



Public Safety    Sécurité publique  
Canada            Canada

Deputy Minister    Sous-ministre

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0P8

MAY 15 2013

Ms. Sonia L'Heureux  
Parliamentary Budget Officer (interim)  
Library of Parliament  
Parliament Buildings  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A9

Dear Ms. L'Heureux:

I am writing in response to your letter of May 3, 2013, requesting data pertaining to the Department's cost assessment of compensation benefits for firefighters and public safety officers killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty further to a response in the House of Commons by Ms. Candice Bergen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety) on April 22, 2013.

As you note, this matter is further to Motion M-388 which was tabled in the House of Commons on June 4, 2012. The Motion called upon the Government to support firefighters and other public safety officers by creating a National Public Safety Officer Compensation Fund, along with other initiatives.

One of the key pillars of the Government's response to the Motion was that this issue falls more properly within the authority of the provinces and territories, and is dealt with by a variety of mechanisms. It was determined that changes would not be made at the federal level to areas that fall within provincial and territorial jurisdiction or duplicate their programs, as the provinces and territories already have a legal framework in place to address compensation issues.

Nevertheless, in the course of making efforts to arrive at a preliminary assessment of the potential cost of this Motion, consideration was given to various sources of information. For example, it was noted that at the Standing Committee on Finance on September 25, 2006, and September 15, 2009, as part of pre-Budget consultations, the

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International Association of Firefighters testified that a national Public Safety Officer Compensation Benefit of \$300,000, paid directly to families for a death of a firefighter in the line of duty, would cost the government \$6M annually. However, it was unclear whether this amount would include longer-term disease related deaths, or how, and at what cost, such payments would be determined and administered respectively. Further, according to information from the Canadian Fallen Firefighters Foundation at that time, approximately 204 firefighters had died in the line of duty during the last 10 years. It should also be noted that Motion M-388 was broader than only firefighters. It could also include other categories such as police officers, auxiliary officers and conservation officers which could substantially increase the costs for implementing such a benefit.

The amount of \$61.2 M was therefore a calculation based on the 204 firefighters who died in the last 10 years, multiplied by the proposed \$300,000 annual benefit. Further financial analysis was not undertaken given the determination that the matter falls within provincial and territorial jurisdiction.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

  
François Guimont

c.c.: Mr. Rick Stewart  
Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet  
Liaison Secretariat for Macroeconomic Policy, Privy Council Office