



Stephenville Pushes to Safeguard Airport and Fire Training

The Town of Stephenville is raising urgent concern over a matter of regional and provincial importance. A power disruption at the Stephenville Airport has severely impacted operations at the Marine Institute's Fire and Emergency Services Training Centre, one of Atlantic Canada's only facilities offering both Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) and structural firefighter training. This program is a critical economic driver, educational resource, and public safety asset, not only for our Town, but for the entire province.

The Marine Institute's Stephenville site plays an essential role in providing certification and recertification training to fire departments throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and across Atlantic Canada. With the growing demand for professional firefighting training, the program has expanded over time to meet industry needs. Its success depends directly on the fixed infrastructure of the Stephenville Airport, including runways, aircraft simulation props, and specialized training grounds, assets that cannot be easily duplicated elsewhere.

A recent power shutoff at the airport has forced the Marine Institute to delay its fall training session from September to January, already resulting in thousands of dollars in operational losses. Without a stable and secure power source, the long-term viability of the program offering in Stephenville is at risk. This situation places provincial training capacity and significant export revenue in jeopardy, all stemming from infrastructure failure within a privately owned facility.

The Marine Institute's presence in Stephenville supports airport and municipal fire departments, enhances public safety across the province, and contributes directly to economic development in the region. Losing this program in Stephenville would undermine provincial emergency preparedness and deliver a significant setback to efforts to revitalize the Stephenville Airport.

The Town of Stephenville is urgently calling on all levels of government and leadership to act. Immediate steps must be taken to secure a stable power solution for the airport, and an emergency meeting must be convened to

determine both short and long term infrastructure responses. In addition, we urge provincial support in helping the Marine Institute recover financial losses and maintain program stability in Stephenville.

We cannot afford to lose this program offering in Stephenville due to inaction. The Marine Institute chose Stephenville because of the unique infrastructure and opportunities available here. With the right leadership and swift collaboration, we can protect this vital asset and ensure it continues to serve Newfoundland and Labrador from its rightful home in Stephenville.