

NIFSC ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



National Indigenous
Fire Safety Council

Conseil national
autochtone de la sécurité-incendie

Table of Contents

Land Acknowledgement	3
NIFSC Board of Directors	4
Message from the Board President	5
Message from the Interim Chief Executive Officer	6
Message from the Incoming Interim Chief Executive Officer	7
Introduction	8
Strategic Objectives: Highlights of Activities - Fiscal Year 2024-2025	9
2024 Indigenous Public Safety Conference and Pre-Conference Training	10
National Incident Reporting System	15
Fire Prevention Promotion	17
Youth Fire Programs	19
Ongoing Partnerships	22
NIFSC Annual Communications Report	24
NIFSC 2024-25 Unaudited Expense Report	30

Land Acknowledgement

The National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC) respectfully acknowledges that our work takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island. We honour and recognize the diverse Nations—First Nations, Inuit, and Métis—who have stewarded these lands, waters, and skies since time immemorial.

As a national organization committed to advancing fire and life safety in Indigenous communities, our efforts are rooted in respect, cultural understanding, and meaningful partnerships. We acknowledge the profound knowledge, resilience, and leadership of Indigenous Peoples in protecting and sustaining their communities, environments, and ways of life, and we express our gratitude to all those whose wisdom, knowledge and contributions are reflected in our work.



NIFSC Board of Directors

The NIFSC would like to thank the Board of Directors for their ongoing commitment and leadership.

- Jeremy Parkin, Board President / EMS Director
- Melvin McLeod, Vice President
- Michelle Vandevord, Saskatchewan Representative / NIFSC Executive Director 2024-2025
- Allan Peters, Secretary/Treasurer
- Anthony Moore, Emergency Management / Disaster Resiliency Representative
- Ashley O'Neil, Wildfire Representative
- Erin Myers, Metis National Council Representative
- James Smarch, Yukon Representative
- Owen Monague, Ontario Representative
- William 'Billy' Moffat, Quebec Representative



Message from the Board President



Jeremy Parkin, National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

It is with great pride and deep gratitude that I share this message on behalf of the Board of Directors for the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC). This year has been one of progress, partnership, and perseverance in our shared mission to protect lives, property, and critical infrastructure across First Nation communities in Canada.

As a national Indigenous-led organization, the NIFSC stands at the intersection of tradition, leadership, and innovation. We are committed to building fire-safe and emergency-ready communities—through culturally relevant training and education, community-driven programs, and strong partnerships grounded in respect and reciprocity.

Over the past year, we have expanded our reach, strengthened our relationships with community leaders and emergency professionals, and delivered training and services that reflect the unique needs and strengths of the communities we serve. These efforts have not only enhanced fire safety but have also supported greater self-determination and community resilience.

None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, our partners, and the countless community members who continue to advocate for safer, more resilient futures. Looking ahead, we remain guided by our values and driven by the knowledge that every community deserves the tools and support needed to protect what matters most. On behalf of the Board, thank you for your continued trust and support in this vital work.

Jeremy Parkin

President, Board of Directors

National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

Message from the Interim Chief Executive Officer



Michelle Vandevord, National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

As my term as Interim Chief Executive Officer comes to a close, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the NIFSC Board of Directors, our dedicated staff, and the many partner organizations who continue to show their dedication for this important work. Together, we have taken meaningful steps to advance fire safety, emergency preparedness, and community resilience in First Nation communities across Canada.

This past year has been filled with both challenges and accomplishments. The path has not always been easy—but the mission has remained clear: to protect lives, preserve property, and empower Indigenous communities with the knowledge, tools, and support to prevent loss from fire.

I am especially proud of the collaborative efforts that have resulted in culturally grounded programs and services that reflect the strengths and realities of our communities. The impact of this work will be felt for years to come, and I am confident that NIFSC is well-positioned to continue leading this vital work with strength and integrity.

It has been an honour to serve in this role, and I leave with deep respect and optimism for what lies ahead.

Michelle Vandevord

Interim Chief Executive Officer

National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

Message from the Incoming Interim Chief Executive Officer



Arnold Lazare, National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

I am honoured to step into the role of Interim Chief Executive Officer at the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC). I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Michelle Vandevord for her leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to strengthening fire safety and emergency management in First Nation communities across Canada.

When I began working with the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada in 2017, the goal was to create an organization that was rooted in the principle of “for us, by us,” ensuring that programs and initiatives are culturally relevant and community driven. I am as committed today, as I was then, to advance this essential work alongside our dedicated staff, community partners, and leadership.

As we look to the future, I remain grounded in NIFSC’s mission to address preventable loss of life, property, and infrastructure through culturally informed, community-driven solutions. This work is more than a professional responsibility—it is a shared commitment to protecting our people and supporting the self-determination of Indigenous communities in their pursuit of safety, resilience, and wellness.

Arnold Lazare

Incoming Interim Chief Executive Officer

National Indigenous Fire Safety Council (NIFSC)

Introduction

At the core of the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council's (NIFSC) work is a commitment to ensuring that all Indigenous communities have equitable and equal access to fire and life safety programs, education, and resources. Historical and systemic inequities have contributed to disproportionately high risks and poorer outcomes for many Indigenous Nations when it comes to fire safety and emergency preparedness. With the support of our partners, we are working to change that narrative. Together, we are not only addressing long-standing gaps but also advancing a future where every Indigenous community has the tools and opportunities to live safely and with dignity.

The NIFSC have 12 strategic goals, as guided by our funder Indigenous Services Canada. We track the progress and report on the advancement of those goals through our quarterly reports. Our funding agreements and audited financial statements are available on our website.

Elevated Fire Mortality Rates

Indigenous peoples face significantly higher fire-related death rates compared to non-Indigenous populations:

- Inuit: 17 times higher
- First Nations on-reserve: 10 times higher
- [Métis: 2.1 times higher](#)

Smoke Alarm Deficiency

[About 12% of residential fire-related deaths among Indigenous people occurred in homes without a working smoke alarm.](#)

GOAL 1 Programs EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES - Prevention	By 2030 all Indigenous communities can develop a fire safety strategy and understand the capacity required to achieve this goal including the contributing causes of fires and related fatalities, knowledge and ability to prevent fires and will to take action.		Summary: Fire prevention is a strategic activity upstream that comes first (like in the level of service standard - LSS). This is where NIFSC will expand capacities and access to quality awareness and education offerings, including generic and targeted guidelines to allow various audiences to help themselves. NIFSC will be working with local leadership, stakeholders and through local or regional partners. This will happen against the backdrop of national campaigns run by NIFSC to raise awareness across all Indigenous communities.			
SO 1 Increase the awareness, availability, and access to quality fire prevention programs and public education in ways that work for Indigenous communities	1.1 Programs & Services Delivery	1.2 Training Accreditation	1.3 Programs & Services Development	1.4. Community Fire Safety Apps	IS 1.5 Fire Prevention Promotion	IS 1.6 Conference & Events
SO 2 Increase the understanding of contributing factors to inform fire prevention strategies, programs, measures and awareness and education offerings (CORE)	2.1 Incident Response Team	2.2 Fire Incident Reporting	2.3 Fire Incident Data Utilization	2.4 Environmental Scan - Tools & Policy Frameworks		
SO 3 Increase the engagement of youth in education offerings, involvement in fire prevention, work experience and exposure to fire service.	3.1 National Youth Initiatives	3.2 Youth Fire Programs	3.3 Youth Fire Programs			
Goal 2 ENABLING PARTNERS TO DELIVER - Capacity Building	By 2030 all regions are able to deliver and sustain quality services to cover fire prevention and protection needs.		Summary: Through enabling its partners, and where needed in its direct service delivery, NIFSC will scale up the provision of quality fire-safety service packages to target audiences. To achieve this goal NIFSC will collaboratively work with partners to improve service offerings, quality and coverage while advocating for regional funding with regional partners. In regions that lack regional organizations NIFSC will create branches or support groups that could transition into self-sustaining organizations or create and mentor new service delivery organizations.			
SO 4 Increase collaboration with regional organizations to support community fire service capacity.	4.1 Regional Collaboration	4.2 Regional Resources	4.3 Community Fire Protection Award			
SO 5 Increase regional and community preparedness for climate change and wildfire mitigation and response capacity.	5.1 Climate Operational Collaboration	5.2 Canadian Interagency Forests Fire Center	5.3 Wildland Fire Mitigation Planning	5.4 Wildland Fire Mitigation Capacity	5.5 Wildland Fire Training & Support	
SO 6 Improve collaboration among operational partners to optimize delivery of support, including promoting the establishment of training standards & capacity building.	6.1 Operational Collaboration	6.2 Training Standards Collaboration				
Goal 3 -CHAMPIONING CHANGE (standards, policies and best practices)	By 2030 legislative, standards, policy or practice improvements in fire safety and protection and related issues are in place to meet or exceed Canadian average numbers of fire incidents with injuries and deaths		Summary: This goal underpins the above program goals. NIFSC would act through direct advocacy and creating coalitions or networks to galvanize commitment from indigenous leaders and from governments to secure legislative, regulatory policy or practice improvements for fire safety. This would include interrelated issues such as housing, education, data, funding, firefighting capacities, etc. Achieving this goal will require strengthening collaborative frameworks that will be shaped in the process of advocating improvements in these areas.			
SO 7 Strengthen collaborative frameworks, promote relevant research and improve knowledge management to effectively address evolving fire safety.	7.1 Research	7.2 Research Advocacy	7.3 Research Repository			
SO 8 Strengthen commitment from First Nations and governments to a coherent Indigenous fire safety and protection framework and funding instruments implementing strategies	8.1 Political Leadership	8.2 Federal Government Relations				
SO 9 Improve policies, standards, and practices to ensure greater fire safety and protection (e.g., data systems, housing, water, education, volunteerism)	9.1 Technical Advisory Committee	9.2 AHJ Standards Adoption	9.3 Insurance			
Goal 4 - EQUIPPED TO DELIVER	By 2030 NIFSC is a strong, innovative, and collaborative organization that is well governed and accountable, equipped with the skills, capacities, and resources to effectively deliver its evolving mission		See the Strategic Framework 2022-2030 - Organizations Challenges as Needs Section (pages 19-20)			
SO 10 Strengthen organizational governance and accountability	10.1 Governance Due Diligence	10.2 Governance Policy Review	10.3 Governance Representation			
	10.4 Governance Training	10.5 Governance Strategic Planning				
SO 11 Strengthen skills, capacities, and IT systems	11.1 Corporate Training	11.2 Corporate Administrative Capacity	11.3 Corporate IT Capacity	11.4 Corporate Legistics Capacity		
SO 12 Strengthen resources and partnerships	12.1 Stabilize Resources	12.2 Diversify Funding	12.3 Partnership Relations			

Strategic Objectives: Highlights of Activities - Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Increase the awareness, availability, and access to quality fire prevention programs and public education in ways that work for Indigenous communities.

Cross Lake: Smoke Detector Installation

Members of the NIFSC's Indigenous Fire Marshals Service (IFMS) team recently traveled to Cross Lake First Nation to support community fire safety through the installation of smoke detectors generously donated by Kidde Canada. This collaborative effort aimed to enhance fire safety and preparedness in the community following a series of fatal and destructive fires by equipping homes with reliable, high-quality smoke detection devices. The IFMS team worked closely with local residents, ensuring proper placement and functionality of the detectors while also sharing essential fire safety education. This initiative reflects the NIFSC and Kidde Canada's shared commitment to fostering safer communities and underscores the power of partnerships in promoting community well-being.



ProBoard - International Fire Accredited Certification

The NIFSC has applied to ProBoard enabling IFMS training to be delivered as international fire accredited certification (professionally recognized). This work does not have dedicated funding assigned to it through the funding agreement or amendment. The NIFSC is continuing with the work to become an accredited training agency to maximize training resources to Indigenous communities.

The NIFSC finalized nine (9) courses to be delivered under Pro Board standards. Course audits and mock deliveries are currently being performed. The courses to be delivered are:

- NFPA 470 - HazMat Awareness Level
- NFPA 470 - HazMat Operations Level
- NFPA 1010 - Firefighter 1

- NFPA 1010 – Firefighter 2
- NFPA 1030 – Fire and Life Safety Educator Level 1
- NFPA 1030 – Fire and Life Safety Educator Level 2
- NFPA 1030 – Fire Inspector
- NFPA 1033 – Fire Investigator
- NFPA 1140 – Wildland Firefighting

City of Toronto - Curriculum Indigenization Project

The NIFSC was sought out by the City of Toronto to enhance the Ontario Fire Marshal’s lesson plans by incorporating Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, and cultural perspectives on the history of fire within Indigenous civilizations in Canada. As part of this project, NIFSC developed six lesson plans for grades JK–12 and provided culturally aligned educational resources to support the curriculum. The completed project was submitted on October 31, 2024.

BC Wildfire

In December 2024, BC Wildfire granted the approval of three NIFSC staff as accredited trainers for the S-100, S-100A (recertification) and S185 courses. The accreditation allows NIFSC to deliver the foundational wildfire training in-house.

ICS Canada

NIFSC presented at the Incident Command Systems Canada annual general meeting on December 10th, 2024, as part of an application to be recognized as an Agency Authority Having Jurisdiction (AAHJ). The membership voted to include NIFSC as an AAHJ, representing Indigenous peoples across Canada. The recognition gives NIFSC a vote on all ICS Canada matters, presents an opportunity to advocate for the Indigenous voice and allows NIFSC to manage nation-wide ICS training in-house.

The NIFSC has adopted an ongoing role as a cultural informant for ICS Canada, ensuring formal recognition of Indigenous representation within the organization and offering guidance on language use and equitable representation in course revisions.

In February 2025, the NIFSC exercised its role as an AAHJ by participating in an ICS-Canada lead-instructor discussion. The NIFSC gained important insights into the inner workings of ICS-Canada, allowing for a more streamlined and comprehensive capacity to manage course delivery. The NIFSC also provided information on methods to approach instruction and course management when working with Indigenous Communities. Eight (8) participants underwent ICS training via the NIFSC and five (5) were successful in completion.

2024 Indigenous Public Safety Conference and Pre-Conference Training

Overview

The 2024 Indigenous Public Safety Conference took place from October 22 to 25 alongside the 35th Annual Firefighting Competition (October 26). The NIFSC set a benchmark of 150 participants (drawn from the 2023 Conference metrics), the 2024 conference participation saw a 100% increase from 2023 to over 300 participants. The 2024 conference provided a diverse range of training

opportunities, insightful sessions, and valuable networking opportunities for those involved in emergency management and public safety, with a strong focus on Indigenous communities.

Pre-Conference Training

The conference began with two days of pre-conference training, held on October 22 and 23. These six training sessions were well attended and provided high-level education on various critical topics. Seven courses were offered, reflecting the broad scope of issues addressed at the conference:

1. Traditional Fire Knowledge
2. Wildland S100 and S185
3. Auto Extrication – Electric Vehicles
4. Building Codes Introduction
5. Community Wildfire Protection Plans
6. Fire Life Safety Educator (facilitated by the Justice Institute of British Columbia)
7. Resilient Minds

Participants expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to gain such specialized training, highlighting the diversity of the courses and the quality of instruction. The training sessions allowed attendees to engage with topics pertinent to both contemporary emergency management and the specific needs of Indigenous communities.

2024 Indigenous Public Safety Conference

The main conference took place on October 24 and 25, featuring 42 speaker sessions. These sessions covered a wide array of emergency management topics, ensuring that attendees could learn from experts in a variety of fields. Two important panel discussions were held during the conference:

1. The National Fire Strategy,
2. Opportunities to Address the Current State of Indigenous Fire.

The panels featured prominent industry leaders from a variety of perspectives including;

- Service delivery providers (FNESS & NIFSC),
- Urban First Nations fire service
- Tribal councils
- Rural First Nations fire service Jeremy Parkin, Nick Rhone, Blaine Wiggins, and Dave Robertson, Arnold Lazare, Anthony Black, and John McKearney who provided invaluable insights into these critical issues.

Opening the conference, keynote speaker Terry Diabo delivered a powerful address, reflecting on the history of the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada (AFAC) and its evolution into the NIFSC. Alec Guerin, a Knowledge Keeper from Musqueam First Nation, opened the ceremony in a traditional manner, blessing the event and acknowledging the conference's location on Musqueam Territory.

The closing keynote was given by Dougie Hall, who offered a heartfelt message of thanks to the

firefighters and emergency management professionals working tirelessly to ensure the safety of First Nations communities across Canada.



Conference Tradeshow

The tradeshow consisted of 50 vendors from all sectors of emergency services. This provided a unique opportunity for attendees to connect with industry leaders and explore the latest products and services available. Artisans and organizations that provided valuable support services (such as mental health services) were not charged a registration fee. For profit vendors were admitted to the tradeshow though an equipment donation which were then distributed to participating fire departments.

35th Annual Firefighting Competition

Each year, First Nation firefighters from across Canada showcase their skills and expertise. This exciting event highlighted the strength and resilience of Indigenous firefighting teams and underscored the importance of continued training and support for First Nations in fire management.



The 35th annual competition results:

- National Firefighting Competition 1st Place Winners: Cross Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba
- National Firefighting Competition 2nd Place Winners: Garden River First Nation, Ontario
- National Firefighting Competition 3rd Place Winners: Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Alberta
- National Firefighting Competition Most Sportsmanlike Team Winners: Team Iqaluit, Iqaluit Fire Department, Nunavut
- National Firefighting Competition Run 4 Fire Prevention Presentation Winners: Cross Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba

35th Annual National Firefighting Competition



National Firefighting Competition 1st Place Winners
Cross Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba



National Firefighting Competition 2nd Place Winners
Garden River First Nation, Ontario



National Firefighting Competition 3rd Place Winners
Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Alberta



National Firefighting Competition Most Sportsmanlike Team Winners
Team Iqaluit, Iqaluit Fire Department, Nunavut



National Firefighting Competition Run 4 Fire Prevention Presentation Winners
Cross Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba



2024 National Firefighting Competition Teams

Community Fire Protection Award

In collaboration with Indigenous Services Canada and regional organizations, the Indigenous Fire Safety Leadership Award was developed and awarded as part of the Indigenous Public Safety Conference.

In recognition of the significant contributions to the field of national statistics and ongoing support in promoting evidence-based approaches to public policy, the NIFSC presented the Indigenous Fire Safety Leadership Award to Statistics Canada.

The award was presented to Chief Statistician of Canada, André Loranger, and accepted by acting Assistant Chief Statistician, Sébastien Larochelle. Blaine Wiggins and Arnold Lazare presented the award alongside a ceremonial eagle feather to Sébastien Larochelle. The eagle feather was gifted to the NIFSC by Blaine Wiggins (Eagle Spirit) who was gifted the feather in ceremony for performing Eskapio and Fire Keeper duties at the 2024 Eagle Lodge Sundance in Alberta. An Eskapio / Fire Keeper is a critical role required for the four-day sundance. The work that Statistics Canada does for Indigenous communities is critical, and the gift represented our gratitude and the acknowledgment of their exceptional work.

This award celebrated Statistics Canada's vital role in supporting fire safety through their data-driven research. Their efforts have empowered First Nation communities to develop effective strategies to prevent fire-related loss of life and property, ensuring a safer future for current and future generations.

The eagle feather not only recognized their impactful work but also underscored the importance of partnerships in advancing community safety. This achievement reflects a shared commitment to enhancing fire prevention and preparedness in Indigenous communities.



National Incident Reporting System

Year End Report | April 1, 2024– March 31, 2025

The National Incident Reporting System (NIRS) plays a critical role in monitoring fire-related incidents in First Nations communities across Canada. As the NIFSC presents the Year End Report for the 2024-25 period, our focus remains on providing an accurate overview of fire incidents, highlighting trends, and identifying areas where fire prevention measures can be strengthened. This reporting period reflects the ongoing collaboration between First Nations leadership, local fire services, and government agencies to safeguard communities and reduce fire-related risks.

This report aims to provide insights into the number, causes, and impacts of fire incidents during the 2024-25 period, helping to inform future safety strategies and resource allocation. By evaluating the data from across the country, the NIFSC’s goal is to empower communities with the knowledge to mitigate risks and support ongoing efforts to enhance fire safety and response capabilities.

These statistics are based on fire incidents voluntarily reported to the NIFSC by fire prevention agencies, fire departments, and other partnerships. They are subject to change as fire reports are continuously submitted by communities after the date of this publication.

Fire Incidents



Structure

54 Fires
5 Deaths
11 Injuries



Vehicle

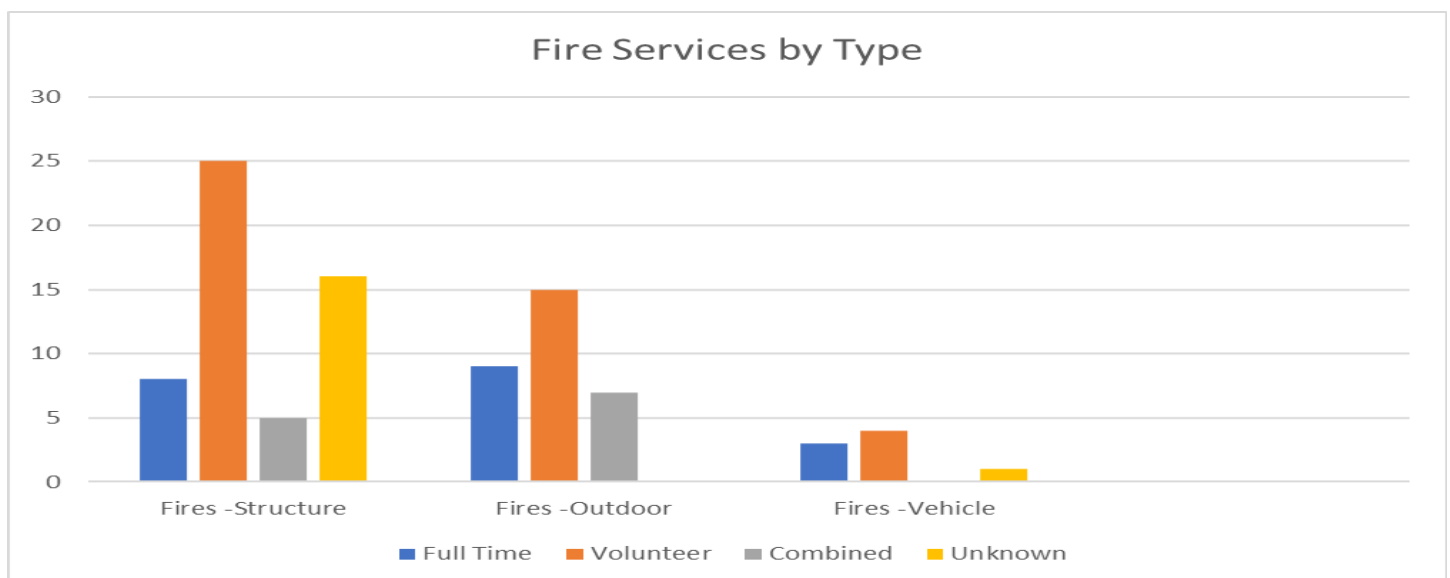
8 Fires
0 Deaths
0 Injuries







Outdoor

32 Fires
0 Deaths
0 Injuries

Fire Services on Scene by Incident Type



Areas of Interest for this Period

	<p>14 Structure fires reported were deemed suspicious.</p> <p>8 Structure fires reported were caused by human error.</p>		<p>7 structure fires this year had a smoke alarm present. The alarm did not operate at the time of the fire in 4 of these incidents.</p>
	<p>38 Structure fires reported were discovered visually.</p> <p>2 Structure fires reported were extinguished by the occupants.</p>		<p>6 Structure fires resulted in the complete loss of the structure.</p> <p>46 Structure fires were extinguished by the fire department.</p>

Structure Fire Analysis Highlights

Category	Sprinkler Present	Smoke Alarm Present	Sprinkler & Smoke Alarm Present	Neither Present	Total
Number of Structure Fires	1	6	1	46	46
Number of Injuries	0	3	0	8	11
Number of Deaths	0	0	0	5	5
Injury Rate – Per 1,000 Fires	-	3	-	8	203.7
Death Rate – Per 1,000 Fires	-	-	-	5	92.6

Method of Fire Control and Extinguishment

- 46 Structure fires were extinguished by a fire department
- 5 Structure fires complete burned out before the arrival of a fire department
- 30 Outdoor fires were extinguished by a fire department
- 7 Vehicle fires were extinguished by a fire department

Fire Service Type

This section refers to the type of fire service where the fire-related incident occurred.

- 20 Full-time/Career Fire Department
- 12 Combined (Career & Volunteer/Paid On-Call Fire Department)

- 44 Volunteer/On-Call Fire Department Only
- 17 Unknown

Deaths

There were six deaths reported for this period. Cause and determination reports have been requested through various provincial and regional channels, as well as through organizational contacts. To date, four cause and determination reports have been received. The outstanding reports are still in the investigation phase or are currently being drafted. These reports will be provided to the NIFSC when they have been completed.

Fire Prevention Promotion

Fire Prevention Week

As part of our commitment to enhancing fire safety awareness among youth, we launched a campaign offering Fire Prevention lesson plans for school-aged children from kindergarten to Grade 6. These lesson plans were made available for free download and were designed to coincide with Fire Prevention Week. This year's Fire Prevention Week theme was "Smoke Alarms: Make Them Work for You." This theme aimed to educate children about the importance of smoke alarms in fire safety, emphasizing how they can save lives when properly maintained and used.



Ms. Keeshig - Kindergarten –
Kikendaasogamig Elementary School
Neyaashiinigiing, Ontario

Integration with the National Poster Contest

This campaign was also integrated into the NIFSC National Poster Contest, which provided students with an opportunity to participate in designing a mascot for the NIFSC. By combining the lesson plans with the poster contest, a comprehensive educational experience reinforced the critical topic of fire safety through multiple engaging activities.

The lesson plans were developed to provide teachers and classrooms with structured activities that complemented the poster contest. These resources included:

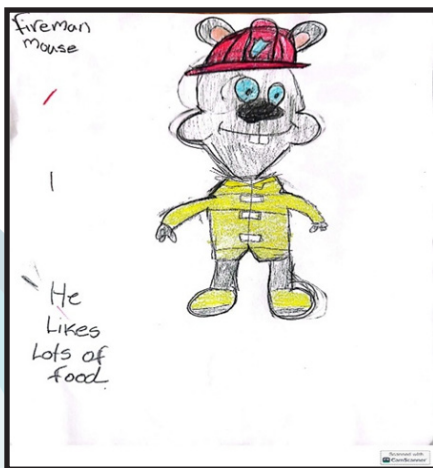
- Interactive discussions on fire safety
- Hands-on activities related to smoke alarms
- Creative assignments encouraging students to think about fire safety in their homes and communities

The campaign was launched during Fire Prevention Week and was promoted alongside the National Poster Contest. The lesson plans were accessible for free download through the NIFSC website and were shared widely via NIFSC social media platforms and distribution lists to reach educators and schools across Canada. The integration of the lesson plans with the poster contest provided a dual opportunity for students to engage with fire safety topics. Teachers reported positive feedback on the ease of integrating the lesson plans into their curriculum and the increased awareness among students regarding the importance of smoke alarms and fire safety measures.

The fire prevention lesson plans campaign successfully complemented our National Poster Contest, enhancing the educational impact of our fire safety initiatives. By providing free, accessible resources to educators, we furthered our mission to promote a culture of safety and awareness among young learners.



Ms. Keeshig - Kindergarten –
Kikendaasogamig Elementary School
Neyaashiinigiing, Ontario



Indu Bala Yadav - Grade 6,7,8
Wasauksing Kinomaugewgamik Wasauksing First Nation, Ontario

Carmen Poitras - Grade 3 - John N.A. Janvier School - Cold Lake First Nation Alberta



Youth Fire Programs

Youth Wildfire Training Project – Progress to Date Report

The NIFSC has received funding from Natural Resources Canada in support of project's related to resilience to natural disaster risks, fighting and managing wildfires in a changing climate. The NIFSC has designed the Youth Wildfire Training project to strengthen wildfire preparedness and response capacity in Indigenous communities across Canada by equipping youth aged 15 – 30 with essential emergency response skills.

The project provides certification in S-100 (Basic Fire Suppression), S-185 (Fire Entrapment Avoidance), WHMIS, and ICS 100 (Incident Command System). These courses provide the foundation for employment opportunities in wildfire response while fostering local resilience. To date, 10 training sessions have been delivered across Canada, with a total of 148 students participating:

1. Indigenous Public Safety Conference (National) – October 21, 2024 | 14 students
2. Blood Tribe First Nation (AB) – Dec 9-10, 2024 | 19 students
3. Paul First Nation (AB) – Dec 12-13, 2024 | 19 students
4. Tobique First Nation (NB) – March 14-16, 2025 | 15 students
5. Tulita First Nation (NWT) – April 7-17, 2025 | 14 students
6. Paul First Nation (AB) – April 12-13, 2025 | 20 students
7. Beaver Lake Cree Nation (AB) – April 25-27, 2025 | 16 students
8. Whitehorse (YT) – April 28-May 7, 2025 | 7 students
9. O'Chiese First Nation (AB) – May 2-7, 2025 | 17 students
10. Yorkton Tribal Council / Kahkewistahaw (SK) – May 6-8, 2025 | 21 students

These sessions demonstrate strong national interest and community engagement, with training delivered in diverse locations ranging from remote northern communities to regional gatherings and tribal councils. The training sessions held in Whitehorse and Tulita were completed in partnership with Yukon First Nations Wildfire.

Interest in the Youth Wildfire Training project is growing at a rapid pace. Currently, there are 17 training sessions scheduled for Q2 2025, with an additional 20+ communities requesting training. The project team will continue to work with communities across Canada to provide training where requested.

Camp Molly

The IFMS participated with the coordination and running of Camp Molly Indigenous firefighter training completed in Kingston, Ontario. Camp Molly introduces female youth to the fire service. Both Indigenous and females are underrepresented in the professional fire service. The purpose is to create interest in fire safety through youth participants as a contribution toward community fire safety programs. Creation of talent pool for future recruitment towards community fire safety.



Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) – Engage with CIFFC to promote the creation of Indigenous national wildfire management representation (AFN resolution).

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) created an advisory committee for the CIFFC Board of Directors. The NIFSC has established itself as the co-chair of the committee along with the National Insurance Council. The terms of reference, membership, and meeting schedule are complete.

Research Advocacy

The NIFSC strives to promote research findings that demonstrate effective fire safety measures, highlight new challenges, and advocate for evolving needs. Through continued partnerships with academic institutions, government agencies, Indigenous organizations, and fire safety practitioners, the NIFSC works to disseminate critical information through workshops, conferences, and publications.

The NIFSC supports advocacy for increased resources, policies, and technologies based on evidence from the research repository, ensuring that Indigenous fire safety needs are addressed in national and regional fire protection strategies.

The NIFSC maintains ongoing collaboration with national fire, health, climate change and relevant agencies to monitor emerging research topics and promote Indigenous inclusions. The goal is to strengthen evidence-based advocacy and data/statistics that contribute to the national body of knowledge, policy and programs.

Ongoing initiatives include:

- CCFMFC – National fire incident data reporting
- Cascadia Wildfire – Climate Change and Urban Sustainability
- Health Canada – Firefighter cancer prevention
- Health Canada – Mental Health for First Responders
- Statistics Canada – Multiple projects
- Wildfire Resiliency Consortium of Canada
- University of Waterloo – Community Wildfire Protection Planning Evaluation

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Safety in Canadian Indigenous Communities Project – Progress to Date

The NIFSC, in partnership with the University of Waterloo, have received funding from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) in support of projects that Build and Mobilize Foundational Wildland Fire Knowledge. The NIFSC is conducting a research project aimed at supporting Indigenous communities in developing Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) preparedness plans. This project centers on creating a culturally grounded, scientifically robust risk assessment framework that incorporates Indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, and community-specific needs.

To date, the research team has made significant progress in several key areas. A foundational knowledge base has been established through extensive engagement with Indigenous knowledge holders, community leaders, and existing academic research. This process has informed a deeper understanding of wildfire risk as experienced in Indigenous communities. A comprehensive

literature review was conducted, with an initial screening of 412 academic and technical sources narrowed down to 66 highly relevant works. These were categorized into themes such as traditional fire stewardship, resilience strategies, and community-based preparedness approaches. Additionally, a GIS-based wildfire mapping tool has been developed by the University of Waterloo to visualize communities in relation to historical wildfire events. This tool offers spatial insights that support strategic decision-making for risk assessment and mitigation planning.

The project is also focused on ensuring that research outcomes are accessible and actionable. Efforts are underway to transform findings into practical, community-based WUI Fire Safety programs. These programs will use storytelling, print materials, and culturally relevant communication methods to share best practices and empower communities to address wildfire risks proactively. To support this, the research team is investigating effective communication strategies tailored to Indigenous audiences, including the use of visual aids, traditional knowledge-sharing practices, and both in-person and virtual storytelling.

The NIFSC has hired two Wildfire Specialists who will begin leading community engagement activities. Moving forward, the team will refine the risk assessment framework through continued consultation, validate the mapping tool, and begin rolling out WUI preparedness workshops. Outreach materials will be designed to reflect Indigenous perspectives and promote community-wide resilience to wildfire threats.

Government Relations Week

Members of the IFMS team attended the Annual Government Relations Week hosted by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC). The CAFC members were scheduled to meet with MP and Senators to discuss the needs of Fire Chiefs across the country. One main goal for this year was to request the implementation of a Fire Administration similar to what exists in the US. Blaine Wiggins and Arnold Lazare were able to meet with the ISC Ministerial Secretary Jenica Atwin.



King Charles Coronation Medal

This year, the CAFC had 50 medals to be presented. Interim Chief Executive Director Michelle Vandevord, Blaine Wiggins and Arnold Lazare were all nominated and recognized for their efforts. Blaine Wiggins received his award at the CAFC Conference in October 2024 and Michelle Vandevord and Arnold Lazare were presented with the award in Ottawa during Government Relations Week.

CAFC President presenting NIFSC Interim's Chief Executive Officer Michelle Vandevord with the King Charles Coronation Medal.



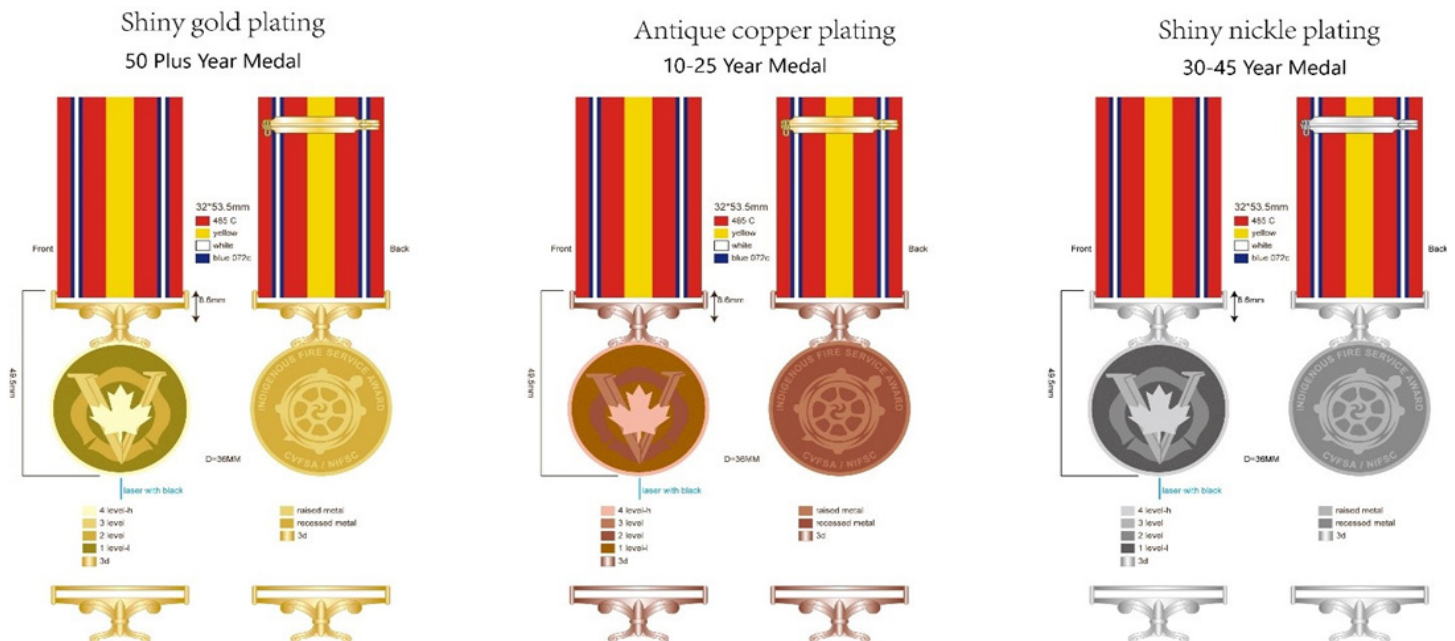
Ongoing Partnerships

Joint Canadian Volunteer Fire Service Association and NIFSC Long Service Medal

The NIFSC in collaboration with the Canadian Volunteer Fire Service Association (CVFSA) developed an Indigenous Fire Service Award. This initiative introduces a medal to honor firefighters from Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit communities who have dedicated 10 or more years of service, with additional bars awarded for every subsequent 5 years of service.

The new Fire Service Award provides a uniformly accepted option for recognizing long-serving firefighters across Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit communities. The program ensures that all medals adhere to a national standard in terms of appearance, presentation, and awarding criteria. This standardization aims to honor the commitment and bravery of firefighters consistently across Canada.

Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit community leaders and senior fire officials can nominate firefighters for the Fire Service Medal using the “Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit Fire Service Award and Bars Application” form. This form should be used to nominate members who have served at least 10 years in a recognized Indigenous fire service or as medical first responders. Medals sponsored by a community must be signed off by a community leader or a senior fire official.



Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes

The NIFSC is a participating member on the CBHCC 2030 building codes proposals; most notable are the single stair proposed for midrise buildings and the Lithium-ion battery fires in buildings due to charging stations.



Canadian Mental Health Association

The NIFSC collaborated with the Canadian Mental Health Association to deliver the Resilient Minds-Indigenous Adaptation course at the Indigenous Public Safety Conference's pre-conference training on October 22-23, 2024. The Canadian Mental Health Association and NIFSC both supplied an instructor, and the two agencies shared responsibilities for the course registration, delivery, and evaluation.

Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators (COPR)

The NIFSC presented a request to the Executive Director of the Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators (COPR) in January 2025. The presentation looked at how to adopt the role of the accreditor for paramedic services within Indigenous communities. Being the accreditor would allow the NIFSC to develop a national standard for paramedic training, scope of practice, ethics, and a professional competency framework for practitioners working in Indigenous communities. Such actions would fill a significant gap in current paramedic service delivery.

In February 2025, the NIFSC participated in the COPR Exam Development Resources Project, which aimed to identify sources used to develop exam questions for the competency areas: Advocacy for Health, Equity, and Justice. As part of this initiative, the NIFSC reviewed 20 resources, providing feedback on their relevance and appropriateness from an Indigenous perspective.

Global Fire Rescue Service Inc. (GFRS)

As part of an ongoing agreement established through a Memorandum of Understanding with the wildfire company Global Fire Rescue Service Inc. (GFRS), the NIFSC conducted a training session at GFRS's head office in November 2024. The session focused on Indigenizing GFRS's business practices. Through a presentation, group discussions, and document reviews, the NIFSC guided the GFRS executive leadership in recognizing the importance of Indigenization efforts, exploring the key elements of corporate Indigenization, and identifying specific areas for improvement.

Heart & Stroke Foundation

The NIFSC partnered with the Heart and Stroke Foundation's National Cardiac Arrest Action plan, which focuses on aspects impacting Indigenous Peoples, such as system inadequacies, geographical barriers, cultural elements, educational considerations, and lessons learned through lived experience.



In January 2025, the NIFSC provided an Indigenous perspective on a national action plan for cardiac arrest. Three NIFSC representatives, representing operations, senior leadership, and the Board of Directors, participated in the discussion. The NIFSC has also met with the Heart and Stroke Foundation to explore an unfunded research project on cardiac health in Indigenous populations.

Kidde Canada

Team members travelled to Cross Lake where the alarms had been delivered. NIFSC provided training sessions to install the alarms to firefighters from the Cross Lake Fire Department



and basic occupant fire prevention training and public education material for distribution to the occupants. The project team (Cross Lake FD & IFMS) installed over 200 alarms in over 100 homes during the first two days of the 27 campaigns. The Cross Lake Fire Department will continue the campaign with continued site visits by the IFMS Fire Specialists.

LivingWorks Education Inc.

The NIFSC collaborated with LivingWorks to create a national framework for suicide prevention training. The NIFSC and LivingWorks' Suicide Prevention Manager outlined a program to adapt the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for Indigenous communities. Program development is ongoing.

National Research Council

Ongoing collaboration with the National research Council to determine an approach to establish codes and standards applicable to Indigenous communities including reviewing technical guides for northern housing.



Statistics Canada

Linking census data with Indigenous communities has commended as part of a Defense Research Development Canada (DRDC) project with the Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners to create a pan-Canadian Fire Community Fire Risk Reduction dashboard, with the anticipated delivery in late 2026.



Tri-Energy

The NIFSC has developed an ongoing collaboration with Tri-Indigenous Energy to promote innovative alternative energy solutions that improve safety and increase reliability in rural and remote communities.



Wildfire Defence Solutions

The NIFSC collaborated with Wildfire Defence Solutions to facilitate their Canadian operations, providing insight into Canadian wildfire policies and informing on strategic locations for base set-up. The NIFSC will serve as the liaison between Wildfire Defence Solutions and Indigenous fire professionals as potential employees.

NIFSC Annual Communications Report

This past year marked a pivotal period of growth and connection for the NIFSC communications program. With a focus on digital outreach, educational engagement, and national event promotion, our team successfully elevated public awareness of Indigenous-led fire safety initiatives. Centered around youth engagement, strategic events, and storytelling, our efforts reached tens of thousands of individuals across Canada and laid the groundwork for continued trust and visibility in Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Public Safety Conference (October 22–24, 2024)

River Rock Casino Resort, Richmond, BC

Conference Communications Overview

The Indigenous Public Safety Conference was NIFSC’s flagship event of the year and has received our most robust multi-channel communications campaign. A comprehensive promotional strategy was deployed between July and October 2024, targeting First Nations leadership, fire professionals, youth, and emergency services partners.

Key Promotional Assets

- Digital conference registration package
- Digital conference schedules and agendas
- Speaker spotlight graphics
- Daily social media countdown posts (Oct 1–22)
- Personalized invitation campaigns from Keynote speaker Dougie Hall

Live Coverage and Engagement

During the three-day event:

- The communications team provided real-time updates via Facebook and Instagram stories.
- Behind-the-scenes content, speaker photos, and session recaps were published daily.
- The Firefighting Competition Event, sponsored by Waterax, was live-posted and garnered over 3,000 engagements.

Metrics Snapshot

- Total social impressions from conference-related content: 28,000+
- Live post engagement: 8,700

Title	Date published	Distribution	Watch time	3-second views	1-minute views	Average watch time	Returning viewers	Reach	Reactions/Likes	Comments	Shares
A heartfelt Thank You to Everyone Who Mad... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 30, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	406	25	0	2
Your Video Reel - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Safe...	Oct 29, 2024	---	42	---	---	0:06	0	227	22	0	4
A huge thank you to all the incredible teams ... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 29, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	1.5K	116	2	15
NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Safety Coun... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 26, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	4K	60	2	6
The 35th Annual Firefighting Competition has... Reel - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Safe...	Oct 26, 2024	---	---	---	---	---	0	---	---	0	0
Exciting news! Today at the Indigenous Publi... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 25, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	627	26	1	3
That's a wrap on Day 1 of the Indigenous Pub... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 25, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	400	11	0	1
Day 2 of Pre-Conference Training: Complete! ... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 25, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	464	11	0	1
Exciting news! The conference program for th... NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Safety Council	Oct 22, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	308	6	0	0
Day 1 of the Indigenous Public Safety Pre-Co... Photo - NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Oct 22, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	1.4K	57	1	6
The National Indigenous Fire Safety Council L... NIFSC - National Indigenous Fire Safety Council	Oct 7, 2024	---	---	0	0	---	0	631	13	0	5

Youth Wildfire Training Campaign – Brampton Submission

This was one of the highest performing NIFSC social media campaigns of all time. Focused on showcasing Indigenous youth participating in hands-on wildfire prevention and suppression training in Brampton, ON, the campaign highlighted:

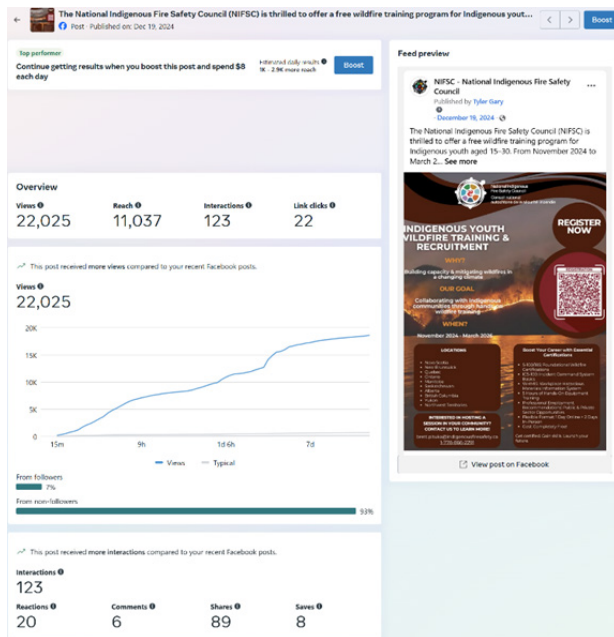
- Youth leadership in fire safety
- Cultural and land-based approaches to wildfire mitigation
- Empowerment of future Indigenous fire professionals

Key Promotional Assets

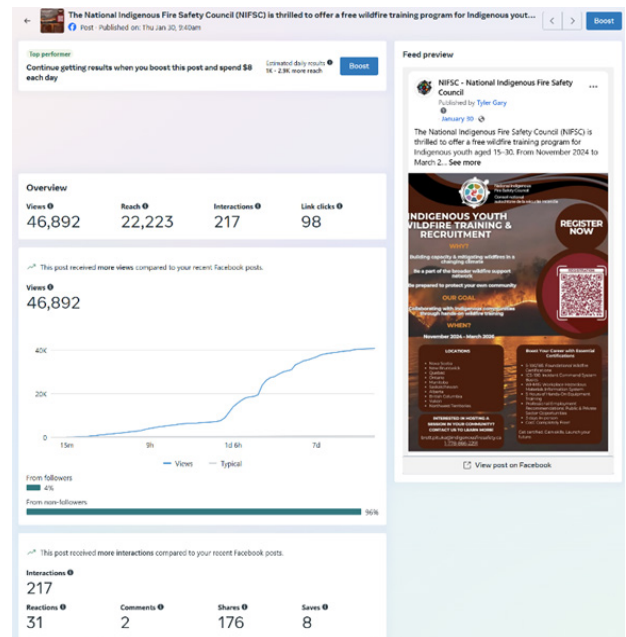
- Digital promotional flyers
- Webpage development

Metrics Snapshot

- Total social impressions from training promotions content: 65,000+



Youth Wildfire Training Post 1



Youth Wildfire Training Post 2

NIFSC National Poster Contest (Sept 3 – Nov 15, 2024)

Theme: Create a Mascot for NIFSC

This youth-focused campaign encouraged students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 to imagine and draw a mascot that would represent NIFSC values and Indigenous fire safety leadership. Ms. Keeshig's Junior and Senior Kindergarten class at Kikendaasogamig Elementary School in Neyaashiinigiing, ON, were the proud winners of our 2024 Poster Contest and the creative minds behind Torch the Turtle.

Key Promotional Assists

- Direct outreach to educators and First Nations schools
- A downloadable Teacher Toolkit
- Monthly email reminders and social media countdown posts

Metrics Snapshot

- Total social impressions from poster contest content: 1900+

Title	Date published	Distribution	Watch time	3-second views	1-minute views	Average watch time	Returning viewers	Reach	Reactions/Likes...	Comments	Shares
Congratulations to Ms. Keeshig's Kindergarte... Photo · NIFSC · National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Tue Jan 28, 9:26am	--	--	0	0	--	0	561	68	0	4
A Huge Thank You to All Participants of the N... Photo · NIFSC · National Indigenous Fire Sa...	Tue Jan 28, 9:21am	--	--	0	0	--	0	199	9	0	1
The National Indigenous Fire Safety Council L... NIFSC · National Indigenous Fire Safety Council	Oct 7, 2024	--	--	0	0	--	0	631	13	0	5

Digital Channels Overview

Social Media Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NIFSC.CA>

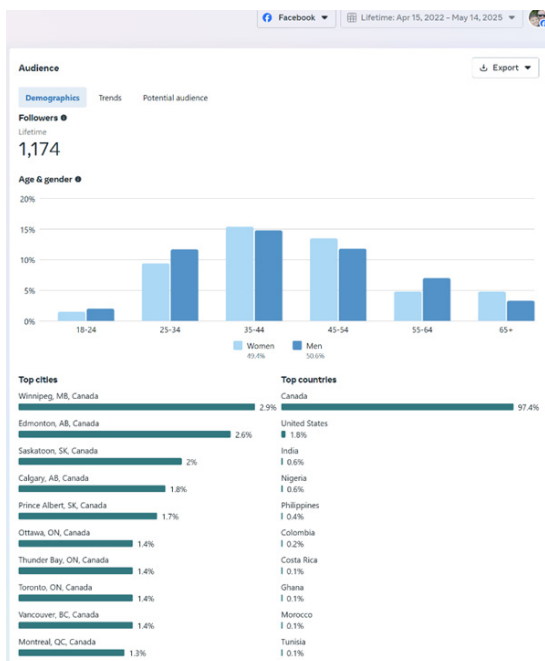
Metric Apr 2024 – Apr 2025

Total Followers: 600 → 1100

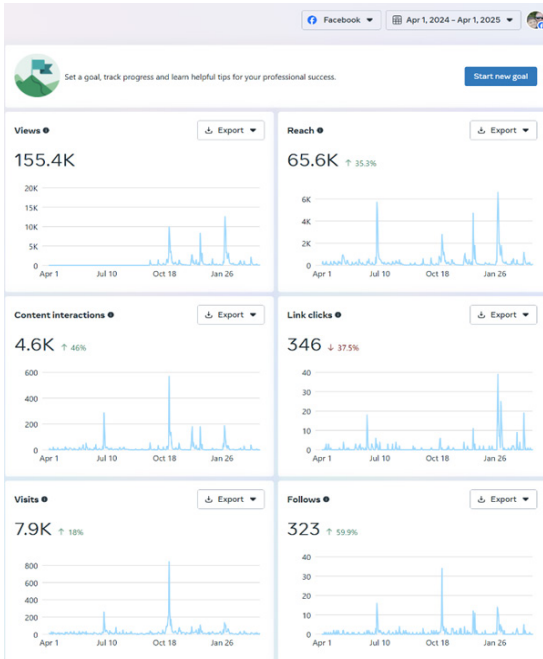
Total Posts: 115

Most Engaged Post Youth Wildfire Training Campaign

Facebook Audience Metrics:



Facebook Metrics 2024-2025



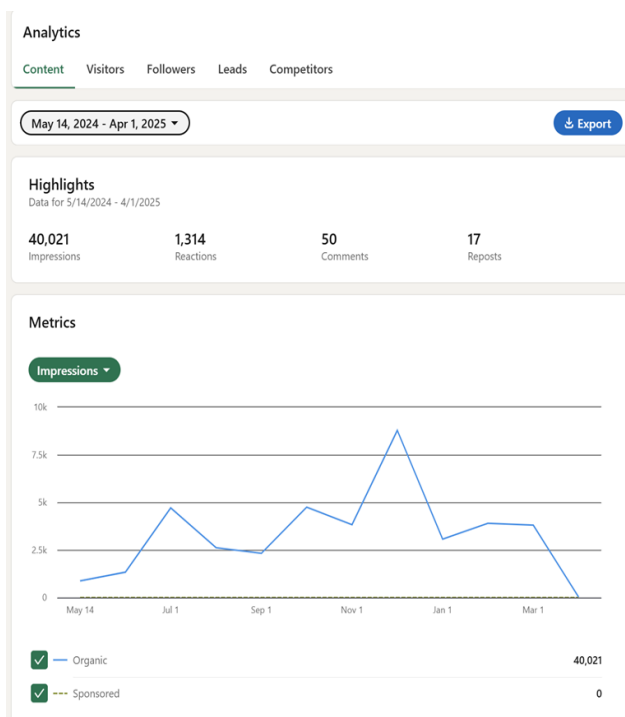
LinkedIn Metrics – <https://www.linkedin.com/company/afac-ifmo/?viewAsMember=true>

Total Followers: 1213

Total Users Impressions: 45,700

Unique Visitors: 600

Page Views: 45,000



Website Metrics – www.indigenousfiresafety.ca

Metric Total

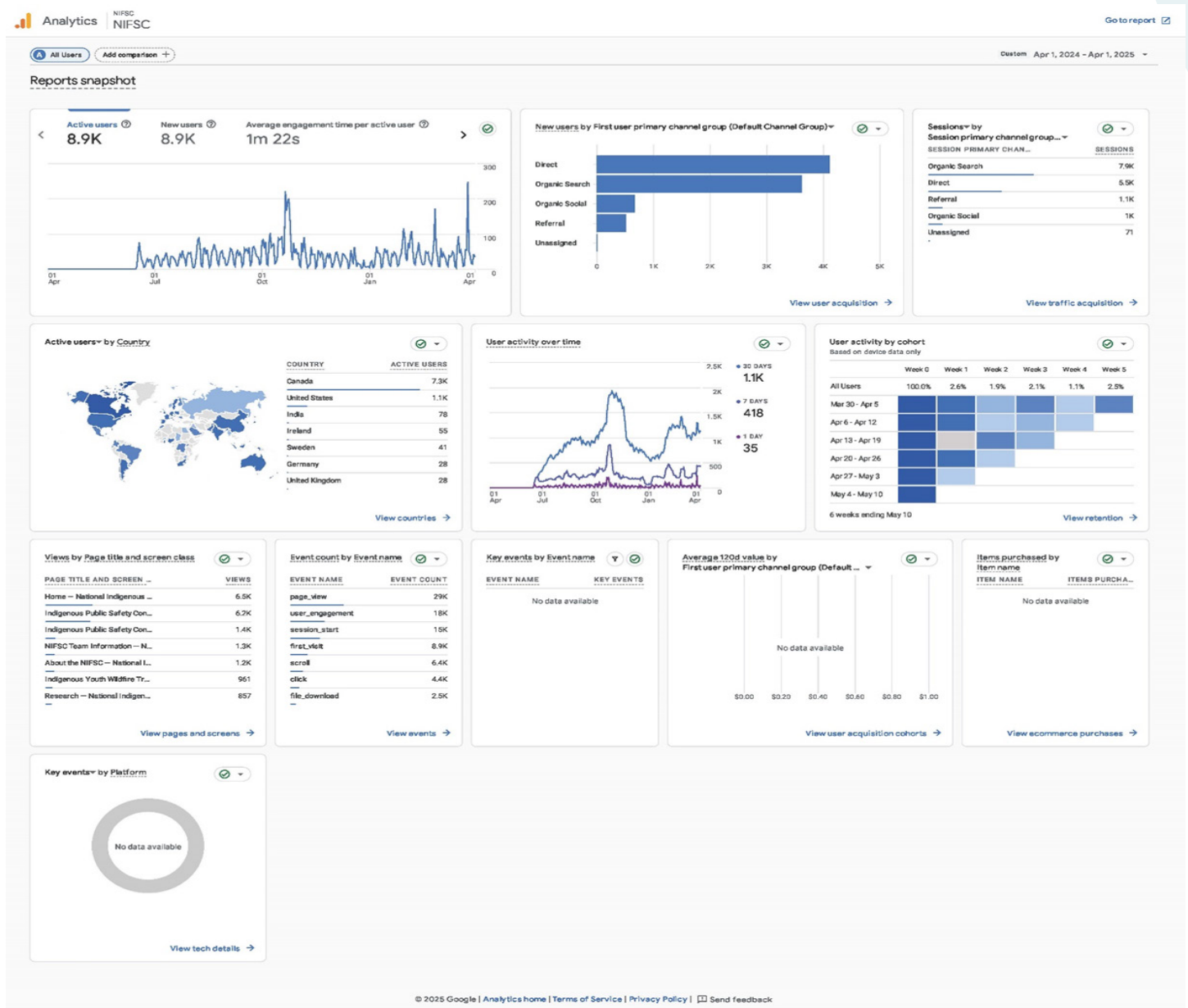
Total Users: 28,600

Unique Visitors: 24,900

Page Views: 28,000

Top Pages: Homepage, Conference Page, Poster Contest, CWPP Training

Website Report:



NIFSC 2024-25 Unaudited Expense Report

		<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expense</i>
2005	Corporate Human Resources	\$225,845	233,147.84
	CEO	\$102,000	131,986.33
	IT Corp	\$35,000	53,190.94
	Human Resources	\$13,845	0.00
	BoD & Exec Asst EC 1.0	\$15,000	10,098.39
	Finance Manager	\$60,000	37,872.18
	Operations Human Resources	\$450,655	\$522,038
2003	IFMS Resources Sub-Total	\$158,155	\$176,866
2011	PPS Sub-Total	\$137,500	\$143,224
2013	Research & Standards Sub-Total	\$155,000	\$201,948
	Corporate Ancillary	\$134,500	\$123,628
1003	Governance	\$13,000	13,339.69
7004	Audit / Legal & Bank	\$48,000	55,125.00
7006	Software/IT	\$32,000	23,966.50
7005	Physical Infrastructure	\$18,000	18,000.00
7002	Telecommunications	\$6,000	0.00
7001	Corporate Equipment & Supplies	\$11,500	382.98
7003	Logistics (Collaboration Booths, Shipping)	\$6,000	12,813.53
1004	Events	\$334,000	\$340,967
	Fire Conference / NFC NPC	\$334,000	340,966.56
	Travel Total	\$55,000	\$26,506
4000	Board Travel	\$12,000	4,612.22
4001	Exec Dir	\$10,000	0.00
4002	Collaboration	\$15,500	8,282.11
4005	IFMS Delivery Travel	\$17,500	13,611.87
	Total Budgeted Expenses & FTE	\$1,200,000	\$1,246,286

2024-25 NRCAN Y-Wildfire Training		<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expense</i>
6000	Salaries	\$132,000	130,738.75
6001	Professional Contract Services	\$13,000	11,200.00
6002	Training Delivery Costs	\$182,000	181,909.67
6003	Educational Materials	\$87,000	66,853.58
6004	Honorarium - Elders	\$3,500	0.00
6005	Administration	\$41,750	41,728.44
	Totals	\$459,250	\$432,430

2024-25 NRCAN Research-CWPP		<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expense</i>
5000	Salaries, Benefits and Stipends	14,494.00	14,494.00
5001	Professional, Scientific and Contr Services	\$ 33,494.47	33,494.47
5002	Training, professional development costs	12,386.00	12,386.00
5005	Informatics and IT and Systems	4,916.00	4,916.00
5006	Communication tools and services	960.00	960.00
	Totals	\$66,250	\$66,250

