

Emergency Management Together

Emergency Management Together

Overview of legislative requirements for local authority risk assessment and planning

September 17, 2026

UBCM 2026 Convention

Territorial acknowledgement

We are grateful for the opportunity to
live, work and learn on this land





Agenda

1. Context
2. Risk assessments
3. Emergency management plans
4. Publishing emergency management plans
5. Intersectional disadvantage and vulnerability
6. Consultation, cooperation and coordination
7. Business continuity plans
8. Reviewing and revising risk assessments and plans
9. Update on future regulations for disaster financial assistance
10. Overview of world café discussion tables

Context



Legislative requirements

- ✓ In November 2023, the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) became law and is being implemented through a phased approach
- ✓ On May 11, 2026, EDMA risk assessment and planning requirements for municipalities and regional districts were brought into force, **effective January 1, 2027**
- ✓ The requirements to begin this work will take effect on January 1, 2027
- ✓ EDMA builds on requirements that existed in the former Emergency Program Act. Your local authority may be able to build on existing emergency management plans and materials to meet the new requirements



Geographic scope of requirements

- ✓ **Municipalities and regional districts** must prepare a risk assessment and emergency management (EM) plan that considers:
 - existing hazards, and
 - potential emergencies that may arise from those hazards
- ✓ For **municipalities**, applies to lands within municipal boundaries
- ✓ For **regional districts**, applies to lands within electoral areas with the following exception:
 - A regional district may choose to exclude Crown land or private managed forest land. The plan must still identify any portions of those areas necessary for evacuating people or animals from a community



Multi-jurisdictional Emergency Management Organizations (MJEMOs)

- ✓ MJEMOs are a voluntary framework for collaboration and partnerships that can help local authorities satisfy their EDMA requirements together
- ✓ MJEMO framework is flexible: can be broad purposes (all four phases of emergency management) or specific (e.g., risk assessment and planning)
- ✓ Forming an MJEMO requires an agreement, bylaw, resolution, law or other legal instrument
 - ✓ EDMA regulations include requirements for these instruments

Risk assessments



Risk assessment is a cost-saving resilience tool

- ✓ Risk assessments support smart investment decisions
- ✓ Mitigation investments can reduce future losses
- ✓ Understanding disaster risk and investing in disaster risk reduction are core priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030
- ✓ The Canadian Climate Institute reports that proactive investments to adapt Canada's roads, bridges, storm sewers and water treatment systems for rising heat and heavy rains could save governments up to \$9 billion in infrastructure costs each year

Risk assessment requirements

- ✓ Risk assessments must identify “reasonably foreseeable” hazards and assess risk
- ✓ Hazards may have natural, human-caused, technological, environmental, or health-related dimensions (and some hazards may involve more than one of these factors)

Examples of hazards to consider

- Wildfire, flooding, earthquake, tsunami, landslide, avalanche, drought, extreme temperatures, severe storms, volcanic activity, hazardous material spills, industrial accidents, infrastructure failures, dam breaches, disease outbreaks, environmental contamination, or terrorism

General scope of risk assessments

- ✓ Assessments should take a practical approach that identifies the hazard, considers where and how it may affect people, property, or objects or sites of heritage value.
- ✓ Separate assessments do not need to be made for every individual site or sub-area where a hazard exists
- ✓ For each hazard, the following must be assessed:
 - **Likelihood:** How probable is it that this hazard will lead to an emergency?
 - **Scale and scope:** If an emergency occurs, how large could it be? How many people, how much area, and what infrastructure might be affected?
 - **Consequences for people and property:** What could happen to people, buildings, roads, utilities, and objects or sites of heritage value?
 - **Disproportionate impacts:** Special consideration must be given to individuals who may experience intersectional disadvantage and to vulnerable individuals, animals, places, or things.

What a risk assessment must be based on

- ✓ Studies and surveys
- ✓ Indigenous knowledge and local knowledge
- ✓ Climate change
- ✓ Other relevant information (that is reasonably available)
- ✓ Information shared through engagement, including consultation and cooperation





Best practices – risk assessment

- ✓ Identify objectives and outcomes of the risk assessment and choose methodologies and approaches accordingly
- ✓ Engage partners collaboratively through design and implementation of the assessment
- ✓ Consider what data and knowledge sources are available and how they can inform the work
- ✓ Risk assessments produce useful results for informing risk planning and mitigation, as well as relationships that can advance other work



Guidance - risk assessment

- ✓ Recognizing a range of local authority contexts - no prescribed methodology; build on existing work; available information, data and knowledge
- ✓ Guidance will support LAs to:
 - ✓ Understand EDMA risk assessment requirements and approaches for meeting them
 - ✓ Understand how EDMA concepts like equity, Indigenous knowledge and engagement apply to risk assessments
 - ✓ Scope and communicate risk assessment expectations when working with consultants or partners
 - ✓ Produce risk assessments that support emergency management planning, mitigation investments and other local decision-making
- ✓ Additional supporting resources available or under development include:
 - ✓ Legislative Requirements for Local Authorities (Risk Assessment and Planning)
 - ✓ Interim Practice Guide: Intersectionality and Vulnerability in Risk Assessment
 - ✓ Interim Practice Guide: Indigenous Knowledge and Risk Assessment
 - ✓ Indigenous Engagement Requirements Interim Guidance

Emergency management plans



Emergency management plan requirements

- ✓ An emergency management plan must address all four phases
- ✓ A plan should explain:
 - **Mitigation:** What your community is doing or will do to reduce hazards or their potential impacts
 - **Preparation:** How your community is building knowledge and capacity
 - **Response:** What actions may be taken when an emergency occurs
 - **Recovery:** How your community will restore health, safety and well-being after an emergency

General scope of emergency management plans

- ✓ A local authority may prepare one or multiple plans
- ✓ Plans should meaningfully address the required elements across its geographic scope – providing greater specificity where needed
- ✓ Required elements:
 - Roles, powers and duties
 - Emergency resources
 - Procedures for engaging emergency alerting systems
 - Training and exercise programs
 - Addressing disproportionate impacts
 - Cultural safety
 - Evacuation and care of individuals and animals
 - Consultation and cooperation with Indigenous governing bodies
 - Description of where consultation and cooperation will be done in relation to certain response and recovery powers, and with which Indigenous governing bodies
 - Description of the consultation and cooperation that was done in relation to the preparation, review, or revision of a risk assessment or emergency management plan

What an emergency management plan must be based on

- ✓ All available and applicable risk assessments
- ✓ Results of:
 - Consultation and coordination with adjacent local authorities
 - Consultation and cooperation with Indigenous governing bodies
- ✓ A plan must also describe:
 - Any areas identified through agreements with Indigenous governing bodies for the purposes of consultation and cooperation during the response and recovery phases

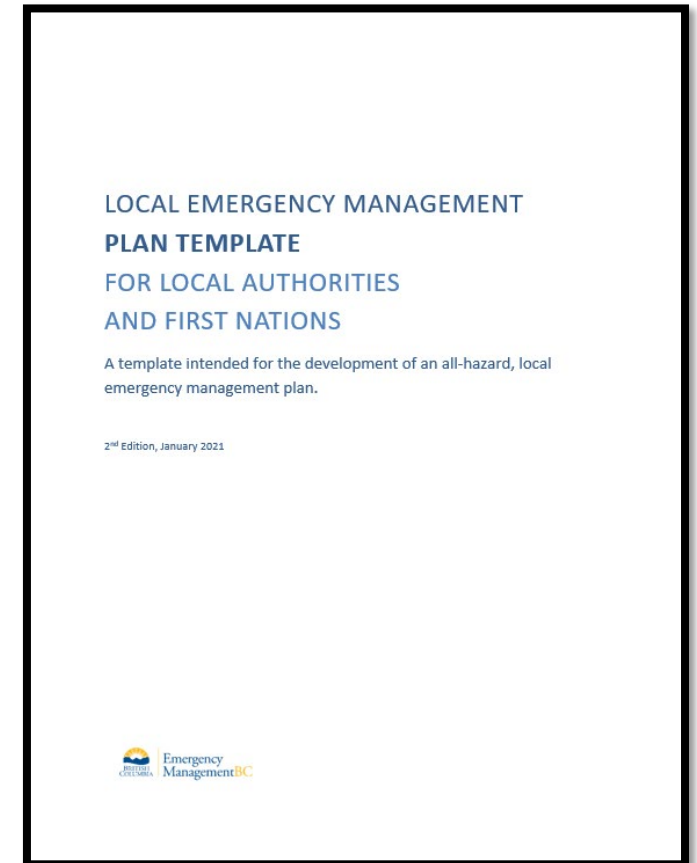


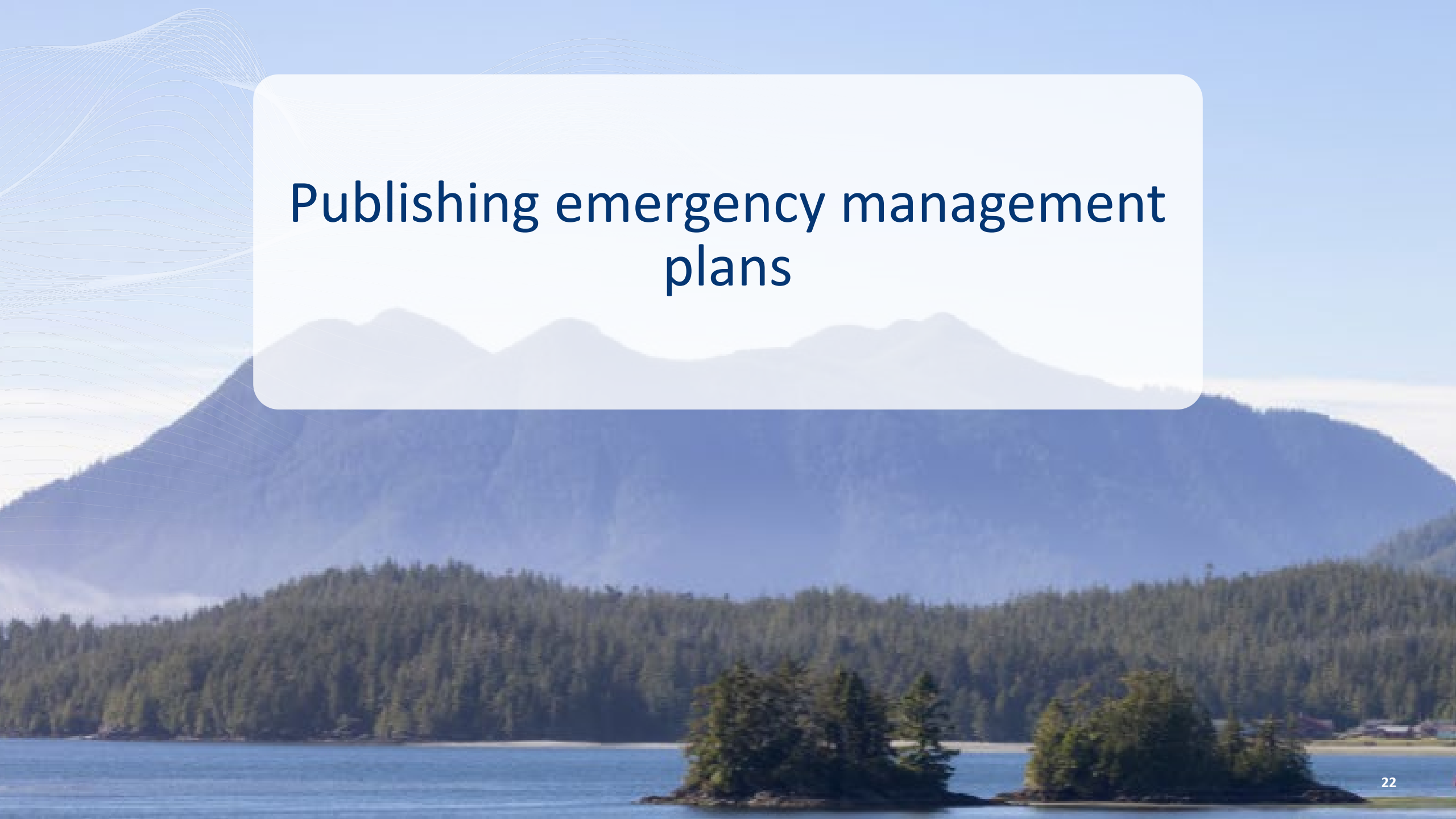
Best practices – emergency management planning

- ✓ Use the process of creating your plan to facilitate important conversations about internal governance, roles and responsibilities for emergency management.
- ✓ Engage partners collaboratively during the drafting process, both internally (ex. planning department) and externally (ex. non-profits representing equity-deserving populations).
- ✓ As you're developing your plan, refer to provincial emergency management plans to examine connections to provincial programs.
- ✓ Maintain your plan as a 'living document' that changes over time, as lessons learned are identified and approaches evolve.

Guidance – emergency management plans

- ✓ **Local Emergency Management Plan Template** being updated to align with EDMA; anticipated January 2027.
 - ✓ Provides suggested format, content and scope of emergency management plans
 - ✓ Not mandatory to follow and may be adapted to local context
 - ✓ Suggestions for incorporating new EDMA requirements will be included, including intersectional disadvantage and inclusion of all four phases of emergency management
- ✓ Future updates are planned for the **Emergency Management Planning Guide**, which outlines best practices for the process of developing plans (including engagement, rollout, exercising etc.)



The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. In the foreground, there is a calm body of water. In the middle ground, a dense forest of evergreen trees covers a hillside. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the upper part of the image, containing the title text. On the left side of the image, there are decorative white wavy lines.

Publishing emergency management plans

Publication requirements

- ✓ Local authorities must publish their emergency management plan
- ✓ Published plans may exclude:
 - Information that the local authority believes could increase the risk of an emergency occurring
 - Information that may or must not be disclosed under specified provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- ✓ Published plans must exclude any Indigenous knowledge shared during consultation and cooperation on the risk assessment and plan unless written consent is provided
- ✓ Published plans may include Indigenous knowledge that is publicly available

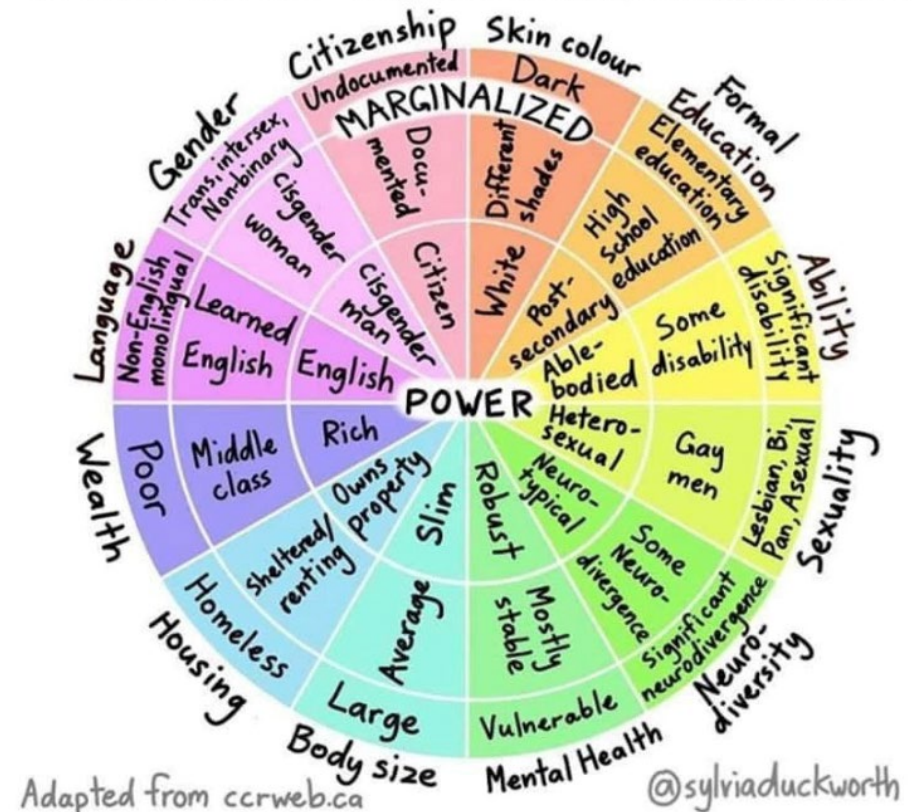
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Intersectional disadvantage and vulnerability

Intersectional disadvantage and vulnerability

- ✓ **Intersectional disadvantage:** “the intersection of social categorizations of persons or classes of persons, including race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, age and ability, in ways that may result in overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantage or disproportionate adverse effects.”
- ✓ **Vulnerable:** for an individual, animal, place, or thing, being “particularly susceptible, due to physical or geographic location or environmental factors, or other similar factors, to the adverse effects of an emergency.”

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



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Consultation, cooperation and coordination

Consulting and coordinating with neighbouring local authorities

- ✓ When preparing or revising a risk assessment or emergency management plan, a local authority must make reasonable efforts to consult and coordinate with each adjacent municipality or regional district.
- ✓ This involves three things:
 1. Reaching out and sharing
 2. Considering their input
 3. Coordinating plans



Consulting and cooperating with Indigenous peoples

- ✓ When preparing or revising a risk assessment or emergency management plan, a local authority must consult and cooperate with:
 - First Nations whose traditional territory or treaty area could be affected by a hazard that is included in the risk assessment or is located within the jurisdiction of the local authority
 - Modern Treaty Nations whose treaty lands are adjacent to their jurisdiction
- ✓ An emergency management plan must include:
 - Description of where consultation and cooperation will be done in relation to certain response and recovery powers, and with which Indigenous governing bodies (also send to EMCR.IER@gov.bc.ca)
 - Description of the consultation and cooperation that was done in relation to the preparation, review, or revision of a risk assessment or emergency management plan

Business continuity plans



Why business continuity planning matters

- ✓ Increasing frequency and severity of climate-driven emergencies
- ✓ Infrastructure and utility disruptions
- ✓ Supply chain and workforce challenges
- ✓ Increased expectations for uninterrupted public services

“Emergency response saves lives. Business continuity sustains communities.”



Business continuity plan (BCP) requirements

- ✓ Under the EDMA, a BCP must describe:
 - “the measures to be taken to ensure the continued delivery, during an emergency, of leadership and services necessary for the effective functioning” of the local authority.
- ✓ Consultation, cooperation and coordination are not required but encouraged



Best practices – business continuity planning

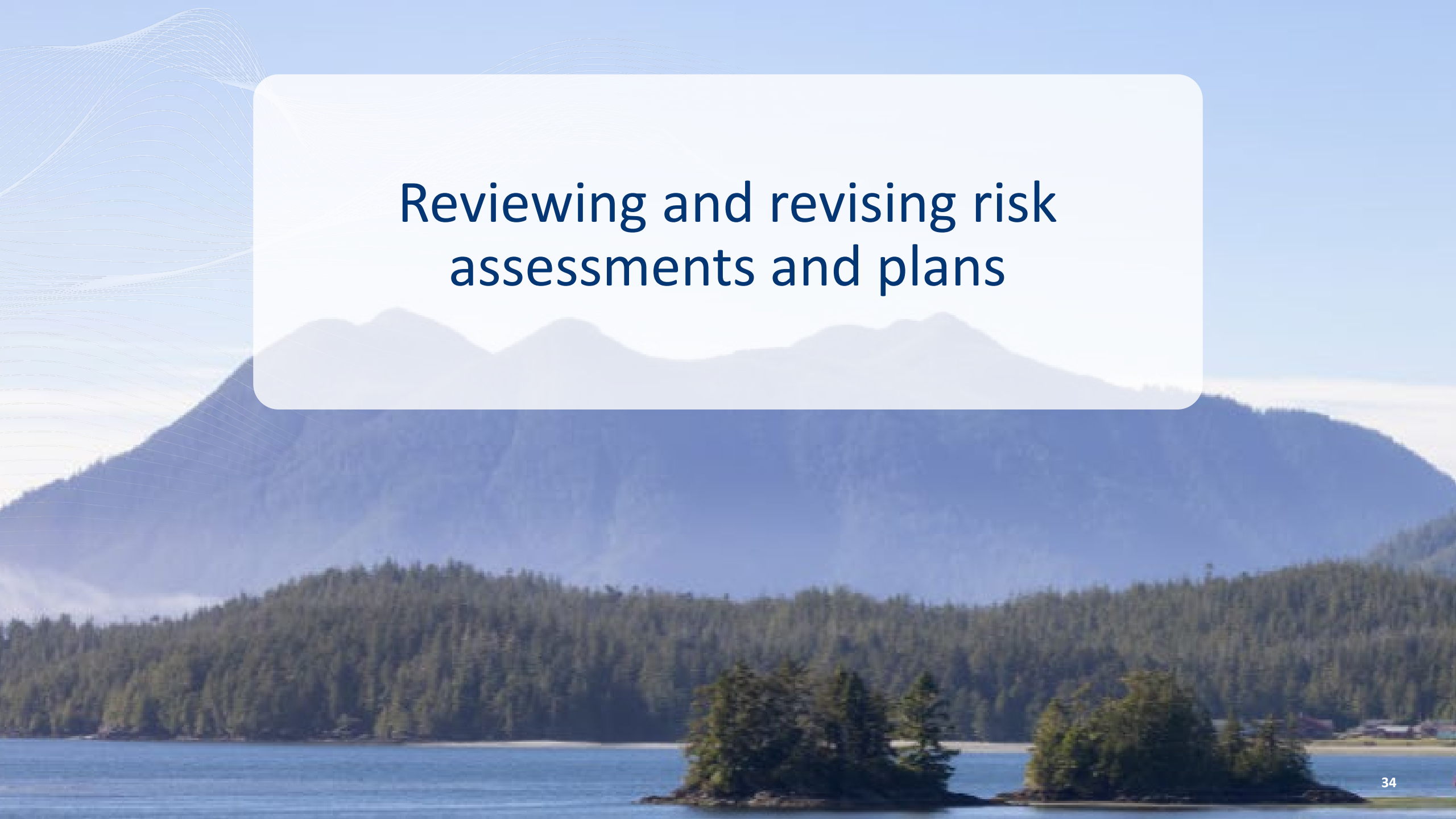
- ✓ Business Impact Analysis (BIA)
- ✓ Critical Services Identification and Continuity Strategies
- ✓ Business Continuity Plans and IT Disaster Recovery Plans
- ✓ Awareness and Training Programs
- ✓ Exercises, Audit and Maintenance
- ✓ Crisis Communications
- ✓ Governance and Executive Leadership Support

“Business Continuity Planning is preparing today for tomorrow’s disruption”



Business continuity planning – resources

- ✓ Business Impact Analysis (BIA) template
 - Identifies critical services, impacts of disruption, recovery priorities, and resource requirements
- ✓ Business Continuity Plan template
 - Documents the strategies, procedures and responsibilities needed to continue and recover
- ✓ Instructional guidance on the webpage
 - Provides information on completing the templates

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape photograph. It features a large, forested mountain range in the distance under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, there is a body of water, likely a lake or a wide river. Two small, tree-covered islands or peninsulas are visible in the water. The overall tone is calm and natural. A white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper part of the image, containing the title text.

Reviewing and revising risk assessments and plans

Review and revision requirements

Item	Review must be initiated within every:
Emergency management plan	7 years*
Business continuity plan	5 years*
Risk assessment	No specified requirement

*from **completion** of the previous review and revision

- ✓ Review cycle for emergency management plans and business continuity plans begins upon completion of the initial plan
- ✓ Subsequent reviews must be initiated within the specified time period following completion of the preceding review and revision
- ✓ Plans must describe chosen review periods



Update on future regulations for disaster financial assistance



Future regulations for disaster financial assistance (DFA)

- ✓ Previous engagement with local governments and other partners informed priorities for future regulations for DFA
- ✓ Feedback highlighted considerations around equity, insurance availability, administrative burden, and the need for programs to support mitigation
- ✓ EMCR is now actively developing future regulations, informed by engagement feedback, UNDRIP, and the Sendai Framework
- ✓ This work is targeted for late 2027, subject to drafting complexity, available capacity, and evolving priorities, including response to significant events
- ✓ Regulations will carry major fiscal implications and all policies will require Cabinet approvals

Thank you!

For more information, please contact:

Policy, Appeals and Legislation Branch

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

EMCR.PolicyandLegislation@gov.bc.ca



Ministry of
Emergency Management
and Climate Readiness

World Café Discussion Tables

Choose 3 topics based on your interest

- **Table 1:** Risk Assessments
- **Table 2:** Emergency Management Plans
- **Table 3:** Business Continuity Plans
- **Table 4:** Intersectional Disadvantage and Vulnerability
- **Table 5:** Disaster Financial Assistance Regulations

Discussion Schedule

- **Round 1:** 25 minutes, first topic
- **Round 2:** 25 minutes, second topic
- **Round 3:** 25 minutes, third topic



**COMMON
GOOD** UBCM
2026



Vancouver Food Runners

In appreciation of our speakers today and with thanks for your contribution, UBCM has made a donation to the Vancouver Food Runners. Building connections between local businesses, nonprofits, and volunteers to ensure surplus food reaches essential community food programs. Vancouver Food Runners believe in turning surplus food into meaningful change. They believe good food belongs to people, not landfills!