

- After every major event, the Province does a review to learn about what can be improved for the next emergency.
- As we reach the two-year mark of this pandemic, it's important to acknowledge that people in B.C. have been through a lot and want to have their voices heard.
- We want to be sure that in the future, government operations are as efficient as possible when responding to the requirements of British Columbians in times of need.
- This review includes decision-making processes, which will help as we prepare to do even better when the next emergency happens.
- While we're still in the pandemic and there are ongoing health concerns both here and globally, <sup>s.13</sup>
- That said, by beginning the conversation and gathering this information, we can find solutions and make improvements within the government sector to ensure British Columbians are protected in future emergencies.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES**  
***Review of government's operational response to COVID-19***  
***March 2022***

**Key Messages**

- People in British Columbia have been through a lot in the last two years.
- We want to be sure that in the future, government operations and communications continue to respond to the needs of British Columbians in times of emergencies.
- COVID-19 is still with us and will be for the long term, but it's not too early to begin to take stock of how we responded to this emergency so we can be better prepared for the next one.
- By learning from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic so far, we will be in a better position to build BC back better and be ready for future emergencies.

**Questions and Answers**

**Why are you undertaking this review now? Shouldn't you be focused on responding to the pandemic?**

- COVID is still with us and will be for the long term, but it's not too early to begin to take stock of how we responded to this emergency so we can be better prepared for the next one.
- We want to undertake this review while information about government's response to the first and second waves is still fresh in people's minds, and the corporate knowledge is available from stakeholders, partners, government agencies, and independent regulators.
- While we continue to respond to COVID-19, we want to get a review of our response thus far underway – and not wait until the pandemic is over to learn lessons.
- We've reached the two-year mark since the pandemic began and there are important lessons to be learned from that time.

**Will you do another review when the pandemic is over?**

- The goal of this review is to help us respond as effectively as possible when a new emergency arises.
- After two years' experience, we can learn from what worked well in the initial stages, what has been adjusted over time to improve the response and what things could be further improved to ensure people in British Columbia are protected in times of emergency.

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**Will there be any recommendations made in the report? And if not, why not?**

- The goal of the review is to support government in learning lessons from the past two years.
- The project team will gather evidence on what has worked well, what improvements were made to operational effectiveness as the pandemic evolved, and what further improvements can be made to be better prepare for future pandemics, emergencies, and natural disasters.
- By gathering this information, we can find solutions and make improvements to operations, practices, or policies within the government sector to ensure British Columbians are protected in future emergencies.

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**Are public servants and health employees allowed to give feedback through this process? Will there be a separate process for gathering that?**

- Anyone who wishes to provide feedback is welcome to do so.
- All ministries and public sector agencies will be conducting an internal assessment on their COVID-19 response as part of the review. This will inform the final report.

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**How much money has been budgeted for this review?**

- This review will be funded through Emergency Management BC's existing budget.

**Government could spend a lot of money on reviews of pandemic response, what are you doing to coordinate that so you get the most out of the work and money that will inevitably be spent?**

- Everyone has been impacted one way or another by COVID-19 and how the Province and various sectors involved have responded deserves a full review when the time is right.
- We will make sure that each and every review adds value, so we learn all of the lessons, so we are better prepared to protect people in British Columbia during the next pandemic or emergency.

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**How are Indigenous people or communities being engaged?**

- The project team will engage with First Nations, Treaty partners, and Indigenous organizations. Anyone who wishes to provide feedback is welcome to do so.
- As a government, one of our key priorities is to establish meaningful and trust-based partnerships with First Nation communities.
- This report will help us better understand the challenges the Indigenous people have faced because of COVID-19.

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**Once the report is completed, will you implement changes to the Province's COVID-19 response, if the pandemic is still ongoing?**

- The purpose of this review is help us understand what we can improve now and, in the future, to best protect people in British Columbia in times of emergencies.

**B.C. has been urged to call a public inquiry into the handling of COVID-19 by a key figure in Canada's inquiry into the SARS outbreak. Why not do a public inquiry?**

- We are undertaking an independent review of the B.C. public sector's operational response to COVID-19 to look at how decisions were made, communicated, and implemented.
- The review will be conducted independently by three senior consultants and there will be a public engagement where people can share how they were impacted by government's response.
- This approach aligns with what other provinces and jurisdictions in Canada are doing.

**So many people have been hit hard during the pandemic... are you going to look into the impacts of isolation on people's mental health or on seniors, or people with disabilities?**

- We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected certain people disproportionately.
- The purpose of the review is to help government to be better prepared, operationally, for future pandemics and other emergencies, especially in terms of mitigating risks and having the processes in place to support decision-making, communications and government operations as the emergency unfolds.
- The findings of the review will help government better protect people in British Columbia in future emergencies.
- There have and will be other reviews to examine specific sectors, such as the one done into outbreaks in long-term care and assisted living during the first year of the pandemic.

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