

# Event Proposal

**Event Title: Launch of Earthquake Consultation and Public Education Review**  
**Representative (Min/MLA): Suzanne Anton**

<b>Date:</b> Mar. 11, 2014 – 9:30 a.m.	<b>Media Market:</b> Province-wide
Location: Legislature Victoria, BC	English Media Spokesperson: Minister Suzanne Anton
	<b>Multicultural Media Spokesperson:</b> Minister Suzanne Anton

## THE EVENT

### PROACTIVE EVENT OR INVITATION

- Proactive
- News release 9:30 a.m.
- Media availability 11 a.m. just after Question Period ends.

### EVENT

- This event will announce the launch of a consultation with stakeholders and public education campaign to provide recommendations on improving the ability of British Columbians to prepare for and respond to a catastrophic seismic event.

### GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FUNDING / PARTNER FUNDING (IF APPLICABLE):

- Government of BC funding: The total value of the review is to be determined.

### WHO'S ORGANIZING?

- GCPE

### STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS and THEME:

- Emergency response in British Columbia is everyone's responsibility.
- We are inviting our partners to participate in discussions with that will result in recommendations on improving the ability of British Columbians to prepare for and respond to a catastrophic seismic event.
- The event will include the announcement of co-chairs John Les, former Solicitor General, and Henry Renteria, former director of California's Office of Emergency Services.
- It will also announce a public education campaign to be rolled out in the coming months.
- It will acknowledge the three year anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake as well as the upcoming 50 year anniversary of the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake (March 27, 2014).

### VENUE DESCRIPTION

- The event will take place in the legislature with a podium and in front of the blue curtain. Include an audio recording for posting online.

### KEY STAKEHOLDERS / PARTICIPANTS

- Minister Suzanne Anton

### LIST OF VALIDATORS FOR POST-EVENT ROLLOUT

- John Les
- Henry Renteria
- Local MLAs

### CAUCUS PARTICIPATION

- No

### MEDIA INVITED?

- Yes.

### AUDIENCE SIZE AND DESCRIPTION / TARGET AUDIENCES

- Approximately 10 legislature media.

## VISUAL MESSAGE(S)

### DESIRED PICTURE (STILL)

#### Primary:

- Minister Anton delivers a call-to-action launching the comprehensive review and public engagement campaign.

### DESIRED PICTURE (VIDEO)

- Minister Anton delivering a call-to-action to launch the comprehensive review and public engagement campaign.

### ACTUAL SPEAKING BACKDROP

- Blue curtain and BC flags

### LENGTH OF SPEECH

- 3-4 minutes

### TO NE

- Serious

### ATTIRE

- Business.

## WRITTEN MESSAGE(S)

### NEWS RELEASE HEADLINE

- Earthquake review to improve public safety

### DESIRED MEDIA HEADLINE

- Government gets serious about earthquake safety.

### DESIRED SOUNDBITE / KEY NEWS RELEASE SOUNDBITE

- Emergency management is a responsibility we all share. That's why we are launching a consultation that will gather our partners so we can work together on preparedness and response and engage the public to make sure more British Columbians get prepared for when the 'big one' hits.

### KEY MESSAGES

- Emergency management is a responsibility we all share. This review is an opportunity to gather our partners and work together on preparedness and response and engage the public to make sure more British Columbians get prepared for when the 'big one' hits.
- Events such as the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami and 1964 Great Alaska earthquake were terrible tragedies. It is a reminder to all of us who live on the West Coast that we cannot be complacent when it comes to public safety.
- This consultation with key stakeholders – combined with a public education campaign – forms a responsible approach to help keep British Columbia homes and families safe during and after an earthquake.

## ROLLOUT

### COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS

- ☐ Media Advisory
- ☒ Speech
- ☒ New Release
- ☐ Backgrounder(s)
- ☐ Fact Sheet
- ☐ Biographies
- ☐ Talking Points
- ☒ Q&A

- ☐ MLA / Caucus Kit (in advance, in association with Caucus Communications)
- ☐ Props (describe)
- ☒ Post-Event Media – Twitter, Facebook – The time-lapse video will be shared via B.C. gov't social media
- ☐ Web Content
- ☐ Photo Release
- ☐ Other (describe)
- ☐ For Information
- ☐ Comment

## MEDIA PLAN

### PLANNING

- ☒ Live Coverage (check if yes)
- ☒ Photographer booked (to distribute photos to media)
- ☒ Readout/transcript
- ☐ Validators
- ☐ Caucus roll-out

### STRATEGY

- Maximize coverage (provincial and regional).
- Media advisory will be sent to major BC media, including ethnic outlets in the lower mainland.
- Video will be posted on YouTube and distributed via B.C. government Facebook/Twitter accounts.

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Process for media releases, letters to the editor, and op eds from consultation leads:

- 1) Consultation leads to contact JAG GCPE in advance to give them a heads up (Jeff Groot 250 356-1196, email [Jeff.Groot@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jeff.Groot@gov.bc.ca) or Leanne Ritchie, 250 952-5062 email [leanne.ritchie@gov.bc.ca](mailto:leanne.ritchie@gov.bc.ca))
- 2) JAG GCPE can advise on the communications materials that should be considered
- 3) Consultation leads provides first draft of material and sends to Jeff and Leanne
- 4) JAG GCPE reviews document using strategic lens to see if any value or context can be added or provided to consultation leads
- 5) JAG GCPE provides quote from Minister and quick facts for news release where appropriate
- 6) JAG GCPE provides input back to consultation leads
- 7) Consultation leads provide final document to Jeff/Leanne for distribution to media

Process for speeches: same as above, steps 1, 3, 4 and 6

Process for events:

- 1) Consultation leads contact Jeff/Leanne in advance to give them a heads up about potential event opportunity
- 2) JAG GCPE confirms Minister's availability
- 3) JAG GCPE to advise on event options for consideration
- 4) GCPE event coordinator assigned to organize logistics
- 5) JAG GCPE to liaise between consultation leads and event coordinator
- 6) JAG GCPE to work with consultation leads on communications materials for event using process for media releases and speeches outlined above

## MEDIA RELATIONS

Process for if request arrives via consultation leads:

1. Media is redirected to call or email JAG GCPE directly (250 213-3602) OR [julianne.mccaffrey@gov.bc.ca](mailto:julianne.mccaffrey@gov.bc.ca)
2. Consultation leads call Jeff (250 920 9203) or Julianne <sup>s 17</sup> or email both ([Jeff.Groot@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jeff.Groot@gov.bc.ca) & [julianne.mccaffrey@gov.bc.ca](mailto:julianne.mccaffrey@gov.bc.ca)) with reporter's name, outlet and phone number (ideally)
3. JAG GCPE follows up with reporter to find out:
  - Reporter's questions, time of interview, type of interview (live, recorded)?
  - Background on issue
  - Who else outlet is talking to
4. JAG GCPE to collate all the information and provide via email to consultation leads to confirm interest and availability. This will also include:
  - Background context that the ministry can provide
  - High level messaging that consultation leads can use for guidance, should he be interested
5. Once consultation leads confirm availability (or not) for the interview, JAG GCPE will follow up with reporter to confirm with them.
6. The contractors will, upon completion of any media interview, provide Jeff or Julianne with a summary of questions asked, answers given and any issues that may result. Alternatively, an audio recording of the interview.

7. Once story runs, Jeff or Julianne will share the transcript with consultation leads in case any corrections are necessary.

Process for if request arrives at JAG GCPE originally: process remains as above, but starts at bullet 3.

Process for if the co-chairs are scrummed before or after a roundtable:

1. Consultation leads will, upon completion of any media interview, provide Jeff or Julianne with a summary of questions asked, answers given and any issues that may result. Alternatively, an audio recording of the interview.
2. The co-chairs may defer any questions at any time to the 24-hour GCPE media line. Laminated wallet cards/ business cards that can be handed out to media will be provided.

# Earthquake Prep Review Launch

## Q&As

### **1. Is this announcement a pre-emptive to soften the blow of the OAG's criticisms?**

- No. What we recognized early on in seeing the scope from the OAG's planned report is that it would only provide a narrow focus in its study and we see value in expanding that to include much more than EMBC's readiness, but the readiness of the province as a whole.
- That's why we are launching this broader consultation – we want to build on the work the OAG is doing and build capacity both inside and outside of government in terms of greater levels of preparedness for a catastrophic earthquake.
- We recognize the need for all of us – from individuals and families, to local authorities and the province – to increase our capacity to respond adequately to a catastrophic earthquake.
- This consultation will be a continuation of the work EMBC does as part of its normal business in that, after each emergency, it takes a look at its preparedness levels and adapts to take into account learnings and best practices.
- Emergency management is a shared responsibility and it begins with each individual and builds from there and that's exactly what the Province is doing in the consultation process – building and expanding on what we know.

### **2. What do you expect to get out of this review? What is the timeline?**

- The Co-Chairs will be providing recommendations to government, based on their consultations with stakeholders, and that there will be a report to government by December 31, 2014. This report will be made public.
- Overall, this review will compliment an all hazards approach to emergency preparedness and response. This is particularly important as we know the consequences resulting from any emergency event are similar.
- They will all have an impact on the population, require a multi-agency response, cause damage to property and infrastructure, impact the economy, and eventually, lead back to the road to recovery.
- While we're specifically interested in earthquake preparedness, the findings from this review will also help us improve how we and our partners can better cope with any type of event.

### **3. How much will the co-chairs be paid?**

- This will be significant work by both of the co-chairs, not only during the consultation process in travelling to communities around the province, but also to those along the US coast.
- My expectation is that this is their primary job until the end of the year and we have come to agreement on a fair level of compensation for that work.

# Earthquake Prep Review Launch

## Q&As

- We have budgeted a total \$240,000 for the two co-chair positions. They will be paid at a rate of \$125 an hour, but if the work is done earlier, they will only be paid for the time they needed to deliver the final report.
- John Les has a max contract of \$140k and Henry Renteria has a max contract of \$100k.

### **4. Why is John Les eligible for \$40k more than Renteria? Are they not equal co-chairs?**

- As John Les resides in the Lower Mainland area, we anticipate that he may be asked to conduct additional meetings and therefore we have allotted a slightly larger funding envelope to account for this. Both Henry and John bring significant expertise from unique backgrounds as equal co-chairs for this consultation and we look forward to the outcome of their efforts.

### **5. What about John Les's lobbyist position? Is he putting that on hold while he takes on this role?**

- John has disclosed all of his lobbyist activities to my deputy minister and I am comfortable there is no conflict of interest here.

### **6. Is this double dipping by John Les now that he is receiving a MLA pension?**

- With this appointment, John Les will be ending his MLA transition allowance entitlement.

### **7. What is the budget for the review? Where is the money coming from?**

- We have budgeted for travel, salary for the two co-chairs and any related expenses.
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- All of this will be paid for within EMBC's existing budget and will be supported by staff already within the ministry.

### **8. What will this review entail and who will be consulted? When will it start and when will the results be concluded? Will the results be made public?**

- The consultation will focus on all aspects of earthquake preparedness and response with the intent of improving the ability of all British Columbians and levels of government to act in the face of a catastrophic seismic event.
- It will be co-chaired by John Les, former BC Solicitor General and Henry Renteria, former director of California's Office of Emergency Services, and they will get underway immediately on planning how best to proceed with the consultation.
- We will invite all levels of government, business, local authorities including First Nations, adjoining provincial, federal and state jurisdictions, as well as non-governmental organizations to participate in the dialogue.

## Earthquake Prep Review Launch

### Q&As

- Stakeholder roundtable activities will focus on those regions at highest risk from seismic events. The final report is expected to be released with an adjoining action plan by the end of the year.

#### *If asked:*

- Once we receive the final report from the Auditor General, those recommendations will also be incorporated in our consultation.

#### **9. This seems like a pretty broad mandate. Are you worried the scope is too large?**

- No. We know emergency management is a responsibility everyone must share, so the goal of this broad consultation is to bring all the critical groups together.
- As well, we are going to make it a priority to reach out to the public as well with the education campaign to better improve the preparedness level of British Columbians.

#### **10. Is the announcement of a public consultation campaign just a knee-jerk exercise of throwing money at a problem or is there a sustained initiative planned? How much money is being allocated to this marketing campaign and what does the public education plan contain in it?**

- We are announcing that in the coming months we will be launching a public education campaign aimed at getting more British Columbians who live in areas vulnerable to earthquakes to take action and prepare for a seismic event.
- We have much work to do as we begin the process of developing this campaign, but what I can tell you is that EMBC will look to work with partners to gauge the current level of personal readiness and the best way to raise awareness and educate citizens in the province.
- Pending the outcome of this work, we do recognize that we may need to spend some money on the campaign, but the exact amount will depend on what we hear back from our stakeholders and the public.
- Before we can answer the question of what we will do to educate or how, we need to better understand what the baseline of knowledge is and how best to communicate the risk and requirements for readiness, and from that develop a plan to help communicate, educate and motivate action by British Columbians for emergency preparedness.

#### **11. Has emergency preparedness suffered in BC's push to balance its budget? It's widely recognized that the scope and scale, even relative frequencies of emergencies is increasing, but the budget for EMBC has not. Moving forward with this consultation, does government foresee and increase in resources for EMBC?**

- The Province is committed to balancing the budget.
- EMBC has been subject to provincial government wide fiscal restraints similar to all other areas of government.



## **Earthquake Prep Review Launch**

### **Q&As**

- There are no plans of allocating funds to a solution before the consultation process that is aimed at better defining what solutions are needed.
- To discuss the end results before the consultation concludes would not be prudent.

**12. How is this review credible when it's a former SG leading it, who arguably, was part of the decision to not add resources to the program when he was Minister? Is this just another measure of government providing bonuses to Liberal friends or former colleagues?**

- John Les is co-chair, paired with Henry Renteria, former director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.
- The two are committed to providing a thorough consultation and the former SG is uniquely positioned with direct knowledge of EMBC, the Emergency Program Act and related legislation which positions him as a particularly strong and well suited leader to help facilitate the complexities of the emergency management consultation process.
- John Les also has the firsthand experience of being the mayor of a local government (Chilliwack) and the president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
- Combine this with Mr. Renteria's experience and knowledge of systems of readiness outside of BC and the co-chairs are uniquely suited for this position.

**13. Isn't this time wasted with more consulting when it's more action needed? More resources? When will the Province do versus continue to ask what needs to be done?**

- The goal of this consultation is to provide recommendations, through discussion with key stakeholders on improving the ability of British Columbians to prepare for and respond to a catastrophic seismic event.
- To implement uninformed change is rather like having the cart before the horse. Before we can achieve results we need to define what we hope to achieve.

**14. Why is media excluded from the consultation process? Are they not a stakeholder and important resource for British Columbians? Do they not have a role in emergencies and why then are they not being consulted?**

- The media is an important stakeholder in emergency communications and public education and key members will be engaged in a separate consultation process that allows us to better focus on the needs and roles of media in a catastrophic earthquake.
- The dialogue we have with businesses on business continuity is not the same as the dialogue on personal readiness at home and not the same as the communication needs and capabilities of media in an emergency.
- The consultation process with stakeholders are topically or geographically focused dialogues and likewise, with media, the dialogue that will take place will be singularly focused on communications with key media stakeholders.

# Earthquake Prep Review Launch

## Q&As

### 15. What about the legislature? Will you be looking at that?

- That falls under the speaker's jurisdiction and I know she's certainly aware of the issue when it comes to the legislative precinct.
- What I can tell you is that the renewal of the buildings is a long-term consideration for the clerk.
- The Sergeant at Arms is working with EMBC on business continuity plans for the legislature and continuity of government.

### OTHER POTENTIAL QUESTIONS:

### 16. How does BC's level of preparedness compare to other earthquake prone jurisdictions – from coastal North West regions like California and Washington State, to international locations like Japan and New Zealand?

- Specific benchmarks for levels of readiness are hard to define because the work of preparing never stops and the variables are so diverse.
- Every jurisdiction assesses risk and tackles it differently based on a myriad of circumstances, ranging from population density and demographics, to the realities of urban versus rural landscape, developed or developing economies, and the resources and resilience within each community.

### *Example (if needed):*

- So, where as one jurisdiction may invest more heavily in notification systems like sirens, others invest more heavily in construction standards so that buildings and other infrastructure are more durable in a disaster. Both aim to provide greater life safety measures, they simply approach it differently and so there really is no apples-to-apples comparison.

### 17. Many communities and first responders around BC have been critical about the Provincial Emergency Notification System being outdated and slow. Do you agree?

- The PENS system uses many different methods of communicating emergency information.
- Some, like social media and email, are almost instant while others, like the automated telephone system, take some time to connect to all the people on the distribution list.
- The PENS system is designed so that there are a number of ways that people can get the message. It is important that key emergency management personnel have multiple avenues of receiving emergency messages.

### 18. Is BC exploring other options for notification processes? Is BC in favour of a national broadcasting system for these alerts?

- While BC is interested and involved in the development of the National Public Alert System (NPAS), we don't feel, at this time, that the system is fully developed.

## Earthquake Prep Review Launch

### Q&As

- Our government would want to ensure that the system is fully functional and working to our full expectations to ensure that British Columbian citizens can trust the information that is disseminated and react to that information safely.
- That said, we'll continue to work with local governments, as well as our Provincial and Federal counterparts, to improve the way that information on emergency issues are sent out.
- In fact, we've already made one key improvement with the adoption of and commitment to social media.
- Another key improvement is related to ensuring a better understanding of where and how to get emergency messages.
- EMBC recently toured the BC coast to meet with local government emergency programs to discuss tsunami risks, alerting tools and methods and strategies that local governments can use to receive and spread the message faster.

#### **19. Do you have an earthquake kit? A designated meet up place? What do you expect British Columbians to do to get ready?**

- Yes, I and every other British Columbian need to equip themselves with an emergency kit and plan. There are great resources available at [www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca](http://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca), but the basics of:

##### **EMERGENCY PLAN:**

- This means deciding where you would go and who you would call.
- Pick one place right outside your home to regroup for sudden emergencies and one place outside of your neighborhood in case you are unable to return home right away.
- Identify your emergency contacts, including local contacts like the police and fire department, as well as an out-of-province contact that you can call to let the rest of your family know you are ok.
- Plan your evacuation route and ensure it includes multiple routes you might utilize.

##### **EMERGENCY KIT:**

- The basics include enough non-perishable food and one gallon of water per person for each member and pets for at least 72 hours.
- It should include prescription and non-prescription medications, first aid supplies, important papers, tools and things like fresh batteries for radios and flashlights.
- Pack warm clothing and bedding, as well as sanitation and hygiene products.

#### **20. What role do local governments play in planning and preparedness?**

- Emergency Preparedness is a shared responsibility spanning all levels of government and includes individual accountability.

# Earthquake Prep Review Launch

## Q&As

- That said, the Emergency Program Act legislates that local governments have emergency plans and an emergency program coordinator in place to help their residents deal with emergencies, including catastrophic earthquakes.
- Our government, through EMBC, assists them with tools and training, and helping facilitate a coordinated and integrated approach to earthquake and tsunami planning.
- For example, EMBC has participated in roughly 25 community-based earthquake and tsunami preparedness presentations that local governments have recently hosted.

### **21. How much money does BC invest in research each year to prepare for an earthquake? Particularly for hosting exercises and public education?**

- EMBC works closely with academic institutions such as University of BC, Simon Fraser University, Royal Roads University and other colleges to leverage research being undertaken at both scholastic and institutional levels.
- We also work collaboratively with other agencies and organizations that undertake independent research like the Insurance Bureau of Canada (2013 EQ Impacts report), BCAA (2013 Risk Readiness Report), Statistics Canada (2014 survey underway).
- We recognize that more can be done in this area so that's why, as part of the emergency prep consultation, we'll again be reaching out to our partners to collate and gather what information is out there as far as how ready British Columbians are.
- We may also look at talking to British Columbians directly as well to gauge their level of preparedness, and also about the best way to communicate with them in order to make our public education campaign as effective as possible.

### **22. Last year there were criticisms by the Van school board and others that the gov't seismic upgrades to schools have been slow, why is this not a greater priority?**

- Student and staff safety is a top priority for this government.
- This is why, since 2001, the B.C. government has spent or committed \$2.2 billion to seismically upgrade or replace 214 high-risk schools.
- The Ministry of Education is working to complete all seismic projects across B.C. in a timely and cost-effective manner and, to achieve this, the highest-risk projects have been given priority to proceed first.
- To date, 133 seismic projects have been completed, 14 are under construction, 7 are proceeding to construction and 60 have been supported.
- Since 2001, 44 capital and seismic projects worth more than \$280 million have been completed in the Vancouver school district, including funding for additional space for Full Day Kindergarten.

### **23. What has B.C. done to modernize the Building Code for earthquakes?**

## **Earthquake Prep Review Launch**

### **Q&As**

- There have been numerous upgrades to the seismic requirements in the building code over the last 30 years.
- Just recently, the 2012 B.C. Building Code introduced new seismic design requirements for houses and other buildings, the first time there were explicit seismic design requirements for houses.
- A new building built according to the B.C. Building Code is designed to withstand a moderate earthquake without significant structural damage and a major earthquake without collapsing.

#### **24. To what magnitude of earthquake are buildings designed?**

- The BC Building Code does not use earthquake intensity scales like the Richter magnitude scale as a direct design parameter.
- Magnitude is one of many factors that influence building performance. The seismic hazard levels specified in the code take into account factors like the distance from the building site to possible sources of earthquakes, past earthquake activity and geological structure.

#### **25. Are older buildings safe?**

- Seismic design has been included in the building code since the 1950s. The requirements have changed over the years as our understanding of earthquakes and their effects on buildings has evolved and improved.
- Yet, just because a building was built to older seismic building code provisions does not automatically mean that it is inadequate.
- Many factors contribute to the seismic risk of an existing building, including condition of the building, construction materials used, and how the structural components are connected.

#### **26. Can older buildings be prepared for a seismic event?**

- Older buildings can be retrofitted to improve their performance. For example, older masonry walls can be tied back to the floors to prevent collapse during an earthquake.
- To accurately determine its seismic risk, a building should be assessed by a qualified structural engineer who will take into account how the building was constructed, as well as its current condition, and recommend any building upgrades.

#### **27. What else can be done to prepare a building for a seismic event?**

- There are many other steps that building owners and occupants can take to prepare for a seismic event, such as planning evacuation routes, tying down hot water tanks and securing heavy furniture.

## **Earthquake Prep Review Launch Q&As**

**28. Is there any threat to British Columbians from radiation that has made its way to North America as a result of Japan's earthquake?**

- Health Canada has said that radiation from the Fukushima reactor is not considered a risk to British Columbia.

## Event Information / Speaking Notes

**Event:** Launch of Earthquake Consultation and Public Education Campaign

**When:** 12:45 Tues., Mar. 11, 2014

**Where:** Podium and curtain just outside main chambers  
BC Legislature

**Contact:** Jeff Groot

Cell: 920 9203

**Length:** 3-4 minutes

### Key Participants:

- Attorney General and Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton

### Attire suggestions:

- Business attire

### Audience Size:

- Media

### Audience – what do they want to hear?

- Emergency management is a responsibility we all share. This consultation is an opportunity to gather our partners and work together on preparedness and response and engage the public to make sure more British Columbians get prepared for when the ‘big one’ hits.
- In the past few years, British Columbians have had two major earthquake and tsunami warnings. Since then, we have had more than 20 meetings with communities and it’s clear that more can and must be done.
- Events such as the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami and 1964 Great Alaska earthquake were terrible tragedies. They are also reminders to all of us who live on the West Coast that we cannot be complacent when it comes to public safety.

Speaking Notes  
for the  
Hon. Suzanne Anton  
Attorney General and Minister of Justice  
MLA for Vancouver-Fraserview

Tues., Mar. 11, 2014  
11 a.m.



## Introduction:

- Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for joining me.

## Announcement:

- In the coming months the Ministry of Justice will launch a consultation on earthquake preparedness as well as a public education campaign.
- Through this consultation we will invite our partners to work together on preparedness and response.
- And we will engage the public to make sure more British Columbians get prepared for when the ‘big one’ hits.
- **Nothing is more important to my ministry than protecting and maintaining the safety of British Columbians.**
- At the same time, we know that preparedness starts with the individual British Columbian...

- ...and also needs to be a priority for all levels of government.
- In the past few years, British Columbians have had two major earthquake and tsunami warnings.
- Since then, Emergency Management BC has continued to meet with communities and it's clear that more can and must be done.
- We must work together. To move forward in the most effective way possible, we need to have a comprehensive action plan that reflects the needs not only of the Province, but of all of our partners.
- That's why we are turning up the heat on this issue.
- **Emergency management is a responsibility we all share.**
- We need other levels of government and British Columbians to work with us to make sure we are all prepared for a major earthquake.

- To do this, today we are launching a consultation that will look at levels of preparedness from the individual British Columbian up through all levels of government.
- This consultation will be co-chaired by two experts in emergency management:
  - John Les, former B.C. Solicitor General, and
  - Henry Renteria, former director of California's Office of Emergency Services.
- These two gentlemen bring an incredible level of expertise.
- Many of you know John Les. As a former Solicitor General in B.C. who was in charge of the Provincial Emergency Program, he is intimately familiar with our government's role in emergency management.

- He was also the Mayor of Chilliwack and a past-president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, giving him a unique lens on emergency preparedness at multiple levels of government.
- Henry Renteria was previously the director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.
- He has been involved in planning for and responding to numerous disasters, including the 2007 wildfires in Southern California.
- I have full confidence their consultation will complement the ongoing work of the dedicated professionals at Emergency Management BC to lead provincial activities and support other authorities to ensure we are as best prepared as possible.

**<<Pause>>**

- This month we mark two solemn anniversaries.
- Today, we remember the thousands of men, women and children who lost their lives three years ago in the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan.
- And we acknowledge the tremendous spirit of the survivors who continue to rebuild today.
- Later this month, British Columbians will look back 50 years at the Great Alaskan earthquake.
- It was an event that caused heavy damage to communities along the west coast of Vancouver Island. And among our neighbouring states, about 135 were lost.
- Both of these tragedies are a reminder to all of us who live on the West Coast - when it comes to public safety, we **MUST NOT** be complacent.
- Earthquakes and tsunamis do not recognize city boundaries. They don't stop at provincial or state borders, or even at the ocean's edge.

- When it comes to preparedness, there is a role for every British Columbian man, woman and child.
- In fact, just the other day, Henry Renteria remarked that one of the key messages we need to stress during this consultation is that, during any significant emergency, your neighbour is most likely to be the first responder to bring help if you need it.
- As I've said throughout, emergency preparedness really does start at the individual level.
- What we need to do with this review is to grow that awareness and tie it in with concrete actions of what all levels of government can do to better prepare for and respond to a large seismic event.
- I invite all our partners to join us and work together.
- Thank you

-END-

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2014JAG0069-000285  
March 11, 2014

Ministry of Justice

### **Earthquake consultation to improve public safety**

VICTORIA – A consultation and public education campaign on all aspects of earthquake preparedness and response will improve British Columbia’s ability to act in the face of a catastrophic seismic event.

The consultation will be co-chaired by John Les, former B.C. Solicitor General, and Henry Renteria, former director of California’s Office of Emergency Services.

It will engage all levels of government as well as invite input and engagement from additional stakeholders, including individuals and families, the media, business, local authorities including First Nations, adjoining provincial, federal and state jurisdictions, as well as non-governmental organizations.

Stakeholder roundtable activities will focus on those regions at highest risk from seismic events. The final report is expected to be submitted to the Ministry of Justice by the end of the year.

In the coming months, the Province will also be launching a public education campaign aimed at getting more British Columbians who live in areas vulnerable to earthquakes to take action and prepare for a seismic event. In the process of developing this campaign, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) will look to work with partners in the field of emergency response and preparedness to gauge the current level of personal readiness among British Columbians, and the best way to raise awareness and educate citizens in the province so they can be better prepared in the event of a major earthquake or tsunami.

This review will build on the work currently underway by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) of British Columbia on catastrophic earthquake preparedness. Government will be receiving and taking action on recommendations from the OAG to improve its seismic preparedness at the same time the co-chairs pursue this review.

### **Quotes:**

#### **Attorney General and Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton –**

“Emergency management is a responsibility we all share. This consultation is an opportunity to gather our partners and work together on preparedness and response and engage the public to make sure more British Columbians get prepared for when the ‘big one’ hits.”

“Events such as the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami and 1964 Great Alaska earthquake were terrible tragedies. It is a reminder to all of us who live on the West Coast that we cannot be complacent when it comes to public safety.”

**John Les, review co-chair and former Solicitor General for British Columbia –**

“Whether you are a first responder, a local government or a regular British Columbian, the job of emergency preparedness never ends. It is a field that is constantly evolving and so is our understanding of how to best manage our response and encourage the public to take action.”

“Informed by disaster research in other countries, as well as our own experiences here at home, this consultation with key stakeholders – combined with a public education campaign – forms a responsible approach to help keep British Columbia homes and families safe during and after an earthquake.”

**Henry Renteria, review co-chair and former director of California Office of Emergency Services –**

“We know that effective emergency response requires a network of responders working together with resilient communities. This consultation will take a broader approach, looking at how all the partners work together and provide practical recommendations to strengthen that network for seismic events.”

**Quick Facts:**

- More information about the consultation on earthquake preparedness and public education campaign will be made available in the coming months.
- The launch comes as British Columbians remember the 2011 Great East Japan earthquake as well as the 1964 Great Alaska earthquake and tsunami. The Japan earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, was a tragedy that claimed approximately 16,000 lives and damaged more than 100,000 buildings. Centred near Anchorage, Alaska, the March 27, 1964, earthquake and tsunami caused heavy damage to communities along the west coast of Vancouver Island and northern Washington State.
- Through EMBC, British Columbia is constantly refining and reviewing its emergency response plans.
- Over the last two years, EMBC has undertaken a community consultation process for tsunami response that included hearing feedback from emergency managers and public officials, as well as training and education in more than 20 communities to ensure local authorities understand their roles and responsibilities around emergency planning and notification.
- The largest recorded earthquake in Canada occurred in 1949 — an 8.1 magnitude earthquake off Haida Gwaii. The second-largest recorded earthquake to affect the west coast of British Columbia was in 2012 — a 7.8 magnitude earthquake west of Moresby Island, Haida Gwaii.



- The Pacific Coast is one of the most earthquake-vulnerable regions of Canada. Although the numbers vary annually, more than 1,000 earthquakes rumble beneath the surface of British Columbia every year – more than three a day on average.

**Learn More:**

To see the EMBC's emergency plans, visit

[http://www.embc.gov.bc.ca/em/hazard\\_plans/hazard\\_plans.html](http://www.embc.gov.bc.ca/em/hazard_plans/hazard_plans.html)

Learn about putting together an emergency plan and preparing an emergency kit, visit:

[www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/prevention-preparation.html](http://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/prevention-preparation.html)

Learn more about B.C.'s earthquake activity:

[www.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca/index-eng.php?tpl\\_region=west](http://www.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca/index-eng.php?tpl_region=west)

Two backgrounders follow.

**Media Contact:** Government Communications and Public Engagement  
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# BACKGROUND 1

For Immediate Release  
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## **Terms of reference for the earthquake consultation**

### **Purpose**

The goal of this consultation is to provide recommendations, through discussion with key stakeholders, on improving the ability of British Columbians to prepare for and respond to a catastrophic seismic event.

### **Guiding Considerations**

Guiding considerations in the development of recommendations will include:

- Overall public safety impact
- Affordability
- Practicality (e.g., implementation requirements, ability of partners to participate, timelines, etc.)

### **Scope**

This emergency management consultation regarding catastrophic seismic events will directly involve all levels of government.

The Province will also seek the input and engagement of additional stakeholders, including: individuals and families, the media, business, local authorities including First Nations, adjoining provincial, federal and state jurisdictions, as well as non-governmental organizations.

Community consultation activities will focus on those regions at highest risk from seismic events.

### **Key Topics within Scope**

- **Roles and responsibilities of all levels of government to plan for and respond to catastrophic seismic events**

To determine if the roles and responsibilities are clearly set out and understood by all levels of government, and if necessary, to recommend methods to improve clarity and understanding.

- **Roles of individuals and families**

To gauge the preparedness of individuals and families for catastrophic events (e.g. family plans, earthquake kits, insurance, etc.) and recommend approaches to improving individual and family preparedness as required.

- **Risk assessment processes**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to risk assessment processes, relevant to catastrophic seismic events, and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Response planning for catastrophic seismic events**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to response plans, capacities, and processes, and provide recommendations for improvements as required.

- **Response capacity**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to response capacity and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate (e.g. targeted investments within British Columbia, mutual aid arrangements with other jurisdictions, etc.).

- **Mitigation strategies for catastrophic seismic events**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to mitigation strategies and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Co-ordination structures**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to existing coordination structures for response to catastrophic events and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Technical emergency communications and warning systems**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to emergency management technical communications and warning systems and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Public communications**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to public communications before, during, and after a catastrophic seismic event and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Training and exercising programs**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to training and exercising for response to catastrophic events, and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

- **Volunteers**

To identify key issues and opportunities with respect to the utilization of volunteers in response to a catastrophic seismic event and provide recommendations for improvements as appropriate.

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# BACKGROUND 2

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## **Biographies of earthquake review co-chairs**

### **John Les, former Solicitor General for British Columbia**

John Les was first elected to represent the riding of Chilliwack-Sumas in 2001 and re-elected in 2005 and 2009. Former Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, and Parliamentary Secretary for HST information to the Minister of Finance, Les also has served as Solicitor General, leading provincial emergency response through significant emergency events, and as Minister of Small Business and Economic Development.

He has served the provincial government in many capacities including serving as Government Caucus Chair; chairing the Legislative Special Committee on the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform; serving on the Government Caucus Committee on Economy and Government Operations; as well as the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations. He also has been chair of the Select Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, and was formerly a member of the Select Standing Committee on Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills.

Before being elected to the Legislative Assembly, Les served for three years as a Chilliwack municipal councillor before he became mayor from 1987 to 1999. During his 13 years as mayor, he served on a number of bodies, including chairing the Fraser Valley Regional District; trustee of the Municipal Finance Authority of B.C.; director of Union of B.C. Municipalities; and president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Les is also an honorary Rotarian who was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship in recognition of his exemplary community service by the Rotary Club of Chilliwack.

### **Henry Renteria, former director of California Office of Emergency Services**

Henry Renteria is an emergency management and public safety consultant who works with government, private industry and non-profit agencies to promote and implement preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation programs. Renteria has expertise in Emergency Operations Centres, Incident Command Systems, crisis intervention and disaster related legislation and funding.

Renteria served as the director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) from 2003 to 2009. As OES director he managed the State response and recovery to numerous local, regional and state disasters including the 2007 Southern California wildfires, the largest in California history. As a member of the Governor's Cabinet, he was responsible for co-ordinating all state agencies and resources in preparing, responding and recovering from human caused and natural disasters.

Prior to his state appointment, Renteria served as the director of the City of Oakland Office of Emergency Services for 18 years. While in Oakland he managed the city's response to six Presidential Declared disasters including the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1991 Oakland Hills firestorm.

As a result of legislation from the firestorm, he served on the co-ordinating committee that created the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). Additionally, he co-ordinated the state's first Emergency Manager's Mutual Aid program in response to the 1994 Northridge earthquake. He was in Japan in 1995 when the Kobe earthquake struck. He remained in Kobe for 10 days and personally witnessed the response and early recovery efforts.

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