was logical to establish a permanent base location, close to an interior airport, where historical fire data had indicated high occurrence of lightning strikes that resulted in inaccessible forest fires (inaccessible from ground crews). As a result, rappel transportation proved effective and ensured/provided a strategic long-term fire response management tool. Recent statistical fire analysis continues to demonstrate cost savings, due to quick response times, for on-site rappel staffing at the base location.

## **RAPPEL BASE FACILITIES**

There are approximately 30 buildings on-site, including cabins. The Rappel Base facilities include:

- Permanent building that includes a full commercial kitchen with a cafeteria, small classroom and wash rooms,
- Permanent building that includes rappel equipment locker rooms, fire crew equipment storage, first aid room, workshop for base maintenance, laundry, washroom,
- One triple wide trailer used as a classroom and meeting room for staff, Provincial meetings and training throughout the year,

- Another triple wide trailer for the combined Rapattack and Zone office to accommodate 2 regular Rapattack/Zone Officers and rappel staff,
- Additional small warehouse buildings and storage areas for fire equipment,
- 70' foot tall rappel and hoist training tower,
- 3 concrete helipads with electrical and water service suitable for medium helicopters,
- A small double wide trailer with seven rooms for aircrew members, that include laundry and washrooms amenities,
- 20 staff cabins that sleep two rappel staff per cabin, and these buildings all have electric power, but no running water and no washrooms
- One single wide trailer for two FLNRO full time C&E officers, and
- Single-wide trailer adjacent to the C&E trailer (joined by a covered walk-way) that is used as additional office space and storage.

## CATERING SERVICES ANALYSIS

### BENEFITS

Overall, the feedback from BCWS staff at the Salmon Arm Rappel Base indicates that the catering services provided have been a benefit to the rappel program for the following reasons:

- It provides program stability and supports BCWS's centralization concept that ensures strict adherence to standard operating procedures,
- Contractors are familiar with provincial regulations regarding food quality and security, food preparation and other applicable standards that BCWS staff are not required to know,
- Catering services have the expertise and ability to prepare and serve food to large groups,
- It works well with the training and proficiency required each season for staff,
- On-site meals preparation by contractors allows for improved team cohesion between fire crews and with the development of relationships and rapport with aircrew members,
- Having the pilots and Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (AMEs) on-site and interacting with rappel staff during meals encourages discussion and increases the knowledge transfer to staff around safety while working with helicopters,
- There is a greater presence of Pilots and AMEs (Aircraft Maintenance Engineers) that increases safety inspections
- Having everyone on base allows for quick response due to access to staff, even with after hours and unforeseen incidents,
- There is a full kitchen facility available for BC Government staff use,
- There is historical use of the facility as initial incident command post during large local fires, and
- There is temporary use for receiving, housing and feeding out-of-province crews.

In addition, there are other factors that have been considered in the catering service analysis:

- Cost of food purchases, (which are increasing), and
- Kitchen equipment purchases, maintenance and care.

Accommodation factors and costs are also important in this analysis and include:

- Annual savings on reduced call-outs,

- Annual savings on base care and maintenance by crew even after regular hours,
- Limited vacancies and high real estate prices in Salmon Arm would make it very difficult for this number of crew to find their own accommodation in town (there may be a risk of losing a high number of trained staff),
- Cost recovery from rent charged (\$280/bi-weekly) = average recovery of \$114,000/yr. The rent charged to staff has been increasing over time, as deemed necessary, to adequately recover costs, and
- Annual savings to BC Government when training courses and meetings are held here (Approx. \$10,000/week based on an average of 25 students per course). Historically 5 provincial training courses are held here in the spring (S434, S411, L380, L381 and Weather Tower Safety) plus at least one multi-day meeting (BCTS, C&E and AAO). Other courses held here include Safety Officer, HLCO, CRM, Helipad, and Chainsaw. In the fall, the AAO group returns for their after season debrief and the Koreans have been here numerous times for a two week Fire Investigation Training course. Total savings on accommodation costs are approx. \$60,000/yr.

## COSTS

The cost for catering services, food, and associated equipment purchases and maintenance are:

- Food (Average \$100,000/yr). The contract specifies basic healthy food and is managed to reduce transportation costs where ever possible,
- Catering (Average \$122,000/yr). This cost has been relatively stable over many years. Yearly preplanning options have been discussed and new models have been successfully initiated to reduce costs (ie community gardens),
- Administration related to food and catering (not currently tracked),
- New commercial grade food/catering equipment (Average \$4,420/yr based on life expectancy of 10 yrs):

Dishwasher maintenance	\$1200
Convection oven	\$7000
Stove/stockpot	\$10,000
Cold table	\$7000
Steam table	\$7000
Upright freezer	\$7000
Walk-in cooler compressor/condenser	\$5000
TOTAL	\$44,200

- Savings of Aircrew daily per diems when on base (average savings \$100,000/yr) based on number of days aircrew is on base (linked to why base location is Salmon Arm due to proximity to historical and current number of rappel fires). Daily Per Diem for Pilot and AME is \$364 (Hotel \$100 x 2, meals \$49.50 x 2, truck \$65).

The costs for on-site accommodation are:

The base evolved from a tent camp to the original 13 cabins in 1992 that cost approximately \$20,000 each. These cabins have required very little maintenance due to their simplicity and are

otherwise kept clean and maintained by the crew that live in them. Historical costs have not been included since they have been amortized over past years.

The more recent 7 cabins built in 2013 cost approximately \$47,000 each and should easily last 50 years or more with their more durable metal roof. This is a yearly amortization cost of \$6,580.

**Summary of Annual Costs and Recoveries (does not include non-monetary benefits):**

Rapattack Crew Room and Board Recovery (Rent)	\$114,000
Rapattack Aircrew daily per diem savings	\$100,000
Other Ministry staff daily per diem savings	\$4,200
Training courses and meetings, savings room & board	\$60,000
Food	\$100,000
Catering	\$122,000
Food/catering equipment	-\$4,420
New cabins	-\$6,580
<b>Total Positive Recovery Benefit</b>	<b>\$45,200</b>

Government per diem rates, number of person-days and total annual costs if BCWS Rapattack staff would eat off-site when working out of Salmon Arm and entitled to meals over an average fire season:

Meal rate per diem	# person-days	TOTAL
\$48	486	\$23,328

## DISCUSSION

Briefly, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base operates as a small city during the fire season, and this dynamic creates strong teamwork and pride on the base. On-site catering services ensure food safety and security measures are regulated effectively and efficiently by supporting provincial departments. The cost analysis completed above demonstrates that the Base does have a net positive benefit from this service.

## RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION

s.13

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: RAP Attack Centre Information Note  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 5:48:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[224540 - DMO Comments.pdf](#)  
[Rappel w tracked changes MS.docx](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

As discussed, DMO has asked for my changes, answering more of the questions in email. Here is my revised time 2 version- I will walk Kim through it tomorrow am.

Of course, this note will now be the appendix to the new one- sigh

---

**From:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 11:15 AM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: RAP Attack Centre Information Note  
**Importance:** High

Hi Mary Sue –

Here is the updated note, version with tracked changes and the email with highlighted pieces to be addressed.

I think we need to be clearer on:

what is going to happen to the current structures; and  
whether or not standard per diems will now be offered.

---

**From:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 4:25 PM  
**To:** Eckardt, Dana R FLNR:EX; Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RAP Attack Centre Information Note  
**Importance:** High



Page 065 to/à Page 067

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

DUPLICATE

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 24~~23~~, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION AND MEAL PROVISION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE STAFF AT THE RAPPEL BASE IN SALMON ARM**

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program within the Province's BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

In short, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodation to staff. The City of Salmon Arm has a higher rental apartment and townhouse vacancy rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St. John. Cost aside, the decision was made September 7, 2016 to eliminate accommodation and meal provision at this base to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia (BC). This decision will come into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and is not consistent government standards of fiscal restraint. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff.

Although staff currently pay some of the costs ~~Even though staff do pay for their board and lodging, it is still an additional annual net cost to government of \$119,000. The Salmon Arm crew will only be provided per diems when they are working in locations other than their home location like all other BCWS crews. When crews (both firefighting and air crews) are working in other locations, they are provided with per diems as per the contract.~~

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either



difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John). Salmon Arm is considered an urban centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC). In a review of vacancy rates across BC in communities of similar size to Salmon Arm that also house BCWF staff Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Government does not provide accommodation in communities of Salmon Arm's Size, even in areas with low summer vacancy.

s.13

### RESPONSE POINTS:

- The Provincial Government's Wildfire Service has recently made the decision to eliminate the provision of accommodation and meals to the staff at the Rappel base in Salmon Arm.
- The Rappel base is the only location in the province that currently provides a catering option for staff.
- Making this change will bring Salmon Arm into line with other BCWS centres of the same size and population.
- Making this change in Salmon Arm will bring Provincial consistency where staff are responsible for finding their own accommodation.
- Government must be responsive to tax payer funds. There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program.
- This decision will also eliminate perceived preferred treatment and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.
- The infrastructure will be repurposed by BCWS to meet operational needs.

### Attachment:

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information - 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)

#### Contact:

Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250 356-1874

#### Alternate Contact:

Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3032

#### Prepared by:

Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3068

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 22 <sup>26</sup> , 2016
Exec Director	MM	Sept 22 <sup>23</sup> , 2016

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Meier, Jan R FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm  
Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:53:48 AM

---

FYI - for the response - need to show how that is consistent w broad prov approach in small remote communities

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Sheldan, Tim FLNR:EX" <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 10:26:58 AM PDT  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Rousselle, Jillian FLNR:EX" <[Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jillian.Rousselle@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

We will need to quickly develop a response. I presume that all of these issues were considered by BCWS before implementing this decision.

Sent from Tim Sheldan's iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Thomson [s.22](#)  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 9:58:16 AM PDT  
**To:** Bruce Strongitharm <[Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bruce.Strongitharm@gov.bc.ca)>, Laura Tennant <[Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Laura.Tennant@gov.bc.ca)>, Tim Sheldan <[Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Sheldan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

This is the info I referenced on the call this morning re the rap attack issue in Salmon Arm that has come into our office in Kelowna.

Steve Thomson  
MLA Kelowna Mission  
Minister Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Ph. 250-712-3620 (Kelowna)  
250-387-6240 (Victoria)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Norm Letnic|[s.22](#)

**Date:** September 16, 2016 at 4:08:59 PM PDT  
**To:** Steve Thomson s.22  
**Subject:** Fwd: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

Is this yours Steve?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: s.22

Date: Fri, Sep 16, 2016 at 11:06 AM

Subject: B C Wildfire RapAttack Base in Salmon Arm

To: Steve Thomson. Mla

<[steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Norm Letnick

<[norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca)>, Christy Clark. Mla

<[christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.rustad.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greg.kyllo.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:eric.foster.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:terry.lake.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shirley.bond.mla@leg.bc.ca)>,

<[todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca)>

Dear Mr. Minister and Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to ensure you and your colleagues are aware of the planned closing of the RapAttack Base Camp effective next spring. Being involved in politics for many years, I understand the political arm of government isn't always aware of the daily decisions within the bureaucratic and administrative arm of government.

The deputy director of B C Wildfire, Mr. Murray Henry and the Kamloops Fire Centre Manager, Mr. Cliff Chapman, recently visited the Rap Attack Base camp in Salmon Arm and notified team members that the lodging and cookhouse on the government owned property will be closed for the use of the fire crew staff next year in order to standardize or ensure CONSISTENCY for all B C Wildfire Services bases and crews in the Province.

The camp in Salmon Arm has 20 cabins and a cook/eating house built at a cost to taxpayers of at least \$500,000.00. It has provided accommodations to at least 40 Rapattack fire fighters who do pay/reimburse the Province for the room and board costs. I understand rental accommodations in Salmon Arm simply aren't available especially during the busy fire fighting season when tourists take up most spots. A check on Further, when these RapAttack team members return from various dangerous spots, they are tired and appreciate the instant availability of wholesome food stocked at the camp.

Question: In the name of 'standardization or consistency', why ever would the Province close a facility that is providing room and board to staff in a small town where it is difficult to obtain or unavailable? It is common place for the private sector to provide specific board and lodging camps to its employees where needed. What is the justification for such a decision? The base also provides food and accomodation to the pilots and engineers for three of the provincially contracted 'medium' helicopters, as per the government contract. If the aircrew are also moved off base, then lodged and fed by government per diems, it would cost the government \$1200 per day for the six aircrew. Further, the base cabins and food services are currently used to lodge ministry staff from around the province, when the base often plays host to multiple training course for staff high in the BC Wildfire ranks.

I appreciate some camps in B C don't have these facilities. However, must we REDUCE an excellent functioning camp to the LOWEST common denominator in the Province? Or, is the government going to offer other board and room options to employees AT A GREATER COST to taxpayers? Where was this decision initiated? Is this an example of senior bureaucrats in Victoria who are NOT IN THE FIELD and who haven't thought through the repercussions of a decision to close this camp issuing directives to their staff further down the line?

The investment has already been made and the costs of providing the lodging and food is recovered from the workers. Please check into the closing of this camp as well as the **consistency** plan. There has been a very negative ripple effect among the Ministry's fire fighters and their families and friends with respect to how taxpayers' monies are spent/invested. It makes one wonder if the new 'standardization/consistency' of uniforms, badges, and now bases, as well as the new changes to the payroll system, limiting the number of hours that can be worked in each pay period, and the **revamping of Branch patches, vehicle decals, logos, and letterheads is another 'make work' project of the Ministry staff in Victoria and Kamloops.**

Is that what our government is going to do with its SURPLUS funds? This may seem like 'small potatoes' but it is JUST these kinds of SILLY decisions that drive supporters and voters in general crazy!

I trust you accept the spirit of goodwill in which I bring this to your attention. I also hope you consider a second look at this decision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers and Best regards,

s.22  
, a member of the B C Liberal Party,

s.22

P.S. On a POSITIVE note and FYI, the RapAttack teams have been living at the base in Salmon Arm for 30 years, and as with

all fire crews in their respective cities, are very active and engaged with the community. The RapAttack crews routinely build and maintain mountain bike, hiking, and cross country ski trails around the area; take part in the Salmon Arm air show and local job fairs; and train and work with two high school students every year as part of a junior fire crew program. No consultation or conversation was initiated with the base supervisor or crew prior to the decision made. Not only do the crews in Salmon Arm take pride in their base, work hard, and pay room and board, but for many of the crew there, their cabins are their primary residence and contain all of their possessions for the majority of the year.

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Kylo Rapattack note  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:31:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Yes I am guessing this is one that was worked on last year. I will get Madeline to track this.

Thanks Gordon

---

**From:** Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:30 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Kylo Rapattack note

s.13

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**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:27 PM  
**To:** Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Kylo Rapattack note  
LOL yes please!!!

---

**From:** Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:26 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Kylo Rapattack note  
Hi Mary Sue,

I've got a copy of the "free-range" Salmon Arm rapattack note. Would you like me to scan it and send it to you?



**Gordon Robinson**  
**Manager, Executive Issues**  
Deputy Minister's Office  
Phone (250) 387-4878, Cell (250) 213-8447  
**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: RE: REVISE: 224540  
Date: Friday, September 23, 2016 3:19:00 PM  
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

---

Can we put it in the BN?

---

**From:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 23, 2016 3:19 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: REVISE: 224540  
**Importance:** High  
For you and Tim to know -



**Madeline L. Maley, RPF | Executive Director BC Wildfire Service**

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Office: [250-312-3032](#) | Cell: [250-318-8441](#)

----- Original message -----

From: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
Date: 2016-09-23 12:57 PM (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>  
Subject: Fwd: REVISE: 224540

----- Original message -----

From: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
Date: 2016-09-23 12:57 PM (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>  
Subject: Fwd: REVISE: 224540  
s.13

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" <[Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca)>  
Date: 2016-09-23 11:52 (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>, "Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX" <[Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca)>  
Cc: "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX" <[Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Madeline.Maley@gov.bc.ca)>  
Subject: REVISE: 224540

Hi Murray,

The DMO came back with some comments (attached in the PDF). Can you please revise the information note (word doc attached) and send back for ADM approval.

Thank you,



From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Re: Salmon Arm message  
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2016 9:17:14 AM

---

Thanks Murray. Tim is aware the announce will happen today.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 7, 2016, at 8:39 AM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Just confirmed with Kelly, that it is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment. There is also nothing in their hire letter, there is an optional form that they sign if they want food or lodging.

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:21 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm message  
Sounds good

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:13 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Salmon Arm message  
I will confirm that as well before I go. I will let you know.  
Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
Date: 2016-09-06 16:56 (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
Subject: Re: Salmon Arm message  
Thanks - so subsidized accommodation is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 6, 2016, at 4:53 PM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
<[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

s.13

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.



From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Myers, Mary E FLNR:EX](#); [Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX](#); [Hogan, Tania FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: UBCM note needed on -RAP salmon arm accommodation decision  
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2016 5:28:01 PM

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s.13

Sent from my iPhone

Page 078 to/à Page 080

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

DUPLICATE

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: other RAPP note  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:42:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [BN September 28 2016.docx](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

My changes are tracked- Sandra is processing/formatting now for DMO approval

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:39 AM  
**To:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** other RAPP note  
**Importance:** High  
cid:image001.png@01D2082B.C32EDD10



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Seasonal Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the British Columbia Wildfire Service have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. BCWS has been engaged in a process to eliminate the provision of these services to staff in all bases across the Province, except for remote areas without available services (Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton). Salmon Arm is the last BCWS base in this process. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost to government, of \$119,000, after staff contributions. During the 2015 fire season a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted and ~~Staff~~ within the Salmon Arm office were involved ~~in this review~~. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office. The existing infrastructure (bunkhouse cabins) will be relocated to the BCWS training facility in Merritt and the kitchen/cafeteria will be re-purposed into office space.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed. See attached BN for information on the decision

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an email drafted by <sup>s.22</sup> a member of the B C Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's including Minister Steve Thomson discussing the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of Information shared at the September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 staff meeting.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination for accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000.00-. The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian revenue Agency rules,

and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing  
| available for staff.

s.13

### **OPTIONS:**

s.13

s.13

s.13

| [Attachment](#)

Approved / Not Approved	Signature	Date
	Steve Thomson, Minister, Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations	

**Attachments:**

<b>Contact:</b> ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney Div: IROD Phone: 250-356-1874	<b>Alternate Contact:</b> Name: Madeline Maley Div/Region/Branch: BCWS Phone: 250-312-3032	<b>Prepared by:</b> Name: Murray Henry Branch/Region: BCWS Phone: 250 318-4484
---	---	---

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Goad, Jennifer FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: RAP note  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 8:21:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision.docx](#)  
[ATT00001.htm](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Can you take a look at this one please..it is urgent

---

I will send you the note to MO on it. Really needs to show that government does not provide accommodation even in area with low summer vacancy...

**From:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:58 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RAP note

Hi Mary Sue,

Here is the draft UBCM note. There are some edits needed that will be dealt with in the morning. They are mostly spelling in nature.

Ian Meier  
Director  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 847-6640 (Office)  
250 643-0078 (Cell)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX" <[Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 21, 2016 at 8:46:50 PM PDT  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** one change

sent the older version, I made one change in this one where I removed the cost piece from the background and just left it as the second to last speaking note.

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016  
Date of previous note: [date]  
File: [arcs/orcs #]  
CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable (first/last name), Minister of (name) OR (first/last name),  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of (name) [

**ISSUE:**

On September 7th, 2016 BCWS delivered the decision to the Rappel base in Salmon arm that accommodations and meals will no longer be available to staff.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment and Townhouse Vacancy Rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC. Cost aside, this decision was made in an attempt to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of Rappel staff receiving preferred treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title and ultimately lead to a stronger rappel program where they will be on the same playing field as the majority of other firefighting/staff resources provincially.

**SPEAKING / RESPONSE POINTS:**



The Rappel base is the only location in the province that provides a catering option for staff, making it inconsistent and leaving the program vulnerable to perceptions of special treatment.

There are only 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide subsidized live on base accommodations – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is non-existent because of remoteness or industry activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering. There is no formal report on vacancy and availability rates for locations with 10,000 people or less.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (E.g Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St John). Salmon arm is considered an Urban Centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC).

CMHC publishes an annual report on the rental market in British Columbia, but only examines locations with a population of 10,000 people or more. See Excel attachment to view how Salmon Arm compares in vacancy and availability rates to other locations defined as Urban Centres that house BCWS crews. (Similar or less availability rates in Terrace, Vernon, Penticton, Cranbrook, and Nelson. Cranbrook and Nelson have lower availability rates and need to house between 17-20 more BCWS crew staff than Salmon Arm- 35)

One argument is that making this change in one year will create an influx of staff seeking accommodation all at once unlike locations where live on accommodation has not been an option. However, a large number of our crew staff in all locations do not hold onto their accommodation through the off season and seek new accommodation on their recall to work each spring. (e.g. Williams Lake, Terrace, etc.)

It is important to note that there are many locations with low vacancy rates that have BCWS offices and staff at these locations have always found appropriate accommodation annually- even with most individuals being seasonal workers.

There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program. This is the cost assumed by the government after collecting the subsidy paid by rappel staff.

More importantly this perceived preferred treatment will disappear with the decision to move forward with no meals and accommodations on base and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.

#### **Attachments:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information- 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)



BCWS Staff Locations  
and Housing Data.xls

**Contact:***ADM:**Div:**Phone:***Alternate Contact:***Name:**Div/Region/Branch:**Phone:***Prepared by:***Name:**Branch/Region:**Phone:*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Goad, Jennifer FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Fwd: BN BCWS Salmon Arm Rappattack  
Date: Thursday, September 22, 2016 10:02:01 AM  
Attachments: [image001.png](#)  
[ATT00001.htm](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[ATT00002.htm](#)  
[FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision v2.docx](#)  
[ATT00003.htm](#)

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX" <[Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Clair.Lloyd@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** September 22, 2016 at 9:54:34 AM PDT  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" <[Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandra.Jupp@gov.bc.ca)>, "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" <[Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Ian.Meier@gov.bc.ca)>, "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: BN BCWS Salmon Arm Rappattack

Apologies, now with contacts complete.

**Clair Lloyd**

Issues Manager | BC Wildfire Service

Office: 250 387-8707 | Fax: 250 387-5685

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016  
Date of previous note: [date]  
File: [arcs/orcs #]  
CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forest, Lands & Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE:**

On September 7th, 2016 British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) delivered the decision to the Rappel base in Salmon Arm that accommodations and meals will no longer be available to staff, effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create a firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054).

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment and Townhouse Vacancy Rate than many other locations in which crews are based. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John, B.C. Cost aside, the decision to phase out the Salmon Arm catering and on-base accommodations was made in an attempt to align the Rappel base and staff with all other BCWS base locations across British Columbia.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff.

## **SPEAKING / RESPONSE POINTS:**

One of the goals of Government is the fair and equitable treatment of all staff. The Rappel base is the only location in the province that provides a catering option for BCWS staff, making it inconsistent and leaving the program vulnerable to perceptions of special treatment. The decision to move forward with no meals and accommodations on-base will enable the Rappel program to operate in the same manner as all other BCWS locations in the province.

There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide on-base accommodation and catering to the Rappel program. This is the cost assumed by the government after collecting the subsidy paid by Rappel staff.

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

CMHC publishes an annual report on the rental market in British Columbia for locations with a population of 10,000 people or more; defined as Urban Centres. As such Salmon Arm, with a population of over 17,000 is considered an Urban Centre. There are no other fire crew bases, in locations of similar size to Salmon Arm that provide live on accommodations and catering (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St John). There is no formal report on vacancy and availability rates for locations with 10,000 people or less.

Similar or lower vacancy and availability rates to Salmon Arm exist in Terrace, Vernon, Penticton, Cranbrook, and Nelson. Moreover, Cranbrook and Nelson have lower rates with a need to house up to 20 more BCWS staff than Salmon Arm (see attached spreadsheet for how Salmon Arm compares in vacancy and availability rates to other locations defined as Urban Centres that house BCWS crews).

It is important to note that there are many locations with low vacancy rates that have BCWS offices where seasonal, non-local staff have always found accommodations.

## **Attachments:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information- 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)



BCWS Staff Locations  
and Housing Data.xls

### **Contact:**

*ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney  
Div: IROD  
Phone: 250 356-1874*

### **Alternate Contact:**

*Name: Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
Div/Region/Branch: BC Wildfire Service  
Phone: 250 312-3032*

### **Prepared by:**

*Name: Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
Branch/Region: BC Wildfire Service  
Phone: 250 312-3068*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		

PRGM Dir./Mgr.		
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Centre	Crew Staff (Y/N)
Abbotsford-Mission CMA	N
Campbell River CA	N
Chilliwack CA	Y
Courtney CA	N
Cranbrook CA	Y
Dawson Creek CA	N
Duncan CA	N
Fort St. John CA	Y
Kamloops CA	Y
Kelowna CMA	N
Nanaimo CA	N
Nelson CY	Y
Parksville CA	Y
Penticton CA	Y
Port Alberni CA	Y
Powell River CA	Y
Prince George CA	Y
Prince Rupert CA	N
Quesnel CA	Y
Salmon Arm CA	Y
Squamish CA	Y
Summerland DM	N
Terrace CA	Y
Vancouver CMA	N
Vernon CA	Y
Victoria CMA	N
Williams Lake CA	Y

# OF STAFF			Additional Info
IA	UNIT	TOTAL	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	
0	20	20	
0	0	0	
15	40	55	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	
30	20	50	
18	20	38	
0	0	0	
0	0	0	
12	40	52	Including 2 Shoreacres UC's
9	0	9	Including 3 Errington IAC's
22	0	22	
0	20	20	
3	0	3	
15	20	35	
0	0	0	
0	20	20	
35	0	35	
3	0	3	
0	0	0	
6	20	26	
0	0	0	
10	20	30	
0	0	0	
36	20	56	



All Data for vacancy rates and availability rates was derived from the latest CMHC Rental Market Report completed in 2015. This report was released in the Spring of 2015.

All crew number data was taken from the BCWS Resource Book.

NOTE: CMHC only releases information for what they define as Urban Centres, which is defined as a centre with a population of 10,000 people or more. The locations listed are not a comprehensive list of base locations for BCWS in the province but only those that meet the threshold of being an Urban centre. This means that remote locations such as Alexis Creek, Dease Lake, 100 Mile House, Hope, Lytton, Fort Nelson, etc. were not listed and likely have similar or less accomodation availability.

Centre	# Staff	Vacancy Rates (%)	Average Rent (\$)
<b>CRANBROOK CA</b>	<b>55</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		16.7	**
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.3	624
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.3	744
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		0	832
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.8</b>	<b>700</b>
<b>FORT ST. JOHN CA</b>	<b>50</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.4	751
<i>1 bedroom</i>		5.5	879
<i>2 bedroom</i>		3	1111
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		3.6	1155
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>1013</b>
<b>KAMLOOPS CA</b>	<b>38</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		10.1	694
<i>1 bedroom</i>		4.6	757
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.7	893
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		4.9	1128
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.1</b>	<b>813</b>
<b>Nelson CY</b>	<b>52</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		0	559
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.4	679
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.6	835
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		**	1145
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.6</b>	<b>751</b>
<b>Parksville CA</b>	<b>9</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.9	546
<i>1 bedroom</i>		0.9	726
<i>2 bedroom</i>		0.9	772
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		0	859
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>758</b>
<b>Penticton CA</b>	<b>22</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.8	578
<i>1 bedroom</i>		1.6	699
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.1	852
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		0	846
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.6</b>	<b>757</b>

<b>Port Alberni CA</b>	<b>20</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		1.5	542
<i>1 bedroom</i>		3.9	559
<i>2 bedroom</i>		5	691
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		3.9	766
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4.2</b>	<b>623</b>
<b>Powell River CA</b>	<b>3</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		**	544
<i>1 bedroom</i>		0.7	608
<i>2 bedroom</i>		2	700
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		6.3	760
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.9</b>	<b>655</b>
<b>Prince George CA</b>	<b>35</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		8.7	568
<i>1 bedroom</i>		5.5	656
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.3	782
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		6	881
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.3</b>	<b>735</b>
<b>Quesnel CA</b>	<b>20</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		0	451
<i>1 bedroom</i>		9	557
<i>2 bedroom</i>		2.7	642
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		5.6	798
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.1</b>	<b>610</b>
<b>Salmon Arm CA</b>	<b>35</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		**	**
<i>1 bedroom</i>		3.1	681
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.1	819
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		**	**
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>751</b>
<b>Terrace CA</b>	<b>26</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		3.2	566
<i>1 bedroom</i>		4.9	656
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.2	845
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		2.2	949
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4.1</b>	<b>778</b>
<b>Vernon CA</b>	<b>30</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		9.1	553
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.4	670
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4	811
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		1	878
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.4</b>	<b>738</b>
<b>Williams Lake CA</b>	<b>56</b>		
<i>Bachelor</i>		0	508
<i>1 bedroom</i>		1.6	628
<i>2 bedroom</i>		5.3	718

<i>3+ bedroom</i>		18.4	844
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.1</b>	<b>697</b>

# of APT Units	Availability Rates (%)	Percentage Change of Avg Rent (%)
12	16.7	++
306	2.7	2.8
488	1.5	1.5
38	0	++
<b>844</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>
78	5.4	7.2
598	6.9	7.4
951	4.8	5.4
32	3.6	4.3
<b>1659</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>6.3</b>
226	11.8	++
1689	7.1	1.8
1377	6.5	3.4
49	4.9	2.6
<b>3341</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>2.4</b>
68	0	**
175	2.4	++
255	1.6	1
12	**	**
<b>510</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.2</b>
17	5.9	3.8
115	1.7	1.8
437	1.4	1.7
15	6.7	1
<b>584</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>1.7</b>
137	5.8	2.1
1014	2.7	4.5
863	1.4	5.2
13	0	-5.1
<b>2027</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>

71	1.5	2.4
410	4.1	1.6
410	5.3	1.3
28	3.9	++
<b>919</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>
13	**	**
293	2.1	3.7
247	2.4	3.6
47	10.6	-0.9
<b>600</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.8</b>
252	9.5	4.3
1063	7.4	3.7
1510	5.9	3.2
391	7.8	1.2
<b>3216</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>3.3</b>
16	0	4.5
201	9	1.6
299	2.7	4.4
18	5.6	-4.3
<b>534</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>
11	**	**
168	3.8	1.9
197	1.1	0.8
5	**	**
<b>381</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>
31	3.2	2.4
123	6.5	8.5
213	4.2	9.9
45	2.2	8.2
<b>412</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>8.8</b>
97	9.1	**
669	2.5	2.3
680	4	1.4
114	1	2.9
<b>1560</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.3</b>
10	0	**
185	1.6	-0.8
358	5.3	0.9

49	18.4	0.3
<b>602</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>





Vernon has 1.1% more in availability rates compared to salmon arm.


**\*2015 Data**

Centre	# Staff	Vacancy Rates (%)	Average Rent (\$)	# of Townhouse Units	Availability Rates (%)
<b>CRANBROOK CA</b>	<b>55</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		14.3	**	14	14.3
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.8	624	323	3.1
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.1	745	548	1.3
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		0.8	873	132	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.8</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>1017</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>FORT ST. JOHN CA</b>	<b>50</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.4	751	78	5.4
<i>1 bedroom</i>		5.3	874	646	6.5
<i>2 bedroom</i>		3.1	1140	1195	4.8
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		3.5	1275	206	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.9</b>	<b>1059</b>	<b>2125</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>KAMLOOPS CA</b>	<b>38</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		10.1	694	228	11.8
<i>1 bedroom</i>		4.6	757	1711	7
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.3	903	1580	6
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		2	1187	273	2.4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4.6</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>3792</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Nelson CY</b>	<b>52</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		0	559	68	0
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.4	679	175	2.4
<i>2 bedroom</i>		1.6	835	255	1.6
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		**	1110	15	**
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.6</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Parksville CA</b>	<b>9</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.9	546	17	5.9
<i>1 bedroom</i>		0.7	728	137	1.5
<i>2 bedroom</i>		0.9	779	455	1.3
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		0	917	18	5.6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Penticton CA</b>	<b>22</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		5.8	577	139	5.8
<i>1 bedroom</i>		1.6	700	1029	2.7
<i>2 bedroom</i>		2.7	852	952	3.1
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		1	1136	101	**

<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2.3</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>2221</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Port Alberni CA</b>	<b>20</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		1.5	541	72	1.5
<i>1 bedroom</i>		3.8	558	420	4
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.7	693	436	5
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		7.5	771	109	7.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4.4</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Powell River CA</b>	<b>3</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		**	544	13	**
<i>1 bedroom</i>		0.7	606	296	2.1
<i>2 bedroom</i>		2	699	260	2.4
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		7.1	766	57	10.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Prince George CA</b>	<b>35</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		9	567	256	9.8
<i>1 bedroom</i>		5.4	663	1118	7.3
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.1	794	1652	5.6
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		4.7	912	597	6.6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>3623</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Quesnel CA</b>	<b>20</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		0	451	16	0
<i>1 bedroom</i>		8.9	548	218	8.9
<i>2 bedroom</i>		2.8	640	335	2.8
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		6.5	693	154	6.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.4</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>5.4</b>
<b>Salmon Arm CA</b>	<b>35</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		**	**	<b>11</b>	<b>**</b>
<i>1 bedroom</i>		3.1	681	<b>170</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<i>2 bedroom</i>		3.1	814	<b>214</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		**	**	<b>9</b>	<b>**</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Terrace CA</b>	<b>26</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		3.2	566	31	3.2
<i>1 bedroom</i>		4.8	654	124	6.4
<i>2 bedroom</i>		3.3	815	299	3.3
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		1.9	1052	112	1.9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.4</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Vernon CA</b>	<b>30</b>				
<i>Bachelor</i>		**	557	138	**
<i>1 bedroom</i>		2.9	664	731	3.1
<i>2 bedroom</i>		3.5	811	732	3.5
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		1.2	934	213	1.2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.3</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1828</b>	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Williams Lake CA</b>	<b>56</b>				

<i>Bachelor</i>		0	508	10	0
<i>1 bedroom</i>		1.5	620	197	1.5
<i>2 bedroom</i>		4.8	722	414	4.8
<i>3+ bedroom</i>		12.3	841	179	12.3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5.6</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>5.6</b>

Percentage Change of Avg Rent (%)	Comments
	*** means not available
++	++ means not statistically significant
2.9	
1.4	Cranbrook has a 1 % lower availability rate in townhouse units and 20 additional staff seeking accomodation
++	
1.8	
7.2	
7.5	
5.9	
5.8	
6.5	
++	
1.8	
3.2	
2.5	
2.4	
**	Nelson has almost 2% less availability rates compared to Salmon Arm and 17 additional staff seeking accomodations.
++	
1	
2.7	
3.2	
3.8	
1.9	
2	
2.1	
1.7	
2.1	Penticton has a slightly smaller availability rate but 13 less staff seeking accomodations.
4.5	
5.3	
++	

\*2015 Data

<b>4.4</b>	
2.5	
1.6	
1.3	
1	
<b>1.4</b>	
**	
3.7	
3.6	
-0.9	
<b>3.6</b>	
4.3	
3.6	
3.5	
1	
<b>3.2</b>	
4.5	
1.6	
4.3	
++	
<b>3.5</b>	
**	
<b>1.9</b>	
<b>0.8</b>	
**	
<b>1.4</b>	
2.4	Terrace has a similar availability rate and 9 less staff seeking accomodation.
8.2	
9.4	
15	
<b>10.9</b>	
**	Vernon has a similar availability rate with 5 less staff seeking accomodation.
2.1	
1.5	
2.9	
<b>2.3</b>	



**	
++	
1.1	
++	
<b>0.9</b>	

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Kylo Rapattack note  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:26:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

LOL yes please!!!

---

**From:** Robinson, Gordon FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:26 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Kylo Rapattack note

Hi Mary Sue,

I've got a copy of the "free-range" Salmon Arm rapattack note. Would you like me to scan it and send it to you?



**Gordon Robinson**  
**Manager, Executive Issues**  
Deputy Minister's Office  
Phone (250) 387-4878, Cell (250) 213-8447  
**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**From:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm message  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:20:00 PM

---

Sounds good

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:13 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Salmon Arm message

I will confirm that as well before I go. I will let you know.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** 2016-09-06 16:56 (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: Salmon Arm message

Thanks - so subsidized accommodation is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 6, 2016, at 4:53 PM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

s.13

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Re: Salmon Arm message  
Date: Tuesday, September 6, 2016 4:56:51 PM

---

Thanks - so subsidized accommodation is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 6, 2016, at 4:53 PM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

s.13

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#); [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#); [March, Kelly PSA:EX](#)  
**Subject:** BN for September 27th 2016 mlm  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 8:43:20 AM  
**Attachments:** [BN for September 27th 2016 mlm.docx](#)

---

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests. Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Seasonal Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the British Columbia Wildfire Service have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. There is no other Office in the BCWS that receives this level of treatment. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost, after staff contributions, of \$119,000. During the 2015 fire season a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted. Staff within the Salmon Arm office were involved in this review. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office. s.13

s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an email drafted by s.22, a member of the B C Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's including Minister Steve Thomson complaining about the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of Information shared at the September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 staff meeting.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination for accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000.00 . The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian revenue Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.

s.13

**OPTIONS:**

s.13

Approved / Not Approved

---

Signature  
Steve Thomson, Minister, Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations

---

Date

**Attachments:**

**Contact:**

*ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney*

*Div: IROD*

*Phone: 250-356-1874*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Name: Madeline Maley*

*Div/Region/Branch: BCWS*

*Phone: 250-312-3032*

**Prepared by:**

*Name: Murray Henry*

*Branch/Region: BCWS*

*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		



**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [March, Kelly PSA:EX](#)  
**Subject:** BN September 28 2016  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:38:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [BN September 28 2016.docx](#)

---

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 28, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests. Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Seasonal Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the British Columbia Wildfire Service have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. BCWS has been engaged in a process to eliminate the provision of these services to staff in all bases across the Province, except for remote areas without available services. Salmon Arm is the last BCWS base in this process. The provision of accommodation and meals has an annual cost, of \$119,000, after staff contributions. During the 2015 fire season a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted. Staff within the Salmon Arm office were involved in this review. The results of the review were considered in making the decision to eliminate provision of accommodation and catering for staff in the Salmon Arm office. s.13

s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Deputy Director of BCWS attended a staff meeting at the Salmon Arm office to deliver the decision to eliminate accommodation and catering services staff as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an email drafted by s.13,s.22, a member of the B C Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's including Minister Steve Thomson discussing the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of Information shared at the September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 staff meeting.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff and to prudent fiscal management. Elimination for accommodation and catering in the Salmon Arm office will reduce annual costs by an average of \$119,000.00 . The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian revenue Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.

s.13

**OPTIONS:**

s.13

Approved / Not Approved

---

Signature  
Steve Thomson, Minister, Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations

---

Date

**Attachments:**

**Contact:**

*ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney*

*Div: IROD*

*Phone: 250-356-1874*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Name: Madeline Maley*

*Div/Region/Branch: BCWS*

*Phone: 250-312-3032*

**Prepared by:**

*Name: Murray Henry*

*Branch/Region: BCWS*

*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 8:13:14 AM  
**Attachments:** [FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision.docx](#)

---

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016  
Date of previous note: [date]  
File: [arcs/orcs #]  
CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable (first/last name), Minister of (name) OR (first/last name),  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of (name) [

**ISSUE:**

On September 7th, 2016 BCWS delivered the decision to the Rappel base in Salmon arm that accommodations and meals will no longer be available to staff.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment and Townhouse Vacancy Rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC. Cost aside, this decision was made in an attempt to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of Rappel staff receiving preferred treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title and ultimately lead to a stronger rappel program where they will be on the same playing field as the majority of other firefighting/staff resources provincially.

**SPEAKING / RESPONSE POINTS:**

The Rappel base is the only location in the province that provides a catering option for staff, making it inconsistent and leaving the program vulnerable to perceptions of special treatment.

There are only 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide subsidized live on base accommodations – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is non-existent because of remoteness or industry activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering. There is no formal report on vacancy and availability rates for locations with 10,000 people or less.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (E.g Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St John). Salmon arm is considered an Urban Centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC).

CMHC publishes an annual report on the rental market in British Columbia, but only examines locations with a population of 10,000 people or more. See Excel attachment to view how Salmon Arm compares in vacancy and availability rates to other locations defined as Urban Centres that house BCWS crews. (Similar or less availability rates in Terrace, Vernon, Penticton, Cranbrook, and Nelson. Cranbrook and Nelson have lower availability rates and need to house between 17-20 more BCWS crew staff than Salmon Arm- 35)

One argument is that making this change in one year will create an influx of staff seeking accommodation all at once unlike locations where live on accommodation has not been an option. However, a large number of our crew staff in all locations do not hold onto their accommodation through the off season and seek new accommodation on their recall to work each spring. (e.g. Williams Lake, Terrace, etc.)

It is important to note that there are many locations with low vacancy rates that have BCWS offices and staff at these locations have always found appropriate accommodation annually- even with most individuals being seasonal workers.

There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program. This is the cost assumed by the government after collecting the subsidy paid by rappel staff.

More importantly this perceived preferred treatment will disappear with the decision to move forward with no meals and accommodations on base and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.

#### **Attachments:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information- 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)



BCWS Staff Locations  
and Housing Data.xls

**Contact:***ADM:**Div:**Phone:***Alternate Contact:***Name:**Div/Region/Branch:**Phone:***Prepared by:***Name:**Branch/Region:**Phone:*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		



From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: FW: Rap Catering Costs 2013 - 2016  
Date: Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:34:00 AM  
Attachments: [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

From: Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX  
Sent: Monday, July 25, 2016 12:31 PM  
To: Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
Subject: Rap Catering Costs 2013 - 2016

Fiscal 2016	
Food Costs	\$ 99,985.54
Catering Costs	\$ 115,615.00
Recovery	-\$ 95,912.74
<b>Cost to BCWS</b>	<b>\$ 119,687.80</b>

Fiscal 2015	
Food Costs	\$ 101,881.10
Catering Costs	\$ 119,082.00
Recovery	-\$ 114,780.00
<b>Cost to BCWS</b>	<b>\$ 106,183.10</b>

Fiscal 2014	
Food Costs	\$ 118,013.15
Catering Costs	\$ 114,418.50
Recovery	-\$ 124,452.00
<b>Cost to BCWS</b>	<b>\$ 107,979.65</b>

Fiscal 2013	
Food Costs	\$ 113,897.95
Catering Costs	\$ 129,290.00
Recovery	-\$ 106,218.50
<b>Cost to BCWS</b>	<b>\$ 136,969.45</b>

Nicole Unrau

Corporate Wildfire Services Officer  
BC Wildfire Service | Kamloops Fire Centre  
Office: 250-554-5523 Fax: 250-376-9732 Cell: 250-851-6704  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#); [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: BN BCWS Salmon Arm Rappattack  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 10:06:25 AM  
**Attachments:** [FLNR-BN-Salmon Arm Rappel decision v2.docx](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image001.png](#)

---

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX"  
**Date:** 2016-09-22 09:54 (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX"  
**Cc:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX" , "Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX" , "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX"  
**Subject:** RE: BN BCWS Salmon Arm Rappattack

Apologies, now with contacts complete.

**Clair Lloyd**

Issues Manager | BC Wildfire Service

Office: 250 387-8707 | Fax: 250 387-5685

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

cid:image001.png@01D18B35.6E37C010



---

**From:** Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX

**Sent:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 9:49 AM

**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX

**Cc:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX; Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX; Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX

**Subject:** BN BCWS Salmon Arm Rappattack

Good morning,

Please find Briefing Note re: Salmon Arm Rapattack Base.

Kind regards,

Clair

**Clair Lloyd**

Issues Manager | BC Wildfire Service

Office: 250 387-8707 | Fax: 250 387-5685

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

cid:image001.png@01D18B35.6E37C010



From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Fwd: Salmon Arm message  
Date: Tuesday, September 6, 2016 4:54:58 PM

---

Fyi

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX"  
Date: 2016-09-06 16:53 (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX"  
Subject: Salmon Arm message

s.13

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
File: 280-20

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds an average of \$119,000.00.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment Vacancy Rate than Kamloops, Vernon or Penticton all of which have BCWS crew bases, but do not offer accommodations. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are readily available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of special treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title.

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Discontinue full catering of meals and accommodation for staff at the Salmon Arm Rappel base effective the end of 2016 fire season,
2. Inform staff at the Rappel base of this decision prior to the end of 2016 fire season

**Alternate Contact:**  
*Name: Ian Meier*  
*IROD/BCWS/PWCC:*  
*Phone: 250 837-6640*

**Prepared by:**  
*Name: Murray Henry*  
*BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:*  
*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		

DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
File: 280-20

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds an average of \$119,000.00.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in [community names] for XX [number] staff. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment Vacancy Rate than Kamloops, Vernon or Penticton all of which have BCWS crew bases, but do not offer accommodations. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are readily available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of special treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the Rappel crews will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title..

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Discontinue full catering of meals and accommodation for staff at the Salmon Arm Rappel base effective the end of 2016 fire season,
2. Inform staff at the Rappel base of this decision prior to the end of 2016 fire season

**Alternate Contact:**  
Name: Ian Meier  
IROD/BCWS/PWCC:  
Phone: 250 837-6640

**Prepared by:**  
Name: Murray Henry  
BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:  
Phone: 250 318-4484

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		

ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: s.22  
Subject: Rappel w tracked changes MS  
Date: Tuesday, September 27, 2016 6:27:41 PM  
Attachments: [Rappel w tracked changes MS.docx](#)

---



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION AND MEAL PROVISION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE STAFF AT THE RAPPEL BASE IN SALMON ARM**

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program within the Province's BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create a firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

In short, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodation to staff. The City of Salmon Arm has a higher rental apartment and townhouse vacancy rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St. John. Cost aside, the decision was made September 7, 2016 to eliminate accommodation and meal provision at this base to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia (BC). This decision will come into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and is not consistent government standards of fiscal restraint. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff.

Although staff currently pay some of the costs for their board and lodging, it is still an additional annual net cost to government of \$119,000. The Salmon Arm crew will only be provided per diems when they are working in locations other than their home location like all other BCWS crews.

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John). Salmon Arm is considered an urban centre as defined as having a population of 10,000 people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC). In a review of vacancy rates across BC in communities of similar size to Salmon Arm that also house BCWF staff Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Government does not provide accommodation in communities of Salmon Arm's Size, even in areas with low summer vacancy.

s.13

## RESPONSE POINTS:

- The Provincial Government's Wildfire Service has recently made the decision to eliminate the provision of accommodation and meals to the staff at the Rappel base in Salmon Arm.
- The Rappel base is the only location in the province that currently provides a catering option for staff.
- Making this change will bring Salmon Arm into line with other BCWS centres of the same size and population.
- Making this change in Salmon Arm will bring Provincial consistency where staff are responsible for finding their own accommodation.
- Government must be responsive to tax payer funds. There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program.
- This decision will also eliminate perceived preferred treatment and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.
- The infrastructure will be repurposed by BCWS to meet operational needs.

## Attachment:

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information - 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)

### Contact:

Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250 356-1874

### Alternate Contact:

Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3032

### Prepared by:

Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3068

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 26, 2016
Exec Director	MM	Sept 23, 2016

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: IN - Rappel Base in SA  
**Date:** Friday, September 23, 2016 9:03:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Perfect thanks.

---

**From:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 23, 2016 9:03 AM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX; Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX; Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** IN - Rappel Base in SA

Good morning,

Please find the ADM approved version attached. This is strictly sent back as a learning opportunity for future notes.

Thanks,



**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Rappel Accommodation-Meal Letter  
**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2016 9:23:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

---

I think it should be from me, I am trying to have Cliff and Rob free of this decision. So it doesn't make other dealings difficult.

Thanks Nicole.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX"  
**Date:** 2016-09-19 09:15 (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX"  
**Subject:** FW: Rappel Accommodation-Meal Letter

Do you want this on your letterhead or KFCs?

## Nicole Unrau

Corporate Wildfire Services Officer  
BC Wildfire Service | Kamloops Fire Centre  
Office: 250-554-5523 Fax: 250-376-9732 Cell: 250-851-6704  
General Corporate Wildfire Services Enquiries: [CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CWSKamloops@gov.bc.ca)  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**



---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2016 8:51 AM  
**To:** Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Rappel Accommodation-Meal Letter

Hi Nicole,

Can you get this letter all nice and pretty on our letterhead so Murray can sign it and then we can send out to all Rappel staff once we have signature.

Thanks,  
Cliff

From: [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Re: Salmon Arm message  
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2016 9:17:15 AM

---

Thanks Murray. Tim is aware the announce will happen today.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 7, 2016, at 8:39 AM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Just confirmed with Kelly, that it is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment. There is also nothing in their hire letter, there is an optional form that they sign if they want food or lodging.

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:21 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm message  
Sounds good

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2016 5:13 PM  
**To:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Salmon Arm message  
I will confirm that as well before I go. I will let you know.  
Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" <[MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MarySue.Maloughney@gov.bc.ca)>  
Date: 2016-09-06 16:56 (GMT-08:00)  
To: "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
Subject: Re: Salmon Arm message  
Thanks - so subsidized accommodation is not considered part of their benefit package or term of employment

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 6, 2016, at 4:53 PM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
<[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

s.13

~ ^  
Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX](#); [Isfeld, Kurtis FLNR:EX](#); [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
Cc: [March, Kelly PSA:EX](#)  
Subject: Salmon Arm staff Accommodation & Catering decision  
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2016 4:53:00 PM  
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

---

Today Cliff and I attended our Salmon Arm office to deliver the message that accommodation and catering to staff will not be supplied after this fire season.

First we reviewed the decision with Tom Hansen, the FPO in Salmon Arm.

Second Cliff, Tom and I met with all staff.

Cliff and I delivered the message that BCWS is continuing to work on areas of inconsistencies across the Province.

We have completed many tasks in this effort, today is the next step in this Provincial process.

Salmon Arm is the only office in BCWS that provides full time accommodations and food preparation for staff.

In an effort to treat all staff in a consistent manner both of these services will not be available to BCWS staff after this fire season.

Outstanding steps:

- Tom will work with staff to identify any outstanding issues created by this change.
- Tom and Cliff will work to develop answers to identified issues.
- Any issues that cannot be addressed at the local level will come back to me.
- Cliff will create a notification letter for each Salmon Arm staff member informing them of this decision. (Kelly March will assist in this letter development)
- Kamloops Fire Centre will send a letter to the caterer informing them that BCWS will not renew their contract for next year. (Cliff is tending to this)
- PWCC will notify the aviation carriers of this change.



**Murray Henry**  
Deputy Director  
BC Wildfire Service |  
(d) 250-312-3068 (c) 250-318-4484  
**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#); [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** BN for September 27th 2016  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 9:01:59 PM  
**Attachments:** [BN for September 27th 2016.docx](#)

---

Try this one. Again same highlighted note comments.

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 27, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests. Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Seasonal Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the British Columbia Wildfire Service have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 1970's. There is no other Office in the BCWS that receives this level of treatment. This treatment has created a stigma of special treatment for Salmon Arm staff across the BCWS. Operational fire fighting decisions have been altered due to this stigma. During the 2015 fire season a review of the catering of meals for staff in the Salmon Arm office was conducted. Staff within the Salmon Arm office were involved in this review. **The BCWS began an**  
s.13

On September 7<sup>th</sup> the Deputy Director of BCWS attended the Salmon Arm office to deliver a decision to staff. This decision was that accommodations and catering of meals for seasonal staff at the Salmon Arm office would end on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. This decision was delivered 7 months prior to staff being affected. The reason for this decision was to treat all BCWS staff in a fair and equitable manner. Staff were instructed to keep this decision confidential until all absent staff could be informed.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 an email drafted by <sup>s.22</sup>, a member of the B C Liberal Party, was sent to several MLA's including Minister Steve Thomson complaining about the decision presented to staff by the Deputy Director on September 7<sup>th</sup>. This email contained several pieces of Ministry knowledge.

s.13

**DISCUSSION:**

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is committed to fair and equitable treatment of all staff. The special treatment of any segment of our organization has the potential to undermine the key values of the BCWS. Costs associated with our operations are always of paramount concern. The BCWS has an opportunity to reduce the annual costs of our Program by an average \$105,000.00 . The Salmon Arm area is not a remote or isolated part of Canada, in accordance with Canadian revenue Agency rules, and in accordance to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation there is adequate housing available for staff.



s.13

**OPTIONS:**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Option 1:** <sup>s.13</sup>

Approved / Not Approved

---

Signature  
Steve Thomson, Minister, Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations

---

Date

**Attachments:**

**Contact:**

*ADM: Mary Sue Maloughney  
Div: IROD  
Phone: 250-356-1874*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Name: Madeline Maley  
Div/Region/Branch: BCWS  
Phone: 250-312-3032*

**Prepared by:**

*Name: Murray Henry  
Branch/Region: BCWS  
Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FLNR-BN-for-Decision-Template  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 7:36:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [FLNR-BN-for-Decision-Template.docx](#)

---

OK here are the options as I have drafted so far.  
Now for the rest of the document

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
DECISION NOTE**

Date: September 27, 2016

Date of previous note: September 23, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests. Lands Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: Decision to eliminate accommodations and meal provision to the British Columbia Wildfire Service Staff at the Salmon Arm office**

**BACKGROUND:**

The initial attack crews in the Salmon Arm office of the BCWS have been provided accommodations and meals since the late 70's at the [Start typing here - This section outlines the background (history) of the issue. While there are numerous background elements, choose those which are **material**. This section should be factual. Use paragraphs (each of which is an idea), maximum 3 sentences per paragraph. If you use bullets, limit the number to 3 and use them as a substitute for a sentence (sub-idea). Usually one third of a page in length.]

**DISCUSSION:**

[Start typing here - This section should outline the branch/division/ministry perspective on the issue, including relevant policy and program implications/precedence and who is affected. Use the same writing style as the BACKGROUND section. Usually one third of a page in length.]

**OPTIONS:**

s.13

Implications:

Approved / Not Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
[type name, title, ministry here]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved / Not Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
[type name, title, ministry here]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachments:**

**Contact:**

*ADM:*

*Div:*

*Phone:*

**Alternate Contact:**

*Name:*

*Div/Region/Branch:*

*Phone:*

**Prepared by:**

*Name:*

*Branch/Region:*

*Phone:*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

# MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS

## BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE

### BRIEFING NOTE

File:

#### I PREPARED FOR:

Greg Kylo (MLA Shuswap)

#### II ISSUE:

Recent notice to cancel the room and board option at the Rapattack Base in Salmon Arm and the potential negative ramifications on the future of the Rapattack program

#### III BACKGROUND:

- On Wednesday, September 7th the Acting Deputy Director (Murray Henry) came to the Rapattack Base to meet with staff.
- Murray presented his position:
  - Provincial consistency is an important goal for the BCWS, and him personally
  - All BCWS crews should be treated the same
  - Rapattack is a great program with a good base model
  - However, since the Province could not provide the same room and board option to all BCWS crews, he has made the decision to cancel the option at Rapattack.
  - His decision was not about cost (Rapattack staff pay rent for the room and board option) or the continuation of the Rapattack Operations
  - He has looked into the rental availability situation in Salmon Arm through the CMHC website and found it to be similar to other towns with fire crews in BC.
  - He believes it should not be a problem to find accommodation for the 35 to 41 auxiliary Rapattack staff in Salmon Arm (10 to 12 three person crews)
  - The base and accommodation could continue to be used for training courses in the spring and fall
  - Further discussion would be needed to determine if the helicopter aircrew would continue to live on base or not (3 Pilots and 3 Aircraft Maintenance Engineers)
- There was no previous discussion with Rapattack Staff prior to this decision and we are unaware of any review, business case or other factors leading up to it.
- Annual review of room and board costs and recoveries have been completed even though it was stated cost was not a factor in this decision.
- Rapattack's primary mandate is to provide rapid initial attack rappel response to difficult or inaccessible fires provincially in an effort to keep them from growing into large fires that cost taxpayers millions of dollars.
- In order to be safe, cost effective and efficient, limited Rapattack resources are centrally based, and managed (strategically moved and located around the province) by the Rapattack Coordination Officer (RAPCO) on behalf of the Provincial Wildfire Coordination Officer (PWCO) in consultation with the various Regional Wildfire Coordination Officers (RWCOs) to ensure provincial priorities are maintained.
- The Rapattack Base was developed as a residential base in Salmon Arm for the following reasons:
  - Historical fire data supported the location as the closest airport to the statistical centre of the majority of most lightning caused fires in inaccessible terrain

- There is an important safety component to the program by having all the Rapattack fire staff and Aircrew living, training and working together to develop a strong bond of trust and mutual respect (safety culture).
- Increased ability to maintain the Standard Operating Procedures critical to safety.
- The residential base allows for increased efficiency during long periods of air operations and fire training and recertification annually (similar to the New Recruit Boot Camps held by the BCWS annually).
- Reduction in costs during Provincial Training Courses held on base.
- Reduction in the daily costs of Aircrew room and board compared with hotels and restaurants.
- Reduction in fire crew meal costs compared with per diems.
- Quicker response times even outside regular hours and weekends.
- Reduced base operations costs with staff filling the role of security and general maintenance.
- Improved communications in all areas.
- Increased flexibility in staffing availability and options.
- The original Priorities of the Rapattack Program were: Safety, Fire Control, Innovation, Community Involvement and Meaningful Employment
- The Rapattack Program has been operating safely since 1977 (Salmon Arm since 1979)

#### **IV DISCUSSION:**

##### **Discussion points from the review:**

- Rapattack staff have been researching the rental accommodation availability in Salmon Arm and so far the information suggests that there is very little available accommodation within 30 minutes travel time of base (BCWS Standby requirement).
- The little accommodation that exists is either too expensive or not available for staff looking to rent for 4 to 6 months each year.
- Staff continue to look for accommodation options and solutions to other issues that this decision has created.
- Issues and questions that this decision has created are:
  - If this is all about consistency then why are there other bases that provide accommodation options paid for by the Ministry?
  - What is the plan if existing staff cannot find accommodations?
  - Is the Ministry prepared to risk losing the majority of current trained and experienced staff?
  - What about the increased time, costs and risks associated with training a new generation?
  - Should we not be fully exploring other viable options to the existing Rapattack Operations before making this kind of decision that could impact the Ministry's ability to respond?
- Are we not expected to follow evidence based decision making based on factual data that supports any adjustments and involve the staff who have the appropriate background and experience to ensure the correct information is used?

**V      OPTIONS:**  
s.13

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**VI      RECOMMENDATIONS:**  
s.13



APPROVED / UNAPPROVED

---

Name, Position

---

Date

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** s 22 - - -  
**Subject:** FW: Kylo Rapattack note  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 6:35:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Scan\\_20160927.pdf](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)

---

**From:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:33 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Kylo Rapattack note  
What do you think this is



**Madeline L. Maley, RPF | Executive Director BC Wildfire Service**  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Office: 250-312-3032 | Cell: 250-318-8441

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2016 4:32 PM  
**To:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Kylo Rapattack note



File: 400-50

September 19, 2016


TO: ALL EMPLOYEES AT THE RAPPEL BASE, SALMON ARM

This letter is to advise that the British Columbia Wildfire Service will no longer be offering accommodation and meals at the Rappel Base in Salmon Arm in the 2017 fire season. Further to our discussion on September 6, 2016, this change is consistent with our current practice in urban areas of the Province. We are providing notice of the change to allow employees sufficient time to make alternate arrangements for accommodation and meals prior to recall in 2017.

For clarity, accommodations and meals will not be available at the Rappel Base effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The Kamloops Fire Centre strongly encourages you to collaborate with your colleagues ahead of your recall date to locate appropriate accommodation in Salmon Arm or the surrounding area.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact the Supervisor Rappel Operations Tom Hansen at (250) 832-9741.

Yours truly,



Murray Henry  
Acting Deputy Director  
BC Wildfire Service

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Unrau, Nicole D FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Scan From <Device Name>  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 2:46:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Scan\\_20160920.pdf](#)

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**From:** MWHENRY [mailto:[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 2:44 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Scan From

Page 155 to/à Page 157

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

DUPLICATE

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#); [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: REVISE: 224540  
**Date:** Friday, September 23, 2016 1:09:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [224540 - Rappel Base in Salmon Arm.docx](#)  
[224540 - DMO Comments.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

Madeline for clarity, the attached BN was developed for a response to a concern from a local government, not a response to the attached letter.  
Claire has started to work on a response to the letter. She had a deadline of October 4th on that response.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX"  
**Date:** 2016-09-23 11:52 (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" , "Lloyd, Clair FLNR:EX"  
**Cc:** "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX"  
**Subject:** REVISE: 224540

Hi Murray,

The DMO came back with some comments (attached in the PDF). Can you please revise the information note (word doc attached) and send back for ADM approval.

Thank you,



**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**  
**INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: September 21, 2016

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 224540

**PREPARED FOR: Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION AND MEAL PROVISION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE STAFF AT THE RAPPEL BASE IN SALMON ARM**

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program within the Province's BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. When the program was first moved to Salmon Arm in 1970, the city itself was not set up to provide meals and accommodations, but has since developed into a relatively large urban centre.

Historically, accommodations have been provided as an incentive to recruit and retain staff in remote locations. As such BCWS currently provides subsidized housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. In accordance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules these accommodations have been provided at less than market rate. The city of Salmon Arm falls outside of the CRA prescribed areas for Housing Benefits Paid (CRA Form 4054). BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

In short, the Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodation to staff. The City of Salmon Arm has a higher rental apartment and townhouse vacancy rate than many other locations that house crews. A similar standalone program, Parattack, does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St. John. Cost aside, the decision was made September 7, 2016 to eliminate accommodation and meal provision at this base to align the Rappel base and staff with the majority of other BCWS base locations across British Columbia (BC). This decision will come into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are available is an unnecessary expense and is not consistent government standards of fiscal restraint. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff.

There are 4 locations provincially within BCWS that provide rental incentives for housing – Alexis Creek, Fort Nelson, Dease Lake and Princeton. These locations are unique because they are either difficult to recruit locations and/or rental availability is challenging due to remoteness or industrial activity. None of these four locations have the option for government provided catering.

There are no other locations which have BCWS crews located in them similar in size and demographic to Salmon Arm that allow live on accommodations (e.g. Williams Lake, Vernon, Penticton, Parksville, Fort St. John). Salmon Arm is considered an urban centre as defined as having a population of 10,000

people or more by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC). In a review of vacancy rates across BC in communities of similar size to Salmon Arm that also house BCWF staff Salmon Arm has median vacancy rates. Government does not provide accommodation in communities of Salmon Arm's Size, even in areas with low summer vacancy.

#### **RESPONSE POINTS:**

- The Provincial Government's Wildfire Service has recently made the decision to eliminate the provision of accommodation and meals to the staff at the Rappel base in Salmon Arm.
- The Rappel base is the only location in the province that currently provides a catering option for staff.
- Making this change will bring Salmon Arm into line with other BCWS centres of the same size and population.
- Making this change in Salmon Arm will bring Provincial consistency where staff are responsible for finding their own accommodation.
- Government must be responsive to tax payer funds. There is a net cost to the tax payer of approximately \$119,000 annually to provide live on accommodation and catering to the Rappel program.
- This decision will also eliminate perceived preferred treatment and allow the Rappel program to operate as most other locations in the province.

#### **Attachment:**

[https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487\\_2015\\_B01.pdf](https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64487/64487_2015_B01.pdf) (CMHC vacancy rate information - 2015 data as 2016 is not complete yet)

#### **Contact:**

*Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM  
Integrated Resource Operations  
250 356-1874*

#### **Alternate Contact:**

*Madeline Maley, Exec. Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3032*

#### **Prepared by:**

*Murray Henry, Deputy Dir.  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 312-3068*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM	MSM	Sept 22, 2016
Exec Director	MM	Sept 22, 2016



**From:** [Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 9:03:26 AM

---



**Madeline L. Maley, RPF|Executive Director BC Wildfire Service**  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Office: [250-312-3032](tel:250-312-3032)|Cell: [250-318-8441](tel:250-318-8441)

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX"  
**Date:** 2016-09-28 8:40 AM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX" , "Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX"  
**Subject:** FW: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA

FYI – MST will no longer be meeting with MLA Kylo on Friday.

**Sandra Jupp**

*Executive Assistant to Mary Sue Maloughney, ADM*

---

**From:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 8:39 AM  
**To:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA

---

**From:** Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 8:38 AM  
**To:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA  
The briefing on Sep 30<sup>th</sup> has been cancelled...  
L

---

**From:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 1:04 PM  
**To:** Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA  
Staff are re-writing a note currently...

---

**From:** Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 12:49 PM  
**To:** Rosche, Kimberly FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA  
Prob best to plan to have staff attend or call in....

---

**From:** Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 12:49 PM  
**To:** Robins, Shala LASS:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA  
Hi Shala,  
Have 1pm booked in MST's calendar for this, MLA Kylo can come up to our office-Room 248

---

**From:** Robins, Shala [<mailto:Shala.Robins@leg.bc.ca>]

**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 10:12 AM

**To:** Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX

**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm Rap Attack Center meet with Greg Kylo, MLA

Good Morning Lisa,

Any chance that Minister Thomson will have a few minutes to meet with Greg Kylo regarding the Salmon Arm Rap Attack Centre?

Thursday morning

9:00-10:00AM and

afternoon after 2:30PM

or

Friday morning

930-10:00AM

10:30-11:30AM

Please let me know what you can arrange.

Thank you.

**Shala Robins**

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

[BC Government Caucus](#)

Dan Ashton, MLA Penticton

Greg Kylo, MLA Shuswap

Don McRae, MLA Comox Valley

Room 029 | Parliament Buildings | Victoria | British Columbia | V8V 1X4

Phone: 250-952-7256 | Email: [shala.robins@leg.bc.ca](mailto:shala.robins@leg.bc.ca)

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

File: [arcs/orcs #]

CLIFF: [cliff #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent of the day was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of Rappelling into incidents via helicopters.

Part of this program included full catering of meals and living accommodations for staff on base.

Today this is the only base in BCWS that supplies food and accommodations to staff in a community that has sufficient private resources to fulfil the need. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds \$119,000.00 annually.

BCWS continues to make significant efforts to eliminate inconsistencies in all aspects of staff's working environment.

Staff within BCWS Salmon Arm Base have exhibited a history of bypassing supervisors when they disagreed with decisions, this type of response it anticipated on this issue.

**DISCUSSION:**

Elitism and special treatments have combined to create a barrier between Rappel crews and other firefighting crews and staff around the Province.

Breaking down this barrier by treating Salmon Arm staff in the same way as the rest of the Province will contribute to the larger FLNRO team culture.

**NEXT STEPS:**

s.13

**Alternate Contact:**

Name: Ian Meier

IROD/BCWS/PWCC:

Phone: 250 837-6640

**Prepared by:**

Name: Murray Henry

BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:

Phone: 250 318-4484

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 8:01:05 AM  
**Attachments:** [Rap BN July 29th 2016 MLM.docx](#)

---

Hey Cliff we will need a BN developed today, based on the info in the attached.

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS  
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
File: 280-20

**PREPARED FOR:** Robert Turner, Assistant Deputy Minister

**ISSUE:** Catering service and living accommodations for staff at the FLNRO Salmon Arm Rappel Base.

**BACKGROUND:**

In the late 1970's, the Rappel Program moved to the current location in Salmon Arm. The intent was to create an elite firefighting unit comprised of several Initial Attack crews with the capability of rappelling into incidents via helicopters. Part of this program included full catering of meals and provision of accommodation on the base for the Rappel Program staff. The annual net costs to Government (after staff contributions) to supply these services exceeds an average of \$119,000.00.

BCWS currently provides accommodation on a subsidised basis due to lack of available housing in Fort Nelson, Alexis Creek, Dease Lake and Princeton. The cost of providing accommodation is balanced against the need to locate staff close to the base to ensure rapid deployment. BCWS does not provide catering services to any other bases.

The Salmon Arm Rappel Base is the only BCWS base that provides full catering of meals and accommodations to staff. The city of Salmon Arm has a higher Rental Apartment Vacancy Rate than Kamloops, Vernon or Penticton all of which have BCWS crew bases, but do not offer accommodations. A similar standalone program Parattack does not supply full catering of meals or accommodations to its staff in Fort St John BC.

**DISCUSSION:**

Providing full catering of meals and provision of accommodations to staff in a community where these services are readily available is an unnecessary expense and has led to a general feeling of special treatment amongst BCWS staff, creating a barrier between Rappel and other firefighting crews around the Province. Elimination of full catering and accommodation for the crews in Salmon Arm will reduce costs and contribute to a culture of consistent treatment of all staff regardless of position or title.

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Discontinue full catering of meals and accommodation for staff at the Salmon Arm Rappel base effective the end of 2016 fire season,
2. Inform staff at the Rappel base of this decision prior to the end of 2016 fire season

**Alternate Contact:**  
*Name: Ian Meier*  
*IROD/BCWS/PWCC:*  
*Phone: 250 837-6640*

**Prepared by:**  
*Name: Murray Henry*  
*BCWS / PWCC Branch/Region:*  
*Phone: 250 318-4484*

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		

DMO		
ADM		
PRGM Dir./Mgr.		

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: BN September 28 2016  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:58:00 AM

---

Right I forgot about that, thanks Cliff.

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:58 AM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** RE: BN September 28 2016  
Murray,  
DUPLICATE

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:50 AM  
**To:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX; Schweitzer, Rob W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: BN September 28 2016  
I made a couple of changes.

---

**From:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 10:39 AM  
**To:** March, Kelly PSA:EX  
**Subject:** BN September 28 2016

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: other RAPP note  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:45:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Perfect, I like the additions.

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:43 AM  
**To:** Maley, Madeline L FLNR:EX; Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Cc:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** FW: other RAPP note  
**Importance:** High  
My changes are tracked- Sandra is processing/formatting now for DMO approval

---

**From:** Maloughney, Mary Sue FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:39 AM  
**To:** Jupp, Sandra FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** other RAPP note  
**Importance:** High

cid:image001.png@01D2082B.C32EDD10





**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter  
**Date:** Thursday, September 15, 2016 8:21:00 AM

---

A couple points when discussing with the caterer, this is not about their performance and does not affect their standing on the MSO.

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:50 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

They have not been informed as Kelly suggested we get our crew letter out first and see if there is any formal push back, so maybe a week after ?

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** 2016-09-14 9:39 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX" <[Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter  
Has the caterer been informed yet?

I recall we were going to let them know after we informed staff, just not sure exactly when?

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:17 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

Sounds good Murray thanks !

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** 2016-09-14 9:16 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX" <[Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

Perfect, you can just ask Nicole to put it on our letterhead and prepare it for my signature. I will sign it then they can deliver it.

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:14 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

We didn't discuss delivery but my thoughts are we get it out in the mail as soon as possible. I'll chat with Nicole Friday (in lillooet tomorrow).

I think cws in kamloops should take care of it once you have signed letter.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX" <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Date:** 2016-09-14 9:06 PM (GMT-08:00)  
**To:** "Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX" <[Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cliff.Chapman@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

Cliff, thanks for preparing this. It looks perfect. Did you discuss delivery options with Kelly?

Or should we task Nicole and her staff with sending this out to all Salmon Arm staff?

I will sign the one to go out to all.

---

**From:** Chapman, Cliff T FLNR:EX

**Sent:** Thursday, September 8, 2016 4:03 PM

**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX

**Subject:** Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter

Murray, here is the Rap letter I drafted and have had Kelly review. Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,

Cliff

s.22

**From:** [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Salmon Arm staff letter  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:34:00 PM

---

Not sure I asked Rob to take care of that. I will confirm it.

---

**From:** Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:34 PM  
**To:** Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX  
**Subject:** Re: Salmon Arm staff letter  
Has the caterer been advised now?

Ian Meier  
Director  
BC Wildfire Service  
250 847-6640 (Office)  
250 643-0078 (Cell)

On Sep 14, 2016, at 9:10 PM, Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX <[Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Murray.Henry@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

FYI I will be sending this out to all staff that worked at this base in 2016. I had Cliff work with Kelly to prepared it.

**Murray Henry**  
Deputy Director  
BC Wildfire Service |  
(d) 250-312-3068 (c) 250-318-4484  
**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**  
**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

From: [Henry, Murray W FLNR:EX](#)  
To: [Meier, Ian R FLNR:EX](#)  
Subject: Salmon Arm staff letter  
Date: Wednesday, September 14, 2016 9:10:00 PM  
Attachments: [Rappel Accomodation-Meal Letter.docx](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)

---

FYI I will be sending this out to all staff that worked at this base in 2016. I had Cliff work with Kelly to prepared it.

FLNR Logo - 2016



**Murray Henry**

Deputy Director

BC Wildfire Service |

(d) 250-312-3068 (c) 250-318-4484

**Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

**REPORT WILDFIRES: 1-800-663-5555 or \*5555**

This letter is to advise that the British Columbia Wildfire Service will no longer be offering accommodation and meals at the Rappel Base in Salmon Arm in the 2017 fire season. Further to our discussion on September 6, 2016, this change is consistent with our current practice in urban areas of the Province. We are providing notice of the change to allow employees sufficient time to make alternate arrangements for accommodation and meals prior to recall in 2017.

For clarity, accommodations and meals will not be available at the Rappel Base effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The Kamloops Fire Centre strongly encourages you to collaborate with your colleagues ahead of your recall date to locate appropriate accommodation in Salmon Arm or the surrounding area.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact the Supervisor Rappel Operations Tom Hansen at (250) 832-9741.

Thank you,

Murray Henry