Halton Hills Fire Department deputy chief Bruce Morrison brought the new Command unit to the Fire Services & Emergency Planning Committee meeting on Thursday for its members to see.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

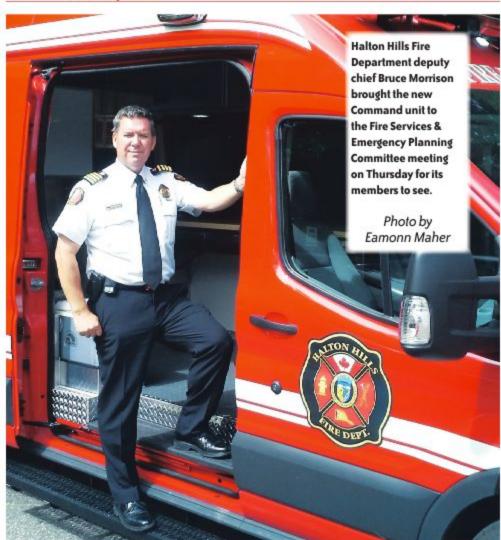## Halton Hills Fire Department adds Command Vehicle

A unique new vehicle has been added to the Halton Hills Fire Department s fleet.

The custom-built, multi-purpose mobile Command unit arrived last week at a cost of approximately $90,000 and HHFD deputy chief Bruce Morrison said that after some programming and modifications are made, the vehicle should be deployed in a couple of weeks.

It s a Ford Transit model, which replaces a Ford Econoline van that was retired three years ago, Morrison added, and it s believed to be the first of its kind for any fire service in Ontario.

Constructed by a firm called WeldeXperts based in New Lowell, Ont. (near Barrie), the Command unit has its own power supply, communications centre and is fully equipped with a self-contained tool crib, respirators, a generator and HAZMAT technical rescue capabilities.

We asked our firefighters, We re going to put a wish list together for this vehicle, tell us what specifications you need, tools, anything that comes to mind, Morrison recalled.

The manufacturer told us he s already has lots of inquiries about it from fire services people who want to see it when it s done because it s something you can deploy at any event.

As well as providing an on-scene presence and a central command, the vehicle has several other uses, including providing privacy for families who have suffered a loss in a fire or accident.

Featuring LED lighting and reflective striping, it s equipped with work stations for two personnel with a whiteboard and meeting room area.

This is something we really needed as the community grows, that we re able to provide the kind of service that s expected from us, said Morrison, who recently assumed deputy chief duties with the retirement of John Martin in July.

It also provides a great platform for investigators, who are able to get out of the elements and can do the job to the best of their abilities. And because it s fully equipped, there s no need to keep a pumper truck on scene if there are tools already there.