SUBJECT: Standardization of Ventilation and Rescue Saws, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and Vehicle Exhaust Extraction Systems (HES09003) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION

(a) That Cutters Edge, a division of Edge Industries Incorporated, be the approved manufacturer’s standard for a period of four (4) years (2009 through to 2012) for the single source purchase of ventilation and rescue saws.

(b) That Scott Aviation be the approved manufacturer’s standard for providing firefighting self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) for a four (4) year period (2009 through to 2012).

(c) That Nederman Canada be the approved manufacturer’s standard for providing vehicle exhaust extraction systems for a four (4) year period (2009 through to 2012).

(d) That staff be authorized to negotiate “house accounts” with: (a) Cutters Edge, a division of Edge Industries Incorporated; (b) Scott Aviation; and, (c) Nederman Canada for the supply of new equipment, parts, repair and maintenance services with original equipment manufacturers and/or licensed distributors of the approved standardized products.

Jim Kay
General Manager / Chief,
Hamilton Emergency Services
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report proposes and seeks approval for fixed term “manufacturer’s standard” for the following equipment used by Hamilton Emergency Services – Fire (HES-Fire):

1. Ventilation and Rescue Saws – Cutters Edge;
2. Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) – Scott Aviation; and,

The proposed manufacturer’s standardization is in accordance with Purchasing Policy #14, and will provide for Department wide consistency, which will lead to improved operational efficiencies and effectiveness. By standardizing equipment the Department will make it easier for Firefighters to become proficient on the equipment that they may be required to use at any time. Additionally, this standardization process will support the employers’ requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1 (OHS Act) to provide the necessary equipment and training (familiarization) for Firefighters.

A committee comprised of members from the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (Career and Volunteer) and Fire Suppression Section staff (Career and Volunteer) completed a scored evaluation and operational testing process for the firefighting equipment. At the conclusion of this process, an end user recommendation was made as to the manufacturer and model of equipment that would best meet the OHS Act requirements. This type of process helps to increase the level of reliability and staff confidence in the equipment.

The recommended equipment has been researched, tested and selected by the end users.

BACKGROUND:

Currently, staff utilizes three (3) different manufacturers’ and thirty (30) different models of ventilation and rescue saws. This is a result of the different types of equipment used by the former municipalities and was inherited at the time of amalgamation.

This has created significant training and operational challenges for the Department due to the fact that all firefighters must maintain a level of proficiency with each type of saw. This current situation has caused health and safety concerns to be raised and creates the need for the Department to provide one (1) make and model of ventilation and one (1) make and model of rescue saw.

Capital funding was secured and a process was put into place to evaluate and determine which manufacturer’s ventilation and rescue saw met both the OHS Act requirements. A committee comprised of members from the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (Career and Volunteer) and Fire Suppression Section staff
(Career and Volunteer) completed a scored evaluation and operational testing process that determined Cutters Edge ventilation saws and Cutters Edge rescue saws rated highest in relation to the Department’s requirements.

At the time of amalgamation there were different styles of SCOTT Aviation Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) used amongst the former municipalities.

In 2006, the Department spent approximately $2.5M to replace all the firefighting SCBA in order to have one (1) make and style throughout the Department. This replacement program ensured that all current health and safety, and operational requirements were met. As part of the selection process a committee comprised of members from the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (Career and Volunteer) and Fire Suppression Section staff (Career and Volunteer) evaluated and tested various makes and models of SCBA. SCOTT Aviation was the selected manufacturer and a contract was awarded. The contract was initiated in 2006 to complete the replacement program expired early in 2009. In order to maintain one (1) make and model of SCBA units in service Department wide, an additional contract is required to allow for the purchase of any additional SCBA units and/or related equipment/parts that may be required. The approval of the recommendations contained in Report HES09003 will eliminate the need to make purchases through the Policy 11 process.

Standardizing to one (1) manufacturer each for ventilation and rescue saws, and SCBA will provide Department wide:

- equipment uniformity and consistency;
- operational effectiveness;
- consistent training (familiarity and confidence in emergency situations);
- compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Act requirements; and,
- reduced repair parts inventory.

Fire has been using diesel exhaust extraction systems in the fire stations that have been provided and installed by Nederman Canada since the late 1990’s. These systems provide a safer work environment for staff by reducing the exposure to diesel exhaust, which is created by the running of vehicles inside the fire station. All Fire apparatus is equipped with exhaust connections and transponders that activate the diesel exhaust extraction system when the vehicle’s ignition system is activated. Apparatus is constantly moved between stations to ensure the best coverage is maintained during emergencies. Having one (1) manufacturer also allows for the interoperability of vehicles from one station to another without any restrictions.

The proposed manufacturer standardization is in accordance with Purchasing Policy – Policy #14 - Policy for Standardization, Section 4.14.
ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

Purchasing Policy #14 - Policy for Standardization, Section 4.14, sub section (1) allows for a management decision making process to select a Good and/or Service that meets common needs or requirements.

Purchasing and maintaining one (1) brand of ventilation and rescue saw, and SCBA will provide professional commercial quality reliable equipment to front-line staff with reduced break-down time along with reduced time for repair. This will also assist in the process of periodic replacement of fleet with a typical life cycle of five to seven (5 to 7) years depending on the amount of use.

Firefighting is a very dangerous activity and requires reliance on proven equipment. The recommended equipment has been researched, tested and selected by the end users.

Standardization also allows for the reduced stock levels of spare parts.

On an annual basis it may be necessary to replace damaged, worn out units or repair with Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) parts. Operating Budget accounts are used for these types of expenditures.

Fire Suppression staff requires equipment-specific ongoing training on these types of saws and SCBA. Standardization will reduce training, enhance product knowledge and assist in efficient emergency fire operations. Furthermore, equipment familiarity will assist in mitigating health and safety issues.

Equipment downtime is costly in terms of service delivery and results in increased costs. Reliable equipment reduces the number of spares that would be required and reduces the cost for repairs. Firefighters in the field rely on the quality of the equipment. Any breakdowns during firefighting operations would bring the fire crew to a stop while waiting for the replacement of the equipment thus extending the time of the emergency operation, which could result in the injury and/or fatality of firefighters and/or civilians, as well as result in potential liability to the City.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

The City purchases the lowest priced equipment tendered regardless of specific brand requirements. Staff does not recommend this as it will result in the City being required to purchase non end user supported/recommended equipment that may lead to increased repair costs; increased inventory costs (due to having to keep additional parts in inventory); increased training costs; end user dissatisfaction; compatibility issues and health and safety concerns.
FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial, staffing or legal implications.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

Purchasing Policy #14 – Policy for Standardization states that standardization is a management decision-making process that examines a specific common need or requirement and allows the Client Department(s) to select a Good and/or Service that best fills that need to become a standard.

In the instance of the Cutter’s Edge ventilation and rescue saw standardization, the establishment of this standard will result in a single source purchase, and that purchase shall be approved by the Manager of Purchasing and Council.

Ontario Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, Section 21 – Guidance Note # 04-9 Respiratory Protection Program

Ontario Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, Section 21 – Guidance Note # 03-1(3) Reducing Diesel Fumes in Fire Stations

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Corporate Services Department, Finance Services Division, Purchasing Section
Hamilton Emergency Services, Administration Section
Hamilton Emergency Services, Mechanical Section

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, and economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Human health and safety are protected.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
A skilled, innovative and diverse workforce is attracted and retained.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☑ Yes ☐ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☑ Yes ☐ No