



Modernizing BC's Emergency Management Legislation

Union of BC Municipalities Convention

September 26, 2019



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



Current Emergency Program Act

- Dates from 1993
- Focuses on preparing and implementing plans, states of emergency
- Focuses on Province and Local Authorities
- Regulations:
 - Emergency Program Management
 - Local Authority Emergency Management
 - Compensation & Disaster Financial Assistance

2016 EPA Proposals

Discussion paper released January 2016

- UBCM response October 2016
- Key issues raised by Local Governments:
 - Capacity challenges for some LGs
 - Maintain current level of LG authority
 - Recognize LG expertise and experience
- Will help inform current modernization initiative



2017 & 2018 Wildfires

3,415
wildfires

71,000
evacuees

2.5 M
hectares burned

660
structures damaged or
destroyed

2 Provincial states of emergency
(71 days & 24 days)

\$1.6 B spent in response and recovery





2018 Floods

400+ homes

severely damaged

100 businesses

severely damaged

\$70 M+

in recovery funding to date



Strengthening Emergency Management: Initial Actions

- Implementing report recommendations (ongoing)
- Adopted Sendai Framework (October 2018)
- Adopted Interim Disaster Recovery Framework (May 2019)
- Modernizing legislation (by Fall 2020)

Engagement with UBCM:

Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee

- Expanded membership and mandate
- Six meetings, June – September 2019
- Identifying issues, testing concepts

Future Engagement

- Response(s) to Discussion Paper
- Area Associations
- Advisory Committee may continue
- EPBC Conference and EPCs



Driving Modernization: Addressing Challenges

- Diverse and complex hazards (earthquakes, windstorms)
- Increasing frequency and severity of disasters (floods, wildfires)
- Impacts of disasters (economic, psycho-social, fiscal)
- Indigenous communities disproportionately impacted
- Needs of vulnerable people not always sufficiently considered
- Address gaps surfaced by events in 2017 and 2018

Key Gaps in Current Emergency Management Legislation (1/2)

- No explicit requirements to assess and mitigate disaster risk (UN Sendai Framework)
- Lack of recovery planning and tools prolongs recovery and does not support resilience
- Integration between plans
- No requirements to provide event-related information





Key Gaps in Current Legislation (2/2)

- First Nations are not yet adequately recognized as partners
- No assurance that cohesive plans and strategies are in place for critical infrastructure
- Current system does not yet represent an all-of-society approach



DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR MODERNIZATION

Seven design principles are guiding development of BC's modernized emergency management legislation. The design principles reflect the key strategic shifts that underpin a more modern approach to emergency management in BC.



A Four-Pillar Approach

The Act will encompass all stages of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.



Shifting How We Think

The Act will reflect a shift from disaster response to managing and reducing disaster risk.



An All-of-Society Approach

Emergency management is a shared responsibility: individuals, governments, communities, private and non-profit sectors.



Putting Safety First

Protection of life, health, and safety is paramount.



Transparent Decisions

Decisions made under the Act and regulations will be transparent.



A Funding Mechanism that Works

Responsive, flexible and disciplined funding mechanism.

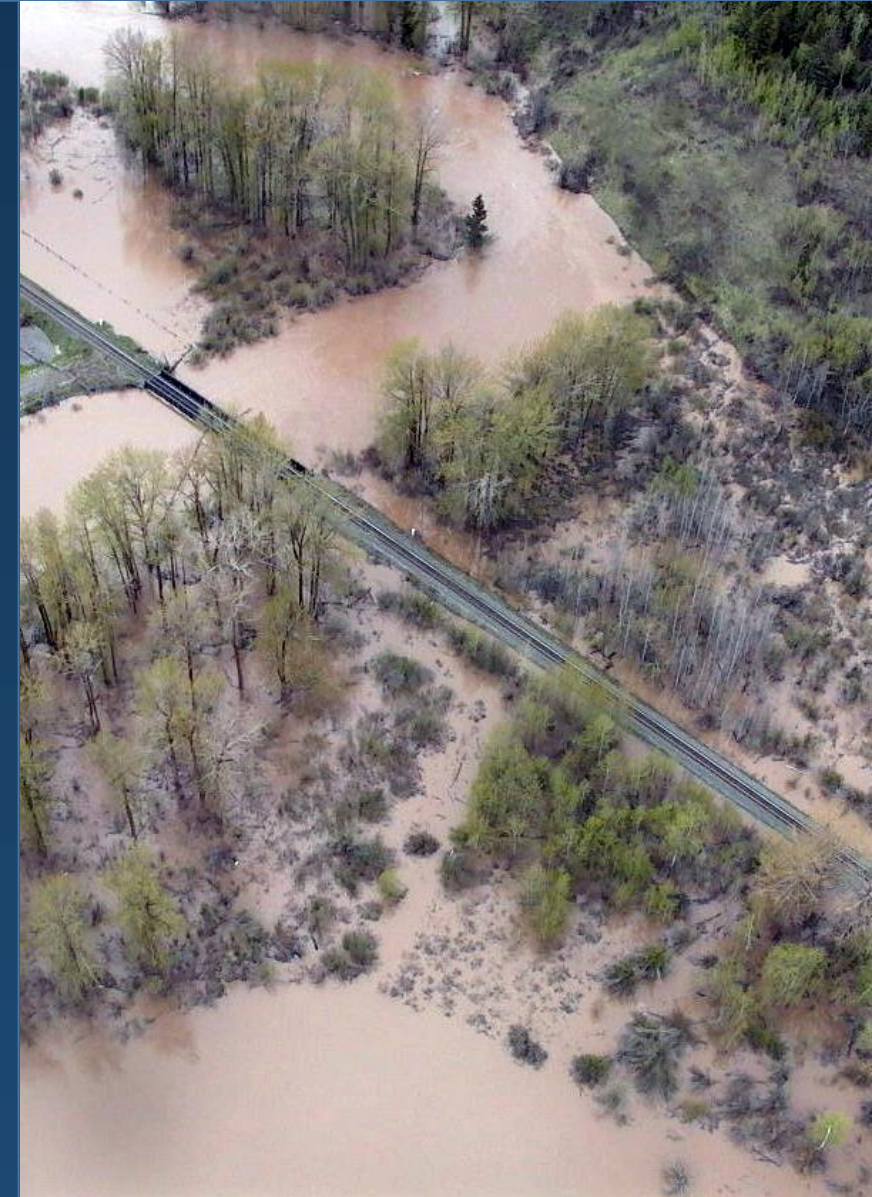


Focus on Inclusion

The Act will be inclusive and will consider the needs of vulnerable citizens.

Potential Changes: Key Definitions

- Definition of “emergency”
- Definitions for four pillars:
 - Mitigation
 - Preparedness
 - Response
 - Recovery



Potential Shift: Ministries, Crowns and Agencies

- Emergency and business continuity planning
- Exercises
- Information sharing
- Continuity of government





Potential Shift: Local Authority Planning and Powers

- Emergency and business continuity planning
- Exercises
- Land development and building decisions
- Recovery powers
- Coordination and regional approaches

Potential Shift: First Nations as Partners

- Potential expanded definition of emergency
- Clear authority to form partnerships and enter into agreements
- Consideration of Indigenous and traditional knowledge, cultural safety and inclusiveness
- Potential requirement for Local Authorities to consult with First Nations



Critical Infrastructure

- Energy & Utilities
- Communications
- Transportation
- Water
- Health
- Safety
- Government
- Food
- Finance
- Manufacturing

In Canada and British Columbia, critical infrastructure (CI) refers to the processes, systems, facilities, technologies, networks, assets and services essential to the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians and the effective functioning of government.

Other Potential Shifts (1/2)

- Quality Assurance:
 - Consider requirement to provide plans to EMBC
 - Possibly establish ability for EMBC to audit plans
- Access to and protection of volunteers





Other Potential Shifts: (2/2)

- Citizens /small business – incentives and education (non-legislative)
- Duration of states of emergency
- Potential standards for public notification and warning
- Compliance and enforcement

Financial Considerations

- Resourcing and capacity implications
- Phase-in of requirements
- Scaled investments
- Responsive, flexible and disciplined funding mechanism
- Visibility and coordination of mitigation funding
- Apply disaster risk reduction and adaptation lens to capital investment decisions
- Federal funding and partnership



Next Steps

- ✓ **Late October / early November 2019**
Discussion paper released
- ✓ Engage with all levels of government, Indigenous Nations, industry and the public
- ✓ **January 31, 2020**
Comment period ends
- ✓ **Spring 2020**
“What We Heard” report released
- ✓ **Fall 2020**
Legislation introduced
- ✓ **Spring 2021**
Regulations, policy, guidelines, templates, tools and education
- ✓ **Spring 2021**
Act in force. Phased implementation