

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BC
BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION**

TO: Madeline Maley, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations Branch,
Emergency Management BC

ISSUE: *EMBC heatwave supports to First Nations and Local Government*

BACKGROUND:

- Historically, EMBC has supported First Nations and Local Governments in severe weather emergencies with a compounding factor (stranded travelers, prolonged power outage, etc.) but has not supported eligibility for extreme heat or cold, except on a case-by-case basis.
- A long duration heatwave caused by an exceptionally strong ridge of high pressure impacted the Province beginning on June 23, 2021. Though most regions have returned to seasonal normal, heat warnings persist in the Okanagan and Fraser Canyon areas.
- EMBC regions distribute Environment and Climate Change Canada Severe Weather Notifications and Warnings to all First Nations and Local Governments as a standard operating practice. Additionally, all EMBC regions provided heat wave briefings to Local Governments and First Nations through specific coordination calls, or through already scheduled wildfire/freshet/COVID-19 coordination calls.
- On June 25, 2021, EMBC Regional Offices/Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centers (PREOCS) noted a significant increase in calls from First Nations and Local Government to support the activation of cooling centers.
- EMBC authorized incremental cost reimbursement for staffing of cooling centres, bottled water supplied to cooling centres, and facility rental where no appropriate Local Government or First Nations-owned facility was available. EMBC engaged with Health Authority (including First Nations Health Authority) and federal partners to share information and consider additional supports required.

- On June 28, 2021, as the severity of the heat wave impacts became apparent through discussions with First Nations and Local Government, EMBC adapted by making the cost of transporting individuals to and from cooling centers where scheduled public transportation was unavailable (rural and remote areas), as well as those costs incurred in supporting the Health system at a local level. The EMBC Southwest Regional office in Surrey had also phoned their community Emergency Program Coordinators in the communities to let them know reimbursements would continue to be supported.
- EMBC will continue to reimburse incremental costs for 72 hours following the downgrade of the Environment Canada Heat Warning Alert. EMBC continues to adapt our approach based on community needs.
- Key messages include:
 - EMBC shares messaging from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). British Columbians can also sign up for ECCC weather updates and it's up to Local Governments to activate their emergency plans.
 - EMBC has provided significant support to First Nations and Local Government during this heat wave, and has expanded eligibility to include transportation and assistance to the Health system.
 - EMBC has supported the addition of surge medical response capacity for fire departments.
 - EMBC continues to work closely with local Emergency Operations Centers to ensure supports are well understood, and to address specific needs that are not clearly covered under established reimbursement eligibility.
 - EMBC continues to work with other Ministries (spec. Health), First Nations organizations, and federal partners to adapt to the emergent needs of communities in this unparalleled event.
 - EMBC has committed to working with all response partners to ensure a robust Provincial extreme weather plan exists for anticipated future events driven by climate change.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:

- EMBC has worked provincially and locally with First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and Indigenous Services Canada to provide wrap-around and culturally appropriate coverage for the needs of indigenous communities during this event, and has provided pathways through response partners for costs not eligible under EMBC's funding frameworks.

OTHER MINISTRIES IMPACTED/CONSULTED:

- Health

PREPARED BY:

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REVIEWED BY:

	Initials	Date
DM		
ADM	MM	Jul 5
ED	PB	Jul 5
Pgm Dir/Mgr		

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Canadian Red Cross Family Reunification Timeline for Lytton Creek Fire

Note: The Lytton fire was reported to have started late afternoon (approximately 3:30 p.m.) on Wednesday, June 30th, 2021. The fire investigation remains ongoing.

Wednesday, June 30th (evening):	EMBC reaches out to Red Cross advising that EMBC may be looking to setup a call centre with specifics to follow
Thursday, July 1st (morning):	EMBC reaches out to Red Cross formerly requesting call centre setup, Red Cross reports may have call centre up and running at 1:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 1st (noon):	Canadian Red Cross conveys clarity required from EMBC for what type of call centre (Emergency Support Services registration call centre versus family reunification call centre)
Thursday, July 1st (evening):	Canadian Red Cross family reunification call centre reported to be active and phone number posted to public EMBC website
Saturday, July 3rd @ 7:52 a.m.	Canadian Red Cross conveys to EMBC that RCMP has requested information from the Canadian Red Cross Family Reunification Team but would prefer that EMBC provides to the RCMP. EMBC requests Canadian Red Cross to provide the information to EMBC so that EMBC can share with the RCMP. Canadian Red Cross conveys they need to callback the inquiries that were looking for loved ones, to gain their consent for providing information to EMBC.
Saturday, July 3rd @ 12:56 p.m.	Canadian Red Cross provides a summary to EMBC containing the information on calls received as of Thursday, July 1st as follows: total of 114 calls received by Canadian Red Cross that results in 44 inquiries from those seeking information about their loved ones.
Sunday, July 4th @ 10:18 p.m.	EMBC requests Public Safety Canada to have RCMP Missing Persons Coordinator contact EMBC
Sunday, July 4th @ 10:49 p.m.	RCMP Missing Persons Coordinator (Cpl. Jennifer Sparkes) RCMP E Division Southeast District phones EMBC and requests data to be provided to the RCMP Missing Coordinator
Sunday, July 4th @ 12:44 p.m.	EMBC provides information that was provided by the Canadian Red Cross to the RCMP, as requested by the RCMP

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Canadian Red Cross Family Reunification Timeline for Lytton Creek Fire

Sunday, July 4th @ 1:06 p.m.

Canadian Red Cross provides EMBC a second update to EMBC on calls received, providing the below bullets for the described timeline as “the latest details”:

- CRC Family Reunification Team has received 196 calls since activating the call centre
- CRC has received 59 inquiries from people seeking loved ones (note: Family Reunification Team may receive multiple inquiries for the same person)
- 14 inquiries have been closed by the CRC Reunification Team, as the team confirmed with the inquirer that contact has been made with their family
- 18 inquiries were escalated to EMBC, 5 of which have led to successful reunification of family members

Additional Background:

- RCMP had requested the Canadian Red Cross to update the Family Reunification Team/Call Centre messaging to ensure callers were being directed to the RCMP to file a missing persons report.
- As of July 4, 11:45 p.m. the Canadian Red Cross continues to operate the Family Reunification Team/Call Centre as requested by EMBC. The EMBC EmergencyInfo website continues to amplify the Family Reunification Services provided by the Red Cross as per below

Family Reunification Services

After a disaster or emergency, communication can be difficult. Your family and friends may be in touch with the Red Cross to find out if you are safe and well. This knowledge can bring your loved ones great peace of mind. We ask that you contact the Red Cross at 1 800 863-6582 between 8am and 8pm to access Family Reunification services.