

EMBC and Regional Districts – Flood and Wildfire Roles

UBCM Electoral Area Directors Forum

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A little context...

- Emergency Management BC – the Province’s agency for *coordinating and supporting* emergency management activities in BC.
- Emergency Program Act (1996)
 - Emergency Program Management Regulation 1994
 - Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation 1995
 - Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation 1995

Emergency Management Principle – *An emergency should always be managed as close to the emergency as possible.*

BCEMS and PREOCs/PECC

- British Columbia Emergency Management System(BCEMS)
 - How we “emergency management” in BC
 - 8 response goals, the 4+ phases of Emergency Management
 - Shared responsibility
- Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centres (PREOCs)
 - There are 6 covering all areas of BC, supported by the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre
 - Always activated through a duty officer rotation
 - Scale up to support First Nations and Local Authorities during response/recovery

A bit more context...

- Floods and wildfires are cyclical and predictable emergencies that are likely to occur annually; climate change almost guarantees this.
- The costliest disasters in Canada are floods and wildfire seasons; they becoming more frequent and expensive.
- No jurisdiction in BC is immune to flood and wildfire hazards

What does the Province bring?

- Floods

- Predictive services through Environment and Climate Change Canada, Water Survey of Canada, and BC River Forecast Centre
- Shared resources like sandbag machines, gabions and tiger dams
- Emergency Support Services teams to help with evacuations
- Disaster psycho-social interventions
- Logistics and resource support drawing from Provincial and federal levels

- Wildfire

- Seasonal forecasting based on ground-truthed forest conditions
- BC Wildfire Service teams inc. aviation and initial attack rapid response teams
- Emergency Support Services surge teams
- Logistics and resource support

Remember the 4 phases? EMBC Role vs. RD Role

- Preparedness – EMBC

- Information (Seasonal Readiness events, connecting RDs with Water Stewardship experts)
- Training for RD staff – formal and informal
- Supporting RD exercises
- Public information products
- Testing internal systems with other Ministries

- Preparedness - RD

- Determining likely areas of impact
- Planning for response (evacuation, livestock, trigger points)
- Testing plans (exercises)
- Connecting with other First Nations and local governments who share the hazard
- Notifying the Province of areas of particular concern
- Disseminating public information

Remember the 4 phases? EMBC Role vs. RD Role

- Response – EMBC

- Stand up PREOC
- Information Coordination (frequent interagency coordination calls w/ subject matter experts)
- Coordinate specialist Provincial teams, experts
- Financial supports to RDs
- Situational awareness

- Response – RD

- Support site (BCWS crews, sprinkler crews, impacted residents)
- Coordinate with BCWS and EMBC around evacuations
- Consider State of Local Emergency
- Establish EOC
- Implement plans
- Coordinate response with neighbours

Remember the 4 phases? EMBC Role vs. RD Role

- Recovery – EMBC

- Support impacted communities
- Fund recovery coordinator positions
- Assist in navigating regulations
- Provide compensation through Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program to a variety of sectors
- Coordinate other Ministries to assist

- Recovery – RD

- Identify impacts (social and physical)
- Work with DFA and establish a recovery centre
- Consider an Unmet Needs committee
- Work with local NGOs
- Advocate for impacted communities

Remember the 4 phases? EMBC Role vs. RD Role

- Mitigation – EMBC

- Work with internal and external funders to establish mitigation funding programs
- Support community applications for funding
- Identify priority projects on a regional level
- Assist with navigation of funding process

- Mitigation – RD

- Identify needs/opportunities
- Access funding “step-wise”
- Advocate to higher levels of government to support mitigation
- Cooperate with neighbours to leverage funding for mitigation across boundaries
- Establish services for O&M of physical structures

Where does the EAD fit?

- ...wherever they want to! (Different approaches across BC), BUT...
 - Become Emergency Management Champions (get actively engaged on behalf of your Electoral Area and the hazards your community faces)
 - Advocate for more or broader funding through Elected Officials forums
 - Support your Emergency Manager by being a fountain of local knowledge
 - Hearts and minds – supporting your constituents to do the right thing, safely
 - Make difficult policy decision through participating in the Policy Group
 - Be a diplomat – get First Nations, member municipality, and neighboring RD colleagues engaged in a group effort
 - Stay engaged with the EOC, but stay out of the room!

Questions and discussion?

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