

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness Estimates 2023/2024

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Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

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2023/24 BUDGET DAY NOTE

Budget Overview

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- In recent years the Province has faced increasing challenges associated with weather related events including wildfires, atmospheric rivers, extreme heat and extreme cold. This has demonstrated the need to boost Provincial capacity to support communities and individuals recognizing climate change is expected to increase the frequency of such events.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMRC) has been established to lead cross-ministry coordination to enhance British Columbia's readiness and resilience towards climate and disaster risks and working towards a comprehensive and interconnected approach to achieving climate and disaster risk reduction.
- The Ministry leads provincial emergency management through the four-phased approach of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in close collaboration with Indigenous Nations, local authorities, other provinces and territories, federal departments, industry, non-governmental organizations, and volunteers.
- *Budget 2023* provides new investment of \$85 million over three years: \$19.267M in 23/24, \$27.937M in 24/25, and \$37.537M in 25/26.
- This provides funding for about 60 permanent positions including 32 net new ones and the related program delivery costs which will allow EMCR to:
 - Provide a higher level of service to communities and First Nations including more focus on proactive preparation through base funding for formerly seasonal positions.
 - Increase permanent foundational capacity in the Disaster Financial Assistance program and community recovery branch so the Province can better support communities and individuals when they are impacted by events.
 - Expand the support for disaster risk reduction with dedicated staffing that will develop and deliver mitigation, preparedness capacity building funding programs.
 - Deliver the Disaster Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment and lead cross-ministry coordination for our government's work to enhance B.C.'s resilience by providing guidance to ministries and enhancing the public's access to information on existing risks and initiatives underway to improve resilience.

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- Work collaboratively with local government and First Nations to make communities more resilient as well as working with key partners and co-develop implementation plans for the modernized emergency legislation.
- Budget 2023 also includes a significant increase to EMRC's budget for disaster mitigation and preparation: \$5M in 2023/24, \$15M in 2024/25, and \$25M in 2025/26.

Background:

- EMCR has two voted appropriations (reference Estimates page 67 – 70)
 - Ministry Operations (Vote 21) - This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriations under the following core business areas: Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and Executive Support Services.
 - Emergency Program Act (Vote 22) - This sub-vote provides for operations and operational support described in the Emergency Program Act, including response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters, and for hazard mitigation initiatives. This sub-vote allows for statutory appropriation.

Financial Summary

Core Business	2022/23 Restated Estimates ¹	2023/24 Estimates	2024/25 Plan	2025/26 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness	31,636	50,844	63,013	72,613
Executive and Support Services	11,039	13,519	11,364	11,364
Emergency Program Act	436,420	36,420	36,420	36,420
Total	479,095	100,783	110,797	120,397
Capital Expenditures (\$000)				
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness	495	524	146	53
Total	495	524	146	53

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2022/23 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2023/24 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#)

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Three Year Service Plan Comparison:

(\$millions)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Last year's plan	\$481,011	\$80,887	\$81,780	nil
Current year's plan	\$479,095 ¹	\$100,783	\$110,797	\$120,397
Current Year – Last Year	<\$1,916>	\$19,896	\$29,107	\$120,397
Current Year/Last Year	99%	137%	136%	-
Current Year – Prior Year	-	<\$378,312> ²	\$10,014	\$9,600
Current Year/Prior Year	-	21%	110%	109%

¹The Office of the Fire Commissioner remained with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General after the formation of the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Climate Readiness in December 2022.

²The Emergency Program Act voted appropriation decreased from \$436 million in 2022/23 to \$36 million in 2023/24 offset by a \$19 million budget increase the Ministry Operations voted appropriation in Budget 2023.

Key Facts and Figures:

Budget 2023 provides additional funding of \$85 million over the next three years:

Initiative	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Totals
	(\$millions)			
Foundational Capacity	Cabinet Confidences; Government Financial Information			
Disaster Mitigation				
Disaster Risk Assessment				
Disaster Resiliency				
	Cabinet Confidences; Government Financial Information			
Totals	Cabinet Confidences; Government Financial Information			

- There is also \$500 million in 2023/24, and \$250 million in 2024/25 to support ongoing recovery efforts from climate-related disasters including the November 2021 flooding and other extreme-weather events.

Prior Year budget decisions:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Totals
	(\$millions)			
Budget 2022				
Wildfire Services and Prevention	\$6.538	\$7.431	\$7.431	\$21.400
CPAS	\$0.115			\$0.115
Budget 2020				
GSAR	\$6.433	\$6.433	\$6.433	\$19.299
Totals	\$13.086	\$13.865	\$13.865	\$40.816

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Budget by expense type:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Totals
	(\$millions)			
Salaries & benefits	\$34.847	\$36.268	\$36.268	\$107.383
Operating costs	\$13.329	\$10.922	\$10.522	\$34.773
Government Transfers	\$27.718	\$38.178	\$48.178	\$113.534
Other expenses	\$0.028	\$0.028	\$0.028	\$0.084
Recoveries	<\$11.019>	<\$11.019>	<\$11.019>	<\$33.057>
Total	\$64.363	\$74.377	\$83.977	\$222.717

Budget 2023 provides funding for an additional 60 (32 net new) FTEs:

	TB Decision	Net New	Focus
Foundational Capacity	Cabinet Confidences		Increasing EMCR’s foundational capacity in key programs areas, modernizing emergency management service delivery, and expanding disaster mitigation & preparedness programming
Disaster Mitigation & Preparedness			See above
Disaster Risk Assessment			Lead the development of an integrated provincial disaster and climate risk assessment to ensure one assessment is used for planning and decision making
Disaster Resiliency			Lead cross-ministry coordination for our government’s work to enhance B.C.’s resiliency with the development of a disaster and climate risk reduction focused web hub tool and establishment of a resiliency secretariat
Modernized Legislation			Complete work to co-develop and introduce modernized emergency management legislation along with capacity building in First Nations and local authorities
Totals	60	32	

Historic information:

The \$519 million in costs expended under the Emergency Program Act (EPA) voted appropriation in 2021/22 far exceed the previous years:

Emergency Program Act					
(\$millions)					
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
\$128	\$276	\$275	\$108	\$149	\$519

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Prior to 2021, there were six major emergency events over the last five years to which EMCR coordinated response and recovery efforts. Table 1 details the estimated and actual response and recovery costs by event.

Table 1	2020 Flooding	2018 Wildfires	2018 Flooding	2017 Wildfires	2017 Flooding	2016 Flooding	Total
	(\$millions)						
Response	\$26	\$177	\$39	\$380	\$59	\$29	\$710
Recovery	\$195	\$3	\$198	\$22	\$57	\$111	\$586
Total	\$221	\$180	\$237	\$402	\$116	\$140	\$1,296

By comparison to these past events, EMCR’s costs for the 2021 events are estimated at \$5.3 billion. Table 2 details the estimated response and recovery costs by event.

Table 2	2021 Fall Atmospheric River Storm	2021 Summer Wildfires	2021 Spring Flooding	Total
	(\$millions)			
Response	\$395	\$376	\$1	\$772
Recovery	\$2,985	\$54	\$1,460	\$4,499
Total	\$3,380	\$430	\$1,461	\$5,271

EMCR has historically depended on temporary auxiliary (“surge”) staff funded through the EPA voted appropriation to respond and recover from emergency hazards. Table 3 provides an overview of EMCR’s FTEs over the last five years and funded between its’ operating budget and EPA statutory spending authority.

Table 3 EMCR FTEs	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	(#FTEs)				
Operating	Cabinet Confidences				
EPA					
Total					

Contact: Alex Chandler Corporate Support Services	Government Financial Phone: Information	Government Financial Mobile: Information
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2023/24 ESTIMATES NOTE

Emergency Management and Climate Readiness Service Plan

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The creation of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) as a new ministry, with a dedicated service plan, demonstrates the Province's commitment to increasing support for climate readiness and the importance of emergency management and disaster and climate risk reduction in B.C.
- The 2023-24 – 2025/26 Service Plan is the Ministry's first service plan and is consistent with government's strategic priorities and EMCR's ministerial mandate.
- Key goals are:
 - Goal 1: B.C.'s strategies and systems reduce the impacts of climate driven hazards and other emergencies and disasters.
 - Goal 2: Indigenous Peoples are true partners and leaders in emergency and disaster risk management.
 - Goal 3: B.C. has modernized and enhanced emergency management in all four phases (prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover).
- Key activities to be undertaken to deliver on these goals include:
 - Leading provincial coordination for disaster risk reduction and climate readiness initiatives to improve awareness and transparency, increase resilience, and build back better from disasters (e.g. Climate Ready BC).
 - Championing evidence-based approaches across the B.C. government to identify and reduce disaster and climate risks and invest in disaster risk reduction (e.g. integrated provincial hazard risk vulnerability assessment).
 - Including First Nations during all phases of emergency management, including all levels of planning, decision making, and implementation.
 - Better shaping the delivery of services to Indigenous Peoples to consider both the needs and the cultural perspectives of individual members and communities.
 - Modernizing B.C.'s emergency and disaster risk management legislation.

February 27, 2023

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- Supporting Indigenous communities, local authorities, and individuals to access the tools and resources needed to manage emergencies and disasters in alignment with local conditions and needs.
- Supporting urgent coordinated government response and recovery to communities in times of emergency.

Background:

- The *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* (BTAA) provides the legislative framework for B.C. Government planning, reporting, and accounting, and requires three year-service plans and annual service plan reports be made public annually.
- The service plan's goals, objectives and key strategies focus on reducing the impacts of climate driven hazards and other emergencies and disasters, ensuring Indigenous Peoples are true partners and leaders in emergency and disaster risk management, and modernizing and enhancing emergency management.
- The service plan's three performance measures highlight measurable outcomes to support the Ministry's goals and mandate.
- Performance measures to support goals include:
 - Provincial and regional risk assessments developed and implemented.
 - Percentage of First Nations attending First Nations Emergency Management Partnership Tables.
 - Percentage of eligible communities onboarded and utilizing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool.
- The Ministry has implemented internal processes to monitor and track progress towards achieving the service plan goals and performance measure targets.

Contact: Raeleen Siu Corporate Planning and Communications	Phone: Government Financial Information	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

2023/24 – 2025/26 Service Plan

February 2023



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Published by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness 2023/24 – 2025/26 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bowinn".

Honourable Bowinn Ma
Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
February 7, 2023

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Strategic Direction

In 2023/24, the Government of British Columbia will continue our work to make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations. Government will focus on building a secure, clean, and fair economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. B.C. will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in an inclusive and sustainable province. The policies, programs and projects developed over the course of this service plan period will focus on results that people can see and feel in four key areas: attainable and affordable housing, strengthened health care, safer communities, and a secure, clean and fair economy that can withstand global economic headwinds.

This 2023/24 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the [December 2022 Minister's Mandate Letter](#).

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (the Ministry) is responsible to British Columbians as the primary coordinating agency for mitigating climate risks and responding to provincial-level emergencies and disasters. The Ministry works to advance the vision of a disaster resilient British Columbia.

The mission of the Ministry is to lead provincial emergency and disaster risk management, build and foster collaborative relationships and partnerships, advance meaningful and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and support all peoples in British Columbia to reduce climate and disaster risk.

The Ministry is responsible for providing cross-ministry coordination to enhance British Columbia's readiness and resilience towards climate and disaster risks and working towards a comprehensive and interconnected approach to achieving climate and disaster risk reduction. The Ministry leads provincial emergency management through the four-phased approach of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in close collaboration with Indigenous Nations, local authorities, other provinces and territories, federal departments, industry, non-governmental organizations, and volunteers. Delivery of the Ministry's mandate is supported by the *Emergency Program Act*.

Operating Environment

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters. Climate risks and extreme weather events – including heat, flood, fire and drought – impact the health of people, damage infrastructure, and disrupt the economy. British Columbia is also at increased seismic risk

compared with other parts of the country and must be prepared to minimize devastating effects of a large earthquake or tsunami.

As the Province's lead for emergency preparedness and response, the Ministry's focus will continue to be on lessons learned from past emergencies and disasters, building capacity to recover and be resilient in the face of current disaster and climate risk, and preparing for hazards in a way that mitigates the risk of future emergencies.

The increased frequency of climate related natural hazards that heighten the risk of natural disasters in British Columbia requires public service employees with specialised and technical skill sets. In the context of a competitive labour market, the Ministry will need to effectively recruit and retain staff, while also building internal capacity by fostering a learning culture and development opportunities.

Economic Statement

B.C.'s economy has been resilient to pandemic, geopolitical and climate-related disruptions. However, higher interest rates are expected to weigh on the economy in the coming years. Following a rapid recovery from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, high inflation led to successive interest rate increases from the Bank of Canada in 2022. The impact of higher interest rates has been evident in housing markets and there is uncertainty over its transmission to the rest of the economy in B.C. and among our trading partners. B.C. is heading into this challenging period in relatively strong position, with a low unemployment rate. The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates that B.C. real GDP expanded by 3.0 per cent in 2022 and expects growth of 0.5 per cent in 2023 and 1.6 per cent in 2024. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC estimates growth of 3.4 per cent in 2022 and projects national real GDP growth of 0.5 per cent in 2023 and 1.5 per cent in 2024. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to be broadly in line with the national average in the coming years.

The risks to B.C.'s economic outlook center around interest rates and inflation, such as the risk of further inflationary supply chain disruptions, the potential for more interest rate increases than expected, and uncertainty around the depth and timing of the impact on housing markets. Further risks include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies, the emergence of further COVID-19 variants of concern and lower commodity prices.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: B.C.'s strategies and systems reduce the impacts of climate driven hazards and other emergencies and disasters.

Effective systems and proactive strategies can help to reduce the impacts of climate related hazards and other emergencies and disasters on people, communities, infrastructure, the environment, and the economy when they occur.

Objective 1.1: Lead provincial coordination for disaster risk reduction and climate readiness initiatives to improve awareness and transparency, increase resilience, and build back better from disasters.

As the Province's lead agency responsible for climate readiness and disaster risk reduction, the Ministry coordinates across the provincial government and with external partners to bring together expertise in the development of plans and strategies to help ensure B.C.'s communities, economy, and infrastructure are prepared to meet the challenges of a changing climate and other emergency events. The Ministry will coordinate provincial efforts to enhance resilience, provide guidance and resources to individuals and communities, and apply lessons learned from past emergencies.

Key Strategies

- Lead cross-ministry coordination to develop a comprehensive, online resource for people and communities to access information on disaster and climate risks and initiatives to improve resilience.
- Provide guidance to ministries delivering risk reduction and resilience initiatives regarding prioritization of efforts to help ensure that investments align with risk assessments.
- Support the Ministry of Forests, in collaboration with local, federal and Indigenous governments, to strengthen the province's flood response through the completion of [B.C.'s Flood Strategy](#) and start the work to translate the strategy into action through the BC Flood Resilience Plan.
- Work across ministries to help maintain the overall provincial business continuity program, including ministry plans that address infrastructure and services that governments, citizens, businesses, and visitors rely on, and continuity of government operations following an emergency or disaster.

Discussion

Past emergencies, such as floods, wildfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic, have demonstrated the need to provide an accessible and central resource where people and communities can obtain information about the Province's disaster and climate readiness strategies and details

about funding and supports. In the upcoming year, the Ministry will coordinate across the provincial government to launch an online resource that brings this information together in a central, easy-to-navigate format. Feedback from communities and interest groups will shape the approach to ensure the information is relevant, useful, and timely.

The Ministry will work across the provincial government to advance emergency preparedness and risk reduction. This includes supporting the Ministry of Forests in starting the work to translate B.C.'s Flood Strategy into an action plan. In addition, the Ministry will work with the Ministry of Forests to support the BC Wildfire Service to reduce wildfire risk and prepare communities for wildfires. The Ministry will also support the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's work to enhance the sustainability and reliability of B.C.'s food systems during emergencies, recognizing the importance of the provincial food system to a secure, clean, and fair economy.

The Ministry will lead cross-ministry coordination to strengthen disaster risk governance and enhance B.C.'s resilience. This includes continuing to develop and monitor government-wide business continuity programs, promoting an all-hazard approach to emergency management planning in communities, and leading provincial training and exercises. Specific deliverables include an annual cross-government review of ministry business continuity programs and conducting an emergency management training needs assessment.

Objective 1.2: Champion evidence-based approaches across the B.C. government to identify and reduce disaster and climate risks and invest in disaster risk reduction.

Every disaster provides the opportunity to learn, build capacity, and reduce future risk. Using global best practices and reliable data and information, the Ministry will lead cross-government efforts aimed at enhancing the province's ability to withstand future disasters and minimize impacts to people, communities, the economy, and the environment.

Key Strategies

- In partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, and in consultation with communities and Indigenous Peoples, advance B.C.'s commitments to the Sendai Framework by leading the development of an integrated provincial hazard risk vulnerability assessment that builds on B.C.'s Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment and integrates climate and disaster risk.
- Advance disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation in B.C. through modernized policies and programs and support First Nations and local authorities on emergency preparedness and mitigation through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund.
- Develop formal partnerships with post-secondary institutions, Indigenous organizations, and other emergency management organizations and jurisdictions to support continuous improvement of the Province's emergency preparedness management and disaster risk reduction strategies.

Discussion

This objective advances B.C.'s commitment to the [United Nations Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction](#) through development and application of disaster risk reduction policies, strategies, and programs to mitigate future disaster risk, reduce existing disaster risk, and manage residual risk.

Progress towards this objective requires modernizing disaster mitigation policies and programs. This includes considering climate change in policies and programs, integrating feedback from Indigenous communities, and bringing international best practices for disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation into future program design. To monitor progress, the Ministry will track the number of provincially funded disaster mitigation projects that include appropriate climate change considerations and the number of successful applications from Indigenous communities and organizations.

The Ministry will also continue to conduct strategic after-action reviews to leverage lessons learned that improve the effectiveness of government's emergency management programs. Over the forthcoming year, the Ministry will review provincial strategies and plans to determine how they address climate and disaster risks and build resiliency.

The Ministry will seek to strengthen existing relationships that enable data and information-sharing by establishing new partnerships that support evidence-based disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation decision making. Progress will be monitored by assessing the quality of data and information used in emergency management service delivery and disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation strategies and investments.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target
1.1 Provincial and regional risk assessments developed and implemented	Risk assessment methodology completed.	Initiate a joint provincial scale Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment (DCRRA) in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) and co-developed with Indigenous partners.	Complete and publish the provincial scale DCRRA in partnership with ENV and co-developed with Indigenous partners. Initiate regional scale DCRRA in partnership with ENV and co-developed with Indigenous partners.	Complete and publish the regional scale DCRRA in partnership with ENV and co-developed with Indigenous partners.

Data source: Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Manually compiled.

Discussion

The mandate letters for the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ECCS) include a joint

mandate to advance B.C.'s commitments to the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction by integrating the assessment of climate and disaster risk to support the development of a subsequent province-wide disaster and climate risk reduction plan. Previously, the Province has used independent processes to conduct disaster and climate risk assessments. However, the Province recognizes that climate and natural hazard risk are interrelated and need to be addressed holistically by the whole of society. The Ministry will work with ECCS and its Indigenous partners to co-develop a risk assessment methodology that will lead to an accurate, shared understanding of risks and risk reduction priorities.

In addition to a provincial scale Disaster and Climate Risk Resilience Assessment, the Province continues to provide disaster risk reduction funding to local governments and First Nations through Federal-Provincial funding partnerships, provincial mitigation funding programs, and the provincially-funded Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF). The Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation funding stream of CEPF supports communities' understanding of the natural hazards they face, the risks associated with a changing climate, and development and implementation of effective strategies to plan for, mitigate, and adapt to those risks.

Goal 2: Indigenous Peoples are true partners and leaders in emergency and disaster risk management.

In line with the B.C. Government's commitments to true and lasting reconciliation, the Ministry will include First Nations in all four phases of emergency management and improve the cultural safety of emergency services provided to Indigenous Peoples.

Objective 2.1: Include First Nations during all phases of emergency management, including all levels of planning, decision making, and implementation.

Effective emergency management requires involvement and expertise of First Nations across B.C. The Ministry will work with First Nations and through government-to-government relationships to foster shared leadership across all phases of emergency management, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, to build their future resilience.

Key Strategies

- Continue to establish emergency management agreements and build relationships and partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations to strengthen emergency and disaster risk management knowledge and practices across all jurisdictions.
- Enhance First Nations emergency management capacity by working with the federal government to replace the current bi-lateral service agreement for the delivery emergency management services on reserve lands with a more inclusive approach through a multi-lateral service agreement with representation from the First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS), the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

- Create an Indigenous engagement suite of tools to support internal staff and external partners that meet engagement, consultation, co-operation, and co-development requirements.
- Support the development of emergency management, capacity building, and disaster risk reduction partnerships that include Indigenous communities, local authorities, and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.
- Support Indigenous communities and local authorities with disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation funding programs as well as the advancement of Indigenous-led disaster risk management priorities that reduce risks to communities and consider future climate conditions.

Discussion

Recognizing the importance of Indigenous knowledge to effective emergency management and the increased risk of climate-related emergencies in rural and remote communities, the Ministry will work to establish First Nations as true partners and encourage collaboration with local authorities across all phases of emergency management. These relationships will be based on a foundation of respect and humility, and cultural sensitivity.

Collaborative Emergency Management Agreements (CEMAs) create a structure for collaboration to ensure that First Nations are at the table and informing decisions that affect them, their families, and their territories, while prioritizing the importance of cultural safety and Indigenous knowledge in wildfire and emergency management. The Ministry will advance discussions with First Nations communities in high-risk areas that have an interest in entering into CEMAs or other types of agreements.

Objective 2.2: Better shape the delivery of services to Indigenous Peoples to consider both the needs and the cultural perspectives of individual members and communities.

Actions and decisions taken by the Ministry will be guided by the B.C. Government's commitment to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Ministry recognizes the diversity of First Nations in British Columbia and respects self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. Services, programs, and training will be sustained to improve cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Key Strategies

- Deliver emergency management services and supports that incorporate cultural safety and humility and are guided by the B.C. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- Facilitate an Indigenous Agency Working Group to promote situational awareness and support response to communities during emergency events.
- Work with Indigenous partners to develop new Emergency Support Services (ESS) policies and training to support culturally safe and inclusive approaches.

- Support self-determination and decision-making by working with Indigenous organizations to provide culturally safe emergency management services and supports to Indigenous communities that enable in-person connection with community leaders, knowledge keepers and recovery leads.
- Support capacity building and training through regional First Nations Emergency Management Partners Tables and FNESS as well as funding to address emergency preparedness and mitigation needs of First Nations communities.

Discussion

Lessons learned following a series of concurrent and overlapping provincial emergencies have highlighted the importance of establishing First Nations as true partners and leaders during all phases of emergency management, including all levels of planning, decision making, implementing, and embedding cultural safety and humility practices. Examples include establishing emergency management agreements with First Nations as well as updates to policies, training materials, guides, and forms through a lived experience lens and increased in-person connections with community leaders, knowledge keepers, and recovery leads to demonstrate a comprehensive support model in emergency management.

The Ministry will continue to work in partnership to improve service delivery through strengthened linkages and partnerships with Indigenous support organizations such as ISC, FNESS, First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Metis Nations BC (MNBC) and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centers (BCAAFC). The Ministry will also continue to facilitate an Indigenous Agency Working Group (IAWG) to maintain situational awareness and timely response to emerging needs and issues.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target
2.1 Percentage of First Nations attending First Nations Emergency Management Partnership Tables	36%	41%	46%	51%

Data source: Strategic Partnerships, Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Discussion

In 2018, the First Nations Emergency Management Partnership Tables were created as regional forums for First Nations and provincial agency emergency managers to share knowledge and provide guidance on emergency management issues and initiatives. As a key workplan deliverable under the current bilateral service agreement between Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, these meetings were developed with the intention of holding Partnership Tables annually.

Every First Nation community in B.C. is invited to participate, along with key support organizations, including FNESS, ISC, FNHA, BC Wildfire Service, and many other non-

governmental, provincial, or federal partners, as determined by First Nations. As part of continuous improvement efforts, support organizations and community representatives are encouraged to continue local and regional dialogue around emergency management topics between Partnership Tables, including through seasonal readiness calls/meetings, in-person community visits, and First Nations specific coordination calls. First Nations communities are faced with capacity challenges and competing priorities at the provincial and federal levels of government. As a result, targeted participation rates are anticipated to increase gradually over time as First Nations continue working toward building dedicated emergency management capacity in communities.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness recognizes the limitations of a performance measure that merely measures the percentage of First Nations attending First Nations Emergency Management Partnership Tables and is committed to achieving truly meaningful engagement and shared decision-making with First Nations far beyond this quantitative metric. This will be realized through modernization of the emergency management system, including the creation of a new approach for the delivery of emergency management services in alignment with the multi-jurisdictional services agreement with ISC, FNLC and FNESS, and new legislation built in partnership with First Nations.

Goal 3: B.C. has modernized and enhanced emergency management in all four phases (prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover).

Government is expected to follow modern and effective practices in emergency management. This goal addresses the Ministry's role in supporting Indigenous communities, local authorities, and individuals to prepare for emergencies, mitigate the risks of a changing climate, respond to disasters, and recover quickly after they occur.

Objective 3.1: Modernize B.C.'s emergency and disaster risk management legislation.

Modernizing the Province's emergency management legislation is a crucial step in implementing the Sendai Framework, emphasizing the importance of disaster risk reduction, and strengthening the four phases of emergency management – mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Key Strategies

- In partnership with key ministries, complete work to co-develop and introduce modernized emergency management legislation that aligns with the B.C. Government's commitments to the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- In accordance with the B.C. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, complete co-development of modernized emergency management legislation with

First Nations and extend co-development to the development of regulations and implementation of the new legislation.

- Engage a wide cross-section of interest groups during the implementation of modernized emergency management legislation to promote effective coordination, collaboration, and information sharing among partners.

Discussion

B.C.'s statutory framework for emergencies is set out in the *Emergency Program Act* (EPA) and its supporting regulations. As part of its adoption of the Sendai Framework, the government announced plans to repeal and replace the EPA with modernized legislation. Work is ongoing to develop modernized emergency and disaster risk management legislation, including significant engagement with the public and local authorities, co-development with First Nations, and engagement with Indigenous leadership organizations. Government intends to introduce modernized legislation in 2023 and, following Royal Assent, the Ministry will work with a broad range of interest groups during implementation to ensure that all parties are working together effectively.

Objective 3.2: Support Indigenous communities, local authorities, and individuals to access the tools and resources needed to manage emergencies and disasters in alignment with local conditions and needs.

The Province plays a key role in providing programs, systems, and resources that people need to prepare themselves and their communities for disasters and manage emergencies when they occur.

Key Strategies

- Deliver disaster mitigation and preparedness programs and funding that incorporate future climate scenarios, climate adaptation, and support development of local plans that reflect a changing climate.
- Expand public education initiatives, such as the PreparedBC program, and deepen engagement with partners to increase awareness of emergency preparedness across British Columbia, focusing on inclusive and culturally appropriate resources.
- Continue to evolve the public alerting system to enhance First Nations and local authority preparedness and response.
- Enhance catastrophic earthquake preparedness in collaboration with partners through the ongoing development of plans, training, exercises, public education, agreements, and investments in seismic mitigation and earthquake early warning.
- Support First Nations and local authorities in building preparedness, response, and recovery capacity through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund and continue to enhance provincial coordination, liaison, and information sharing capacity.

Discussion

Helping people and communities mitigate risks and prepare for emergencies is essential to reducing the impact of disasters when they occur. The Ministry's focus during the upcoming year will increase understanding and awareness of risks posed to communities as well as mitigating that risk through strategic investments and enhancements for community preparedness. The Ministry will integrate climate readiness with disaster mitigation strategies and policies to reduce hazard risks and work with communities to manage significant risks.

This work will include expanding and refreshing the PreparedBC program to increase public outreach through social and other channels, create interactive tools, tailor content to meet needs of specific populations, and translate household preparedness resources into multiple languages. The Ministry will also continue to evolve the public alerting system in collaboration with First Nations and local authorities to help people make informed decisions. The Ministry will continue to collaborate with federal-provincial-territorial alerting partners and help educate the public about the public alerting system.

Catastrophic earthquake preparedness will be advanced through continued investment in seismic upgrades of public buildings and infrastructure, provincial seismic risk management activities, and support for people and communities to manage seismic risk. This includes continuing to provide public education and raise awareness of earthquake early warning systems, training exercises, and support for the development and enhancement of seismic risk reduction measures. The Ministry will monitor the number of individuals and communities participating in programs and training and receiving funding to measure progress towards this objective.

Objective 3.3: Support urgent coordinated government response and recovery to communities in times of emergency.

The Ministry will continue to apply lessons learned from past events, such as the 2021 wildfires, flooding, landslides, and the COVID-19 pandemic, to improve preparedness and the timeliness and coordination of response and recovery efforts.

Key Strategies

- Continue to support the province-wide response and recovery from the widespread damage caused by severe events, such as wildfire, flooding, and landslides in B.C.
- Work with Indigenous, federal, and local authority partners, and non-governmental organizations to deliver programs such as Emergency Support Services and Disaster Financial Assistance as needed for communities and individuals impacted by disasters.
- Implement improvements enabled by modernized emergency management legislation and support emergency management program and service delivery enhancements through lessons learned, systems reviews, and by promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

- Continue to work closely with the Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer groups in support of response related efforts.
- Maintain specialized regional emergency management partnership agreements with local authorities, and cross-border arrangements and agreements with key interest groups, aimed at enhancing B.C.'s mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts for disasters.

Discussion

Climate related emergencies are growing in scope, scale, and duration in British Columbia, requiring greater emphasis on strong coordination among First Nations, local authorities, other government partners, and non-governmental organizations. Following provincial emergencies and disasters, the Ministry reviews lessons learned to improve programs and service delivery, including ongoing delivery of the enhanced public alerting program to manage emergency and public alerts, working in collaboration with Indigenous nations, local authorities, and provincial and federal partners.

Emergency Support Services (ESS) provides short-term basic support to people impacted by disasters. During an emergency event, support services such as temporary lodging, food, clothing, and incidentals may be offered to those eligible as determined by a case-by-case basis. Services may be available for an extended period depending on the emergency and the circumstances of an evacuation. This performance measure demonstrates the Ministry's progress on strengthening community resilience and providing rapid response when disasters occur.

Disaster Financial Assistance provides financial assistance to communities for damaged infrastructure and members of the public, small businesses, farms, and charitable organizations to restore uninsurable losses that are essential to homes, livelihoods, or community services, when applicable. Timely decision making about disaster financial assistance helps ensure that individuals, organizations, and communities impacted by eligible disasters can focus on recovery efforts, such as rebuilding infrastructure or replacing equipment.

The Ministry will continue to actively promote agreements and relationships that enhance coordination and information sharing during the four phases of emergency management. This includes ongoing work to support strategic planning and steering committee meetings for the Integrated Partnership for Regional Emergency Management in Metro Vancouver, which supports improved coordination of emergency management planning in the Metro Vancouver region and streamlined communication with municipalities in the Metro Vancouver region.

Similarly, work will continue to support the Regional Emergency Management Partnership in the Capital Region. Partners will promote the regional tsunami information portal and pursue cross-jurisdictional evacuation planning. Following these successful models, the Ministry will continue building regional partnerships with First Nations communities and local authorities to improve planning and response activities across regions.

The Ministry supports the Integrated Disaster Council of BC, a network of government and non-government agencies that work together to provide humanitarian aid to support First Nations and local authorities' emergency management following a disaster. This forum increases coordination of member agencies and enhances communication and information sharing.

Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer (PSLV) groups such as Search and Rescue, Emergency Support Services, Emergency Radio Communication, Provincial Emergency Program Air Volunteers, and Road Rescue are at the heart of emergency response in B.C. Thousands of volunteers across the province lead air and ground searches, help people in motor vehicle accidents, and coordinate services for victims of disasters.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target
3.1 Percentage of eligible communities onboarded and utilizing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool	35%	50%	75%	100%

Data source: Regional Operations Division, Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Discussion

In 2022-23, the Ministry enhanced Emergency Support Services (ESS) by introducing a new digital platform called Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA), which increases the efficiency and speed of service delivery and payments for evacuees. Modernized ESS service delivery reflects the need to respond to more complex and longer duration emergency events.

In 2023-24, the Ministry will continue to engage with communities to onboard and train on the ERA tool, including updated guides, resources, and support. The Ministry will also continue working with Indigenous communities and other partners to ensure the program is administered in a culturally safe manner and meets the needs of those receiving support.

Financial Summary

Core Business	2022/23 Restated Estimates¹	2023/24 Estimates	2024/25 Plan	2025/26 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness	31,636	50,844	63,013	72,613
Executive and Support Services	11,039	13,519	11,364	11,364
Emergency Program Act	436,420	36,420	36,420	36,420
Total	479,095	100,783	110,797	120,397
Capital Expenditures (\$000)				
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness	495	524	146	53
Total	495	524	146	53

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2022/23 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2023/24 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#)

