

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

EMCR Mandate Letter Commitments – Progress Overview

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Since the creation of the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness in December 2022, significant progress has been made on delivering its mandated priorities, including:
 - Supporting urgent coordinated government response to communities in times of emergency, including supporting response and recovery in communities around the province affected by flood, drought, and the unprecedented wildfire season in summer 2023.
 - Enhancing focus on preparedness to ensure communities are ready for urgent response and incorporating lessons learned from previous emergencies. Examples include working across the B.C government to implement improvements from lessons learned from the 2021 Atmospheric River and 2023 Exercise Coastal Response. The Ministry also co-chairs the Premier’s Expert Task Force on Emergencies, which was created to develop action-oriented recommendations to improve preparedness and response for the anticipated 2024 emergency season.
 - Completing work to collaboratively develop and introduce modernized emergency management legislation. The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* came into force in November 2023 and represents B.C.’s first land-based legislation that aligns with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. B.C. now has the most comprehensive and progressive emergency management legislation in Canada.
 - Advancing B.C.’s commitment to the Sendai Framework by leading the development of a provincial Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV), and in collaboration and consultation with First Nations partners, local authorities, and other partners, which will be publicly released in Summer 2024.
 - Partnering with Indigenous Peoples at all stages and levels of our work. Examples include a new Letter of Understanding (LOU) between the First Nations’ Emergency Services Society, BC Wildfire Service, and the Office of the Fire Commissioner to ensure collaboration in all phases of emergency management, and providing \$18 million to First Nations, municipalities, and regional districts to support the implementation of Indigenous engagement requirements.
 - Leading cross-ministry coordination of our government’s work to enhance B.C.’s resilience, through investing in the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund which helps First Nations and local authorities prepare communities for the risks of natural hazards and climate change and lessen the effect before disasters happen, and improving transparency and awareness of resilience initiatives and existing risks

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through the ClimateReadyBC platform.

Background:

- EMCR is leading on five mandate letter commitments and supporting on three additional commitments. This note provides an overview of progress to date.

1. Emergency Response – Lead Ministry

- EMCR was directed to prioritize supporting coordinated government emergency response to communities; reviewing emergency response systems to ensure they are prepared; and incorporating lessons learned from previous emergencies.
- Recent examples of supporting communities include:
 - Delivery of Seasonal Hazard Preparedness sessions to brief local government and First Nations partners, critical infrastructure providers, non-profit organizations, and federal and provincial agency representatives on forecasted hazards and associated risks.
 - Working with communities such as Cache Creek, West Kelowna, and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District to understand flood mitigation assets and looking to pre-stage assets in areas of increased risk.
 - Working with Semiahmoo First Nation and Seabird Island First Nation to support Emergency Operations Centre activities in response to separate Dangerous Goods Incidents that impacted fisheries values and sites of archaeological interest.
 - Coordination by EMCR in response to the closure of Highway 4 on Vancouver Island, including information sharing between ministry leaders, coordination calls with all affected Indigenous governing bodies, regional districts, and communities, and coordinated critical services delivery calls to maintain essential fuel, medication, and food supplies.
- Other response work being undertaken by EMCR includes:
 - Enhancing key programs such as Emergency Support Services and Disaster Financial Assistance to improve accessibility and operating efficiency to better support communities and individuals impacted by disasters.
 - Implementing findings and recommendations for continuous improvement from the Atmospheric River and Exercise Coastal Response After Action Reviews.
 - Co-chairing the Premier’s Expert Task Force on Emergencies with the Ministry of Forests, which was created to develop action-oriented recommendations to improve preparedness and response for the anticipated 2024 emergency season.

2. Partner with Indigenous Peoples – Lead Ministry

- EMCR was directed to prioritize including First Nations from the beginning of its work at all levels of planning, decision making, and implementation.

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- EMCR, BC Wildfire Service, and the Office of the Fire Commissioner have signed a LOU with First Nations' Emergency Services Society to strengthen cross-agency collaboration, improve service to Indigenous Peoples, and to advance Indigenous-led approaches in emergency management.
- EMCR introduced modernized emergency management legislation developed in collaboration with First Nations partners and has developed guidance materials for internal and external audiences to support meeting Indigenous engagement requirements outlined in the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.
- EMCR continues to work with First Nations partners to develop regulations associated with the new Act.

3. Emergency Management Legislation – Lead Ministry

- EMCR was directed to prioritize introducing co-developed emergency management legislation that aligns with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* was introduced in October 2023, and received royal assent in November 2023.

4. Provincial Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment – Lead Ministry

- EMCR was directed to prioritize leading the co-development of a provincial-level disaster and climate risk assessment that integrates climate and disaster risk, in partnership with the ENV. This assessment will support a subsequent province-wide risk reduction plan and subsequent regional assessments.
- EMCR completed the risk assessment methodology, and in collaboration with First Nations partners and through engagement with partners, selected hazards to assess for the Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessments (coastal and riverine flooding, extreme heat, drought, wildfire, earthquake, and a scenario of cascading and compounding risks).
- The provincial Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment underway and will be publicly released in Summer 2024.

5. Enhance Resilience through Building Back Better, Coordination, and Information Sharing – Lead Ministry

- EMCR was directed to prioritize leading cross-ministry coordination of provincial work to enhance B.C.'s resilience, including building back better from recent disasters, providing guidance to ministries on prioritizing risk reduction and resilience initiatives, and developing new tools for the public on existing risks and work to improve resilience.

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- In 2023 the Province committed \$180M to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF), bringing the Province's total investment to \$369 since 2017. In 2023, CEPF provided funding for more than 425 projects, including 137 disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation projects, and 290 preparedness projects.
- EMCR launched ClimateReadyBC, a publicly accessible disaster and climate risk reduction resource hub that incorporates lessons learned from past emergencies, builds capacity and resilience to face current challenges, and prepares communities to mitigate risk from future disasters. The platform provides mapping tools, risk and resilience data, and other resources to support communities.

6. Emergency Preparedness and Food Security Strategy – Support Ministry

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) mandate letter directed AF to prioritize working with EMCR to develop an emergency preparedness strategy for food security.
- Actions to support the strategy are under development. AF staff are working closely with partner ministries, including EMCR, to ensure a coordinated approach to developing the strategy. Questions on this topic should be referred to AF.

7. Wildfire Prevention and Management – Support Ministry

- The Ministry of Forests (FOR) mandate letter directed FOR, with the support of EMCR, to strengthen the BC Wildfire Service's focus on wildfire prevention and management year-round, including cultural and prescribed fire.
- FOR staff are working closely with partner ministries, including EMCR, on wildfire prevention and management. Questions relating to this file should be referred to FOR.

8. Flood Strategy and Plan – Support Ministry

- The Ministry of Forests (FOR) mandate letter directed FOR, with the support of EMCR, to strengthen the province's flood response through completing B.C.'s Flood Strategy and starting work to create a BC Flood Resilience Plan.
- In October 2023, FOR transferred the responsibility of B.C.'s Flood Strategy and flood planning to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRs).
- WLRs staff are working closely with partners, including EMCR, to strengthen the Province's flood resilience. Questions relating to this file should be referred to WLRs.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/05/2024

EMCR Service Plan Overview

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The 2024/25 – 2026/27 EMCR Service Plan 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 and strategies to be undertaken to deliver on these goals include:
 - Championing evidence-based approaches across the B.C. government to identify and reduce disaster risk and climate risks and invest in disaster risk reduction (e.g. Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessments).
 - 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. Provincial Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction Plan)
 - Including First Nations during all phases of emergency management, including all levels of planning, decision making, and implementation (e.g. Multi-lateral service agreement for the delivery of emergency management services on reserve lands).
 - Better shaping the delivery of services to Indigenous Peoples to consider both the needs and cultural perspectives of individual members and communities (e.g. Multi Agency Support Teams).
 - Modernizing B.C.’s emergency and disaster risk management legislation (e.g. Supporting the implementation of the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*).
 - Supporting Indigenous communities, local authorities, and individuals to access the

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- tools and resources needed to manage emergencies and disasters in alignment with local conditions and needs (e.g. ClimateReadyBC).
- Supporting urgent coordinated government response and recovery to communities in times of emergency (e.g. Emergency Support Services; Disaster Financial Assistance).
 - Performance measures to support goals include:
 - Provincial and regional risk assessments developed.
 - Number of new Indigenous Emergency Management Agreements.
 - Percentage of eligible communities onboarded and utilizing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool.
 - Percentage of complete Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) private applications processed within 90 days.

Background:

Purpose of the Service Plan

- The *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* (BTAA) provides the legislative framework for B.C. government planning, reporting, and accounting. It requires three-year service plans and annual service plan reports be made public annually.
- The service plan is intended to provide the public a high-level overview of the ministry's purpose, strategic direction, key priorities, and the results it expects to achieve with the use of its financial resources.

Changes to the 2024/25 Service Plan compared to 2023/24

- The 2024/25 Service Plan Goals and Objectives remain unchanged from 2023/24.
- New Key Strategies for 2024/25:
 - Objective 1.1: "Develop a Provincial Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction Plan that assesses risk priorities and systematically coordinates and implements cross-government interventions consistent with those priorities."
 - Objective 1.1: "Update the Province's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, inclusive of all four phases of emergency management, to better prepare British Columbia for disasters and emergencies in partnership with ministries, Indigenous governments, local authorities, and critical infrastructure partners."
 - Objective 1.2: "Implement the recommendations of the Premier's Expert Task Force

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- on Emergencies and enhance preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery to better support people on the front lines of emergencies.”
- Objective 2.1: “Develop, negotiate, and implement new emergency management government-to-government agreements with Indigenous governing bodies enabled through the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.”
 - Objective 2.2: “Provide coordinated provincial, federal, and Indigenous partner emergency management services through the Multi Agency Support Team initiative.”
 - Objective 3.1: “Support regulated entities in implementing new Indigenous engagement obligations required under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.”
 - Objective 3.2: “Continue to expand the ClimateReadyBC platform with new and current hazard data and resources to guide the public and communities on disaster and climate readiness strategies and supports.”
 - Objective 3.3: “Enhance awareness and modernize Emergency Support Services and Disaster Financial Assistance to improve accessibility and operating efficiency to better support communities and individuals impacted by disasters.”
- Removed 2023/24 Service Plan Key Strategies:
 - Objective 1.1: “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.”
 - ClimateReadyBC has launched and is now represented as a new strategy under Objective 3.2.
 - Objective 1.1: “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.”
 - Combined with the strategy of providing guidance to ministries.
 - Objective 2.1: “Create an Indigenous engagement suite of tools to support internal staff and external partners that meet engagement, consultation, co-operation, and co-development requirements.”
 - Considered complete as the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program has launched, and Interim Indigenous Engagement Requirements Guidance was published.
 - Objective 2.1: “Support the development of emergency management, capacity

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- building, and disaster risk reduction partnerships that include Indigenous communities, local authorities, and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.”
- Combined with other strategies.
 - Objective 2.2: “Work with Indigenous partners to develop new Emergency Support Services (ESS) policies and training to support culturally safe and inclusive approaches.”
 - Included in Objective 3.3.
 - Objective 2.2: “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.”
 - Combined with other strategies.
 - Objective 3.1: “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.”
 - Considered complete as the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* received royal assent in 2023/24.
 - Objective 3.2: “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.”
 - Revised to a ClimateReadyBC focused strategy.
 - Objective 3.2: “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.”
 - Combined with other strategies.
 - New and revised Performance Measures for 2024/25:
 - Revised Performance Measure 1.1: “1.1 Provincial and regional risk assessments developed”
 - “... and implemented” has been removed.
 - New Performance Measure 2.1: “Number of new Indigenous Emergency Management Agreements”
 - Tracks the number of new agreements between Indigenous governing bodies and the Province enabled by the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.

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- New Performance Measure 3.2: “Percentage of complete Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) private applications processed within 90 days”
 - Tracks the improvements to DFA processing times enabled by the DFA Digital Portal, moving from a paper-based system to digital.

- Removed Performance Measure for 2024/25:
 - Performance Measure 2.1 from 2023/24 has been removed: “Percentage of First Nations attending First Nations Emergency Management Partnership Tables”
 - Removed due to the bi-lateral service agreement negotiations and uncertainty whether the Partnership Tables will occur in 2024/25. The future use of a performance measure relating to the Partnership Tables will be reviewed for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

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2024/25 Estimates Note Overview

Budget 2024/25 Overview

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- *Budget 2024* provides for incremental investment of \$18.00 million over three years.
- This includes a base budget increase for the Ministry of \$12.411 million over three years and one-time capital funding of \$0.292 million in 2024/25 which provides for the permanent staffing of 35 positions which were previously temporary seasonal positions. This will allow the ministry to:
 - Reduce the reliance on seasonal staff to support Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre activation in light of more frequent and longer duration events.
 - Improve emergency communications capacity to support preparedness and execution of public communications related to evacuation alerts and orders.
 - Better support Local Authorities in their preparation and administration of the Emergency Support Services (ESS) program.
 - Provide the resources required to build out and administer the provincial Disaster Recovery Framework and policies.
 - Position the Disaster Finance Assistance (DFA) team to effectively surge up when an emergency is declared.
 - Provide timely review of Disaster Financial Assistance program appeals recognizing the need highlighted by the Ombudsperson.
- *Budget 2024* also confirmed access to Contingencies funding to provide for the broadening of support for evacuees by funding specially trained Service BC call centre agents to provide support to evacuees in assessing information and emergency support services.
- The Ministry was also approved to provide up to \$76.600 million to the City of Abbotsford to support the Barrowtown Pump Upgrade project – this was announced on February 15, 2024.
- *Budget 2024* also including funding for disaster risk reduction investments including:
 - The Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program - \$83 million (AGRI)
 - Cowichan Weir - \$14 million (WLRS)
 - Saint Mary Lake - \$10 million (WLRS)
 - A Municipal Water Metering Pilot - \$50 million (MUNI)

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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 businesses: Emergency and Disaster Management Operations, Climate Readiness Programs, and Executive and Support Services.
 - Emergency Program Act (Vote 22) - This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriations under the following core businesses: Emergency and Disaster Management Act and Financial Assistance.
- The Ministry service plan financial summary below details the estimates budget for each core business line:

(\$000s)	2023/24 Restated Estimates ¹	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Emergency and Disaster Management Operations	32,416	39,033	38,633	38,633
Climate Readiness Programs	18,429	28,429	38,429	38,429
Executive and Support Services	13,739	11,585	11,584	11,584
Emergency and Disaster Management Act	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Financial Assistance	6,420	6,420	6,420	6,420
Total	101,004	115,467	125,066	125,066
Capital Expenditures				
Emergency and Disaster Management Operations	524	548	53	53
Total	524	548	53	53

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Key Facts and Figures:

Budget 2024:

Budget 2024 provides additional operating funding of \$12.411 million over the next three years and one-time capital funding of \$0.292 million in 2024/25:

Initiative	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Totals
Operating	(\$millions)			
Response capacity (25 FTEs)	\$2.951	\$2.951	\$2.951	\$8.853
Community Recovery/DFA capacity (10 FTEs)	\$1.186	\$1.186	\$1.186	\$3.558
Totals	\$4.137	\$4.137	\$4.137	\$12.411
Capital	\$0.292	Nil	Nil	\$0.292

Prior Year budget decisions:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Totals
	(\$millions)			
Budget 2023				
Enhanced capacity, disaster mitigation program, EDMA implementation	\$27.937	\$37.537	\$37.537	\$103.011
Budget 2022				
Wildfire Services and Prevention	\$7.431	\$7.431	\$7.431	\$22.293
Budget 2020				
GSAR	\$6.433	\$6.433	\$6.433	\$19.299
Totals	\$41.801	\$51.401	\$51.401	\$144.603

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Budget by expense type:

Vote 21	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	(\$millions)		
Salaries & benefits	\$40.263	\$40.262	\$40.262
Operating costs	\$11.598	\$11.198	\$11.198
Government Transfers	\$38.178	\$48.178	\$48.178
Other expenses	\$0.032	\$0.032	\$0.032
Recoveries	<\$11.024>	<\$11.024>	<\$11.024>
Totals	\$79.047	\$88.646	\$88.646

Vote 22	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	(\$millions)		
Operating costs	\$23.700	\$23.700	\$23.700
Government Transfers	\$12.720	\$12.720	\$12.720
Totals	\$36.420	\$36.420	\$36.420

Capital	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	(\$millions)		
Office Equipment	\$0.003	\$0.003	\$0.003
IMIT Equipment	\$0.111	Nil	Nil
Vehicle Replacement	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050
New Vehicles	\$0.384	Nil	Nil
Totals	\$0.548	\$0.053	\$0.053

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/06/2024

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan / All-Hazard Plan

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) leads and coordinates the cross-government work to strengthen the Province’s ability to prepare for emergencies and disasters to protect British Columbians.
- The Province’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is the emergency plan for government that includes:
 - All-Hazard Plan: overall provincial operations, governance, and responsibilities.
 - Lead ministry hazard emergency management plans.
 - Support and functional annexes.
- As part of the implementation of the new Emergency and Disaster Management Act, EMCR is updating the All-Hazard Plan as a first step to update the CEMP. This update will reflect lessons learned from previous disasters in addition to new provincial requirements, including:
 - Be done in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous governing bodies
 - Consulting local authorities
 - Be based on Indigenous knowledge and local knowledge, if available
 - Support cultural safety
 - Consider intersectional disadvantage
 - All four phases of emergency management – mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- The updated All-Hazard plan will clarify and define important themes across hazards and phases of emergency management, such as roles and responsibilities, communication, and coordination.
- EMCR is engaging with and seeking feedback from First Nations, local authorities, and emergency management partners in Spring 2024 on the All-Hazard Plan and will finalize the update ^{Advice/Recommendations}

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Background:

- Under the Emergency Program Act (EPA) key ministers had planning obligations in relation to specific hazards and the Minister of EMCR was responsible for the preparation of Provincial emergency plans. These requirements were clarified and expanded through EDMA along with the introduction of new statutory rules for a province-wide emergency management plan—referred to in EDMA as the "comprehensive emergency management plan (CEMP)."
- Though the term "CEMP" was not used in the EPA, EMCR did refer to the provincial network of emergency plans as the "comprehensive emergency management plan" previously. The new structure, mandated by EDMA, sets the stage for consistency and oversight in the implementation of all future emergency plans for the Province.
- EDMA mandates certain requirements for the CEMP, including that it must apply throughout BC and that it must include the emergency management plans developed by lead ministers. Through rules prescribed in regulation, the Provincial Administrator will be required to make the CEMP public when it is complete.
- EDMA also sets out requirements for lead-minister plans and requires that ministers take emergency measures identified in the CEMP.
- The Ministries regulation, which is in development, will complete the scheme for the CEMP, including assigning Lead Ministers with hazard assignments that dictate which hazard plans the minister must create under the CEMP within four years.
- The current All-Hazard Plan was drafted in 2012 and outlines the response framework for emergency and disasters in B.C. to coordinate provincial integrated response. It includes roles and responsibilities, intergovernmental integration, hazard information, and governance concepts.
- Engagement with First Nations and local authorities relating to the All-Hazard Plan will begin in April 2024 and will set the stage for engagement on hazard-specific planning in the coming years. The All-Hazard Plan will also include content related to the implementation of consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs), as outlined in EDMA.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/25/2024

Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Province is committed to mitigating the impacts of disasters such as wildfires and floods on people and communities across British Columbia.
- For every dollar invested in disaster mitigation, \$7 to \$10 can be saved in post-disaster recovery costs. To realize these savings and make wise investments in disaster mitigation, we first need to assess current and future disaster and climate risk.
- The Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment (DCRRA) is a joint mandate of the Ministries of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and Environment and Climate Change Strategy and will assess risks from hazards, including wildfire, flood, extreme heat, drought, and earthquake, at the provincial and regional levels.
 - Data, analysis, and other products from the DCRRA will be made public through ClimateReadyBC – a one-stop, online platform designed to help guide the public and communities on disaster and climate readiness strategies and supports.
- The assessment is being developed in collaboration with First Nations and Modern Treaty Nations, taking a distinction-based approach, and through engagement with Indigenous organizations, all levels of government, industry, critical infrastructure owners, academia, non-governmental organizations, and other key partners.
- Results from the assessment will inform a provincial disaster and climate risk reduction plan.

Background:

- The provincial phase of the DCRRA is underway and will be completed in ^{Advice/Recommendations} the regional assessments will be completed in ^{Advice/Recommendation}
- An updated and modernized assessment of disaster and climate risks across B.C. is critical for the Province to strategically prioritize risk reduction and climate adaptation investments and develop policies and programs to strengthen the Province's resilience.
- A Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment for B.C. was published in 2019. This was the first provincial-scale assessment of climate risks in Canada, and the first assessment of risks in B.C. since the Provincial Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Assessment in 1997.

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- The DCRRA is building on lessons learned through the 2019 climate risk assessment by including collaboration with First Nations and Treaty Nations, equity-focused analysis, engagement with key partners and diverse populations, and outputs that provide value to communities.
- As of late March 2024, the DCRRA has convened subject matter experts to discuss disaster and climate risk and resilience in British Columbia through the lens of priority hazards and how they impact what we value. This knowledge is being informed by climate change science, geospatial analysis, and local knowledge and will uphold Indigenous Knowledges and Sciences where available.
- Forthcoming regulations under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act will require regulated entities to undertake risk assessments that consider equity, climate change, and use the best available local and Indigenous knowledge. The DCRRA will support regulated entities – including provincial ministries, local governments, and critical infrastructure owners – to meet these requirements with data and a scalable risk assessment methodology.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy have aligned legislative and government commitments:
 - In 2018, B.C. adopted the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction that provides guidance for using an all-hazards approach and considering climate change when assessing disaster risk and resilience.
 - The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is responsible for meeting the Climate Change Accountability Act requirements of assessing and publicly reporting on climate risks every five years, with the next report due in 2025.

Key Facts and Figures:

- The Ministry has budgeted approximately \$7,525,000 million over three years for costs associated with delivery of Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessments.

Fiscal Year	Budget
2023 - 2024	\$2,175,000.00
2024 - 2025	\$2,875,000.00
2025 - 2026	\$2,475,000.00
Total	\$7,525,000.00

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/26/2024

Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Funding Programs

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) supports First Nations and local authorities to advance disaster risk reduction through several funding programs, including provincial programs and federal/provincial cost shared programs. Research confirms that for every \$1 invested in mitigation, \$7 to \$10 can be avoided in post-disaster recovery costs.
- Through *Budget 2023* the Province increased EMCR's base budget for mitigation and preparedness by \$5 million for 2023/24, \$15 million for 2024/25, and \$25 million for 2025/26 onwards.
- The Province has also provided contributions to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) totaling \$369 million since its creation in 2017. The program is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and supports First Nations and local governments to better prepare for disasters and reduce risks from natural hazards in a changing climate.
- The Province also contributes to disaster risk reduction through provincial grants, and joint federal/provincial funding programs such as the Adaptation, Resilience, and Disaster Mitigation (ARDM) streams of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) and the recently completed National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP).
- Since 2017, approximately \$298 million in provincial funding has been provided to First Nations and local governments supporting more than 2,000 projects across the province.

Background:

- In Budget 2023, the province increased EMCR's base disaster mitigation and preparedness budget to develop a new program to provide consistent and ongoing funding opportunities to communities. The program, which is under development, will support communities in addressing risks from climate change and natural disasters.
- Across all funding programs, the Province has provided:
 - Approximately \$50.6 million for approximately 1,500 emergency preparedness projects: equipment and training for Emergency Operations Centers, Emergency Support Services, and Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments; public notification and evacuation route planning; extreme temperatures risk mapping,

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assessment, and planning; and Indigenous Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility Training.

- Approximately \$ \$248 million for just under 570 disaster mitigation projects, including:
 - \$214 million for 476 flood risk reduction projects throughout B.C.
 - \$369,000 for four projects that address extreme temperatures
 - \$1.9 million for two projects that address drought
 - \$29.6 million for over 70 projects that address all hazards such as climate adaptation plans, and Hazard and Risk Vulnerability Studies
 - \$2.1 million for 13 projects that address avalanche, seismic, and tsunami risks

Community Emergency Preparedness Fund

- The Province has provided a total of \$369 million to the CEPF since its establishment in 2017. As of March 25, 2024, approximately 1,900 First Nations and local government projects have been approved for funding through the CEPF totaling approximately \$213.9 million.
- EMCR announced funding for more than 340 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) projects in the 2023/24 fiscal year totaling \$104.7M, including 144 Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation Projects, and 348 Preparedness projects.
- The Disaster Risk Reduction - Climate Adaptation funding stream was announced in 2022. This new all hazard stream replaces hazard-specific funding streams for flood and extreme temperature.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Adaptation, Resilience, and Disaster Mitigation Stream (partnership with Infrastructure Canada)

- COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Sub-Stream (2020):
 - \$53.4 million (provincial funding \$9.5 million) for 23 projects
 - \$10M for individual communities; \$20M joint flood mitigation
- Green Infrastructure Sub-Stream (2022): flood mitigation infrastructure
 - \$81.865M (\$37.5M provincial)
 - \$10M for individual communities; \$20M joint flood mitigation
 - Project selection is complete, and the federal government is expected to announce funded projects shortly.
 - Two Green ARDM projects have been announced to date for a total of \$11 million. More announcements are forthcoming.

EMCR's Disaster Mitigation Program Grants

- Since 2017, the program has funded 29 projects totaling approximately \$43.2 million in provincial funding through ad hoc grants and year end funding.

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- Funded projects include flood mapping, structural flood mitigation (dikes, pump stations, etc.), seismic projects (micro zonation mapping, and earthquake early warning), and avalanche risk assessments.

National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) – Partnership with Public Safety Canada

- 114 projects for approximately \$53 million (provincial funding of \$20.8 million).
- No further intakes of the NDMP are expected.
- The NDMP was established in 2016 to provide funding for projects that included non-structural mitigation (flood risk assessments, flood mapping, and mitigation planning) and small-scale structural mitigation (upgrading existing diking structures to improve resilience).

Infrastructure Canada Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund

- EMCR works closely with other ministries and all levels of government to support disaster risk reduction programs including Infrastructure Canada’s Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF).

Additional Information:

- Appendix 1 provides a summary of total investments to date by funding program.
- Appendix 2 provides a breakdown of total investments by hazard.

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Appendix 1 – Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Funding Summary*

DMAP Program	Funding Stream	Number of Approved Projects	Total Actuals to Date
CEPF	1 Flood Risk Assessment, Mapping, and Mitigation Planning (stream retired – projects now captured under DRR-CA). To ensure communities have accurate knowledge of the flood hazards they face and to develop effective strategies to mitigate and prepare for those risks.	128	\$17.0M
	2 Emergency Support Services Equipment & Training To build local capacity to provide emergency support services through training, volunteer recruitment and retention, and the purchase of ESS equipment.	474	\$13.5M
	3 Emergency Operations Centres & Training To build local capacity through the purchase of equipment and supplies required to maintain or improve an EOC and to enhance EOC capacity through training and exercises.	455	\$12.2M
	4 Structural Flood Mitigation (stream retired – projects now captured under DRR-CA) To prevent, eliminate or reduce the impact of flood and geological hazards through construction of structural mitigation projects	52	\$31.4M
	5 Public Notification & Evacuation Route Planning To develop Evacuation Route Plans that provide information for local governments, First Nations, and community members on the recommended evacuation routes for the community in the event of an emergency.	119	\$3.7M
	6 Extreme Temperature Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (stream retired – projects now captured under DRR-CA) To ensure accurate knowledge of risks associated with extreme heat and how these will change over time, and to develop effective response plans and strategies to prepare, mitigate, and adapt.	47	\$2.4M
	7 Volunteer & Composite Fire Department Equipment & Training To build the resiliency of volunteer and composite fire departments in preparing for and responding to emergencies through the purchase of new or replacement equipment and to facilitate the delivery of training.	344	\$17.5M
	8 Indigenous Cultural Safety & Cultural Humility Training To support eligible applicants to enhance cultural safety and humility in the delivery of local emergency management programs and services.	44	\$1.4M
	9 Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation To support eligible applicants to reduce risks from future disasters due to natural hazards and climate related risks	221	\$114.9M
		Total	1,884
ARDM	Covid- 19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream For communities to complete disaster mitigation and adaptation infrastructure projects	23	\$9.5M
	Green Infrastructure Build or modify infrastructure (including natural) to prevent, mitigate, and protect against floods and related hazards.	Pending (2 announced, 14 approved but not announced)	\$11 M announced
		Total	\$21M announced
		25	
NDMP	Flood risk assessments, mapping, mitigation planning, and non-structural mitigation	114	\$20.8M
Grants	DMU Grants Cost share NDMP flood projects and non-eligible ARDM project expenses	15	\$5.9M
	End Of Year Grants Provincial priority disaster risk reduction projects, including seismic projects	13	\$5.6M
	Large Scale – Grand Forks	1	\$31.7M
		Total	29
	Total	2052	\$298M

*Numbers vary from 2023 due to 2024 inclusion of all hazards and removal of cancelled and withdrawn projects.

Appendix 2 – Project Breakdown by Hazard Type for Preparedness and Mitigation

The below table summarizes projects funded by the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation funding programs at EMCR since 2017. These are projects that were approved for one of the funding programs and not subsequently withdrawn or cancelled.

Hazard Type	Number of Approved Projects	Total Actuals to Date
All-hazard	1163	\$60.3M
Avalanche	2	\$0.1M
Extreme Heat/Extreme Temp	51	\$2.7M
Fire *	344	\$17.5M
Flood	476	\$214
Seismic	2	\$0.3M
Tsunami	12	\$1.6M
Drought	2	\$1.9M
Total	2052	\$298M

*Fire refers to funding provided to volunteer and composite fire departments for equipment and training in support of structural fires, not wildfires, which are funded through Ministry of Forests.

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/25/2024

Earthquake Early Warning

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The federal government is developing the Canadian Earthquake Early Warning (EEW) system for areas of moderate-to-high seismic risk, including Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Sea to Sky Corridor, Sunshine Coast, the north coast and Haida Gwaii.
- Once launched, the federal government will be able to issue alerts in B.C. to mobile devices, radio, and television to warn of a potentially harmful earthquake – giving people crucial seconds to take protective measures such as “drop, cover and hold on” before shaking begins.
- The Province is a committed partner in the development of Canada’s new EEW system anticipated for launch this spring. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness’ role is to support public education on EEW and coordinate public alerting.

Background:

- Earthquake early warning systems consist of an array of seismic sensors that detect the first waves of an earthquake and issue a notification before damaging secondary waves arrive. Essential and valuable protective actions that reduce the impacts of an earthquake (e.g., instructing people to drop, cover, and hold on, halting surgeries, opening bay doors at fire halls, or stopping trains) can be automatically triggered within the few to tens of seconds of a notification.
- In 2019, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) secured funds to develop a Canadian Earthquake Early Warning Program in areas with high seismic hazards and where there is critical infrastructure of national significance.
- The implementation of the Canadian EEW system will be carried out in phases, with the initial phase focusing on public alerting. Subsequent phases will involve the integration of technical partners and the implementation of automated actions, such as opening bay doors and stopping trains, to enhance response capabilities.
- If an EEW alert is issued, the message automatically sent to mobile devices, radio and television will state, “*Earthquake Detected – Drop, Cover and Hold On – Protect Yourself – Natural Resources Canada*” in both English and French.

Earthquake Early Warning Sensors

- The Canadian EEW system relies on a network of seismic sensors that will detect the first

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waves of an earthquake and has potential to issue automated alerts.

- As of late March 2024, Natural Resources Canada has installed 74 of the 96 core sensor stations slated for B.C.
- The core system will be complemented by an extended sensor network run by partners including the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Connected Coast, and Great Bear Rainforest – Coastal First Nations. To date, at least 17 out of these additional 91 stations have been installed.

Alert Ready

- The Canadian EEW system is complementary to, and will not replace, B.C.'s use of Alert Ready. NRCan has a separate and automated access to Alert Ready.
 - If an earthquake meeting NRCan's thresholds is detected, NRCan's automated system will issue a wireless alert to the impacted area.
 - If an EEW alert is issued, EMCR Operations will begin assessment and response processes as usual.

Oceans Network Canada's Early Warning System

- Prior to NRCan establishing the Canadian EEW System, the Province partnered with Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) to develop an earthquake early warning system for the Cascadia Subduction Zone
- The Provincial investment of over \$6 million supported ONC to do valuable work to advance science around earthquakes in B.C and early warning. This research continues to be important.
- NRCan is the authoritative source for earthquake information and early warning. They have the authority to release alerts to the public through the National Public Alerting System in Canada.

Key Facts and Figures:

- There are approximately 5,000 earthquakes across Canada each year and approximately 4,000 of these occur in British Columbia.
- There have been four magnitude-7.0 or greater earthquakes in the past 130 years in southwest B.C. and northern Washington state.
- On Jan. 26, 1700, the west coast of North America experienced a massive megathrust (magnitude 9.0) earthquake with a subsequent tsunami.
 - If a similar earthquake were to occur today, the Canadian EEW system could deliver up to four minutes of warning to coastal B.C. communities before the strongest shaking begins.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Catastrophic Earthquake Preparedness

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) enhances catastrophic earthquake preparedness in collaboration with partners through the ongoing development of plans, training, exercising, public education, agreements, and investments in seismic mitigation.
- In 2022, EMCR updated the Provincial Earthquake Immediate Response Strategy (PEIRS) that details how the Province will lead and coordinate immediately following a catastrophic earthquake and articulates the roles and responsibilities of emergency management partners.
- The Province builds and maintains response capabilities for a catastrophic earthquake through regular exercises with First Nations, local and Federal governments, non-government organizations, and senior government leadership. Successful exercises were conducted in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2023. In 2023, this included Exercise Coastal Response, a large-scale, provincial catastrophic preparedness exercise that included over 1,500 participants and 50 agencies. The current exercise program 2023 to 2028 includes a continuation of tabletop and live play activities to improve provincial disaster preparedness.
- Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is leading the development of a national Earthquake Early Warning (EEW) system and anticipates launching the system this spring. The Province is a committed partner in the development of the system. EMCR's role is to support public education on EEW and coordinate public alerting. The public education campaigns raise awareness to the system and the important protective actions people need to take (drop, cover and hold on) when they receive an alert on their phones, TV, or radio.
- The Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment (DCRRA) will be delivered later this year and will examine provincial risks resulting from a major earthquake scenario, among other hazards. The DCRRA will inform future updates to PEIRS, and the next catastrophic exercise.
- EMCR's public education program – known as PreparedBC – is responsible for sharing earthquake preparedness information through regular social media posts and campaigns, information at public events and booths, and webinars. The PreparedBC Earthquake and Tsunami Guide has been updated this year to include information about EEW and steps individuals can take to be more prepared for damaging earthquakes.

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Background:

- The Province is committed to planning for catastrophic seismic events in BC following the release of the Office of the Auditor General’s Catastrophic Earthquake Preparedness Report (2014) and the BC Earthquake Consultation Report (2014), both of which identified shortcomings in BC’s earthquake preparedness.
- In 2015, EMBC published the Earthquake Immediate Response Plan (IRP), the predecessor to the Provincial Earthquake Immediate Response Strategy (PEIRS), which outlined the government’s planned response immediately after a catastrophic earthquake.
- In 2016, EMCR established a multi-year exercise program to improve preparedness for complex emergency events that require a multi-jurisdictional response. EMCR also partners with the BC Earthquake Alliance each October to encourage broad participation in ShakeOutBC – the province’s largest earthquake drill. Provincially led exercises were conducted in 2016, 2017, 2018 and a large-scale catastrophic earthquake exercise in 2023.
- Senior government leadership is provided with communication tools, access to systems and means to connect immediately after a Catastrophic event. Processes and procedures are in place to help facilitate decision making and build situational awareness.
- Every ministry has identified the critical services they provide and has business continuity plans and programs in place to recover business despite the hazard. Consideration for catastrophic planning is included in their development. Each Ministry has a Ministry Operations Centre (MOC), which would activate to support their ministries should business continuity plans be overwhelmed. In the event of a catastrophic earthquake, all MOCs would activate in support of government continuity.
- The province has approved more than \$1.6 billion for seismic upgrades or replacements at 63 schools since 2017 and more than \$5 million annually for seismic retrofits and upgrades to existing structures and new bridges and highways.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/06/2024

Provincial Disaster Preparedness

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- As part of the implementation of the new Emergency and Disaster Management Act, EMCR is updating the All-Hazard Plan as a first step to update the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and working with ministries responsible for hazard-specific risk assessments, emergency management plans and business continuity plans.
- The new legislation also regulates entities for emergency management training and exercising, ensuring that they are included in emergency plans and programs. EMCR provides leadership and guidance for emergency management training and standards and works closely with technical training institutions and emergency management training providers to build provincial capacity for emergency response and recovery operations.
- Within the contracted services from post-secondary service providers, local authorities and First Nations communities can access training, consisting of emergency management, emergency support services, and search rescue training. During the 2023/24 fiscal year this amounted to over 225 courses, reaching more than 8,500 participants.
- EMCR has a Multi-Year Provincial Emergency Management Exercise Program outlining key exercise priorities based on known hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities. The intent of this Program is to incrementally test key core capabilities, identify areas requiring follow-up action for continuous improvement and strengthen the preparedness of ministries responding to a wide range of hazards before disaster strikes.
- Successful exercises were conducted in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2023. In 2023, this included Exercise Coastal Response, a provincial catastrophic preparedness exercise that included over 1500 participants and 50 agencies. The current exercise program 2023 to 2028 includes a continuation of tabletop and live play activities to improve provincial disaster preparedness.
- EMCR also manages the Provincial Business Continuity program to support alignment to core policy and legislative requirements by providing leadership and guidance across ministries, including support to Business Continuity Advisors within each ministry to reduce risk to critical government services and ensure continuity of operations.

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- EMCR also regularly conducts after action reviews to incorporate lessons learned from exercises and disasters into emergency management programs, policies, and plans.

Background:

- Work on the CEMP commenced following the release of EDMA and is expected to culminate with a revised All Hazard Plan by ^{Advice/Recommendations}
- Partners included in the delivery of training including the Justice Institute of BC, ICS Canada, Rescue Canada, and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.
- Business continuity plans of ministries are tested internally on an annual basis and EMCR leads bi-annual cross-government exercises to enhance provincial preparedness.
- EMCR provides support to First Nations, local authorities, and other agencies by creating publicly available tools, templates, and guidance to guide preparedness efforts across the province.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/13/2024

EDMA Introduction

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Under B.C.'s new emergency management framework, people and communities are safer and better prepared for the increasingly severe emergencies and disasters the Province is experiencing due to climate change.
- B.C.'s new Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) has a focus on disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, recovery and climate adaptation and is the most comprehensive and forward-looking emergency management legislation in Canada.
- EDMA became law on November 8, 2023. New powers and tools are now available to the Province and local authorities, while many of the new obligations will be brought into force by regulation.
- The first regulation, the Emergency and Disaster Management Regulation (EDMR), was effective November 15, 2023. This regulation was designed to ensure there were no gaps in civil liability protections for volunteers.
- We know some communities are concerned about capacity and some people are concerned about the preservation of rights and freedoms. These powers within the legislation that should be used only when absolutely necessary.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness is supporting local authorities, First Nations and search and rescue organizations in implementing the new legislation including the development of new tools, guidance and templates, capacity funding for Indigenous engagement, providing advice and answering technical questions.

Background:

Public safety providers / search and rescue

- The EDMA provides eligibility for protection from legal proceedings, and enables employment protection, for volunteers registered with the Provincial Administrator. In addition, Ground Search and Rescue Groups who are authorized as a Public Safety Provider (PSP) are also provided protection from legal proceedings.

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- All Ground Search and Rescue Groups have been invited by the Provincial Administrator to apply for authorization as a PSP at their convenience and discretion.
- To accommodate the Ground Search and Rescue Groups which do not wish to be authorized as a PSP, an alternative deployment process under Section 32.4 (a) of EDMA will be established. Until this is established, all Ground Search and Rescue Groups regardless of registration as PSPs will continue to be deployed as requested by requesting agencies.
- The EDMA allows the Provincial Administrator to establish “standards, protocols, and procedures” with respect to the recruitment, management, training, registration, and deployment of volunteers. This will support responder and public safety across the province.
- Regional Operations staff have established processes for consulting with the BC Search and Rescue Association, as the representative of the Ground Search and Rescue Groups, on policy development.
- The Provincial Administrator can deploy volunteers registered with the Provincial Administrator, or authorize groups registered as PSPs to deploy volunteers. Registration is also key to the availability of civil liability and employment protections created by the EDMA.

Local authority obligations and autonomy

- Local authorities have raised concerns that the Province is requiring substantial new work related to risk assessment and planning.
- While the EDMA provides more detail around the completion of risk assessments, emergency management plans and business continuity plans, these requirements were already largely in place under the existing *Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation* (LAEMR).
 - LAEMR section 2 (1) requires local authorities to reflect in their emergency management plans the potential emergencies that could affect their jurisdiction and an assessment of the relative risk of occurrence and potential impacts on people and property. This would require an assessment of risks, like that required by the EDMA.
 - LAEMR section 2 (3) requires local authority to include specific components in their emergency management plans, many of which are like those in the EDMA.
 - LAEMR section 2 (3)(g) requires local authorities to establish priorities for restoring essential services during an emergency, which is a key component in developing a business continuity plan.

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- There are perceptions that the EDMA results in a loss of local autonomy in managing emergencies. While the origin of this perception is unknown, it is false.
- Local authorities retain the authority to manage emergencies within their jurisdictions. Local authorities now have access to recovery powers for use in declared recovery periods as well as the suite of existing and new response powers.

Penalties and enforcement

- Citizens in largely rural areas have raised concerns around penalties and enforcement of orders under the EDMA. There are misunderstandings related to when penalties will be issued, the amount of those penalties and the overall approach to enforcement of the Act.
- Enforcement of emergency orders has not changed under the EDMA. Government's priority is to obtain compliance through public education and awareness rather than enforcement.
- When it is necessary to consider penalties, enforcement officers can issue violation tickets under the *Offence Act* for amounts far below the maximum monetary penalties established by the EDMA.
 - Default violation tickets are \$2,000 plus a \$300 victim surcharge, for a total ticketed amount of \$2,300.
 - Historically, lower amounts have been prescribed for certain event-specific offences (e.g., "fail to stop for police officer" during the 2021 atmospheric river event was \$200 plus \$30, for a total ticketed amount of \$230).
 - Consideration of lower event-specific violation ticket amounts will occur whenever the province is dealing with a significant emergency.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/29/2024

Implementation of the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Under B.C.'s new emergency management framework, people and communities are safer and better prepared for the increasingly severe emergencies and disasters the Province is experiencing due to climate change.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) became law on November 8, 2023.
- EDMA implementation will be phased in. New powers and tools are now available to the Province and local authorities while new requirements, such as the updated obligations for risk assessments and emergency management plans for local authorities, come into effect as future regulations are made.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) is supporting local authorities, First Nations and search and rescue organizations in implementing the new legislation with new tools, guidance and templates, capacity funding to local authorities and First Nations to support Indigenous engagement requirements, and responses to technical questions.
- EMCR is also leading work on development of a provincial Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment and updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan to support EDMA implementation.

Background:

- Key EDMA implementation activities are outlined below. This is in addition to ongoing implementation support provided by the Partnerships, Engagement and Legislation Division and Regional Operations in answering questions and providing presentations to partner groups.

Regulation Development

- The focus in the coming months will be on developing regulations for government ministries, regulations to define 'treaty area', and other housekeeping regulations. EMCR is developing these regulations in partnership with other ministries and through consultation and cooperation with First Nations.

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- Broad engagement on regulations for local authorities and post-emergency financial assistance ran from October 2023 through January 2024. “What we Heard” reports on these consultations are planned for release in spring 2024.

Development of Tools, Guidance and Templates

- Three plain language videos have been released to provide: (1) an overview of the EDMA, (2) a summary of the EDMA risk assessment concept, and (3) an explanation of the new recovery period concept. Additionally, a series of webinars provided jointly with the BC Association of Emergency Managers was recorded and is accessible from EMCR’s website.
- EMCR has released four “factsheets” on: (1) Indigenous engagement requirements, (2) the phased implementation of the EDMA, (3) multijurisdictional emergency management organizations, and (4) the definition of “emergency” in EDMA.
- EMCR has released three longer-form guidance documents on: (1) states of local emergency, (2) EDMA response and recovery powers, and (3) post-event reporting requirements. Forms have also been developed to support local authorities with states of local emergency and post-event reporting.
- Work is underway on other key guidance and templates, including: (1) an in-depth guide on Indigenous engagement requirements, (2) a long form guide and templates for recovery periods, and (3) guidance and templates for evacuations.
- As the risk assessment and planning features of the EDMA are brought into effect through regulations, guidance and templates for risk assessments and planning will also be developed.

Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program

- The Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program (IERFP) provides funding to local authorities and First Nations for the implementation of the Indigenous engagement requirements within EDMA.
- The funding is provided to assist First Nations and local authorities to engage in activities focused on consultation and cooperation, relationship building, planning, reconciliation and capacity building and agreement building.

Risk Assessments and Emergency Management Plans

- EMCR is leading development of a provincial scale Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment (DCRRA). The DCRRA will be developed in alignment with the risk assessment requirements set out in EDMA and will contribute to the development of risk assessment tools and guidance for regulated entities.

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- EMCR is also beginning development of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) required under EDMA. The first stage of this work is the refresh of the all-hazards plan to meet the new emergency management plan requirements set out in EDMA. This work will contribute to the development of emergency management plan tools and guidance for regulated entities.

Contact: Keith Preston Partnerships, Engagement and Legislation Division	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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EDMA-specific KMs for Estimates

Local authority downloading

1. Re: consultation and cooperation requirements

E.g.:

- *“The Province is downloading its consultation requirements on local governments.”*
- *“Local governments and First Nations don’t have the resources we need to consult in the way the EDMA requires.”*

KMs:

- There is no downloading here: the Province has obligations to consult and cooperate with Indigenous governing bodies, as do other types of regulated entities like local authorities, public sector agencies, and critical infrastructure owners.
- This isn’t about shifting *who* is responsible for consulting. It’s about ensuring *all* the key decision-makers and actors in emergency management are talking to each other and working together, which naturally enhances coordination and promotes public safety.
- In December, our government announced the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program to help local governments and First Nations get this process started in a good way.
- Through this program, each B.C. First Nation is eligible to receive \$45,500 and each local government is eligible to receive between \$40,000 and \$65,000, with these funds intended to support relationship-building and consultation in the first full fiscal year that the EDMA is in place.

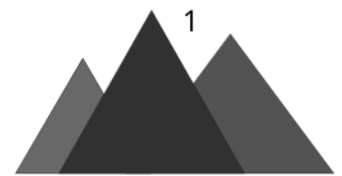
2. Re: service level requirements

E.g.:

- *“Regional districts aren’t set up to provide response services, let alone planning over vast areas. This should be the Province’s job.”*
- *“The EDMA requires local governments to ensure basic needs like warming centres are provided.”*

KMs:

- The EDMA is a framework for good emergency management across the province, but it does not create service level requirements for local authorities.



- This legislation is about ensuring we're all thinking about and planning for the types of measures that might be needed in each phase of emergency management.
- It doesn't mandate that local authorities take particular response actions (for example, providing emergency warming centres)—rather, it enables local authorities to take certain actions *during a state of local emergency* or *during a declared local recovery period* that local authorities feel are *necessary*.
- We encourage local authorities to look at the full range of options available to them—including other provincial legislation and working with other provincial ministries on issues important to them—and we view emergency powers as a last resort.

Compliance and enforcement

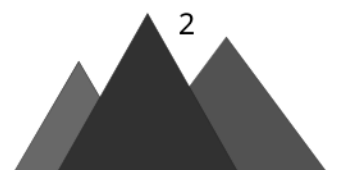
1. Re: monetary penalties

E.g.:

- *"Homeowners are going to be slapped with \$100,000 fines for doing the right thing and using their skills and equipment to defend their communities."*

KMs:

- Orders are binding—whether put in place by the Province or, as is more common, by a local authority. This means that if you're told to evacuate, it's time to head for safety.
- The government's preference, when it comes to compliance and enforcement, is to use education, awareness, and other soft approaches.
- Just like the former EPA did, the EDMA includes a maximum monetary penalty for offences committed under the Act.
- This is common across provincial legislation, including legislation that has nothing to do with emergencies or people's rights and freedoms.
- The \$100,000 maximum penalty in the EDMA *is* higher than the \$10,000 maximum from the EPA. That reflects the fact that the EPA was drafted more than 30 years ago. \$100,000 maximum penalties are found in dozens of other B.C. statutes.
- The Province does not routinely use the maximum penalty. It exists for certainty: it's best for everyone—the government, B.C. citizens, and the Courts—to know the maximum consequences for offences, rather than leaving it open for prosecutors and the Courts to decide.
- In the relatively rare circumstances where penalties are used to deal with offences, we have a link from the EDMA into the *Offence Act* and enforcement officers (like the police) can issue violation tickets for far less than the maximum penalty under



the EDMA. The mechanism for doing this is the same as when police issue a speeding ticket.

- *If asked:*

- The current amount of a violation ticket for an offence under the EDMA would be \$2,300. (This consists of a \$2,000 fine and a \$300 victim surcharge levy.)
- The Violation Ticket Administration and Fines Regulation made under the *Offence Act* can be amended to establish fine amounts that correspond to specific offences. For example, during the 2021 atmospheric river event, tickets of \$230 (consisting of a \$200 fine and a \$30 victim surcharge levy) were authorized for four specific offences related to travel restrictions put in place during that event.
- The ministry will be analyzing options for different (including *lower*) violation ticket amounts when it begins work on compliance and enforcement regulations under the EDMA.

2. Re: imprisonment

E.g.:

- *“Homeowners are going to be put in jail for doing the right thing and using their skills and equipment to defend their communities.”*

KMs:

- Orders are binding—whether put in place by the Province or, as is more common, by a local authority. This means that if you’re told to evacuate, it’s time to head for safety.
- The government’s preference, when it comes to compliance and enforcement, is to use education, awareness, and other soft approaches.
- Just like the former EPA did, the EDMA includes a maximum one-year term of imprisonment for offences committed under the Act. There was no change to this maximum when we moved from the EPA to the EDMA.
- This is common across provincial legislation, including legislation that has nothing to do with emergencies or people’s rights and freedoms.
- The Province does not routinely use the maximum penalty. It exists for certainty: it’s best for everyone—the government, B.C. citizens, and the Courts—to know the maximum consequences for offences, rather than leaving it open for prosecutors and the Courts to decide.
 - *If asked:*

- We have no record of prison terms ever having been sought in response to offences under B.C.'s emergency management legislation.
- That doesn't mean there's no reason to include that possibility in legislation—it just goes to reinforce that we prioritize softer approaches.

3. Re: implications on local governments and local government staff

E.g.:

- *“My regional district is going to face \$1M fines and my staff face \$100,000 fines for giving people access permits to temporarily reenter evacuation zones.”*

KMs:

- Local authorities have flexibility under the EDMA (see next set of KMs) to control the scope of evacuation orders.
- Local authorities and their staff are not committing an offence under the EDMA when they give people access permits to temporarily reenter evacuation zones, so they are not liable to fines or other penalties when they do this. In fact, not only are they not committing offences—they are allowed to do this.

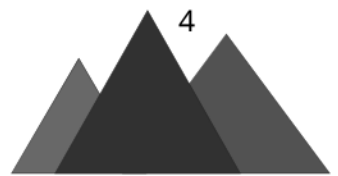
4. Re: flexibility (incl. local authority flexibility) to control the scope of evacuation orders

E.g.:

- *“We used to be able to give people access permits to temporarily reenter evacuation zones, but the EDMA put a stop to that.”*

KMs:

- There was no change from the EPA when it comes to how the scope of evacuation orders can be set.
- When an evacuation order is made, it can be written to allow certain people (like response personnel, people who need to protect critical infrastructure, or others with valid reasons) to remain in or to enter evacuation zones.
- It's up to the authority that issues the order—that could be the minister, or it could be a local authority, depending on who declared the state of emergency—to draft the order with those scope considerations in mind.
- For certainty, local authorities can issue evacuation orders that provide for things like temporary re-entry using access permits, and the local authority can then issue access permits to people who, in their opinion, have a valid reason to temporarily re-enter an area covered by the evacuation order.



UBCM request for further engagement with local governments on EDMA regulations

1. Re: request for a joint working group

E.g.:

- *“Local governments and the UBCM have asked for more consultation before regulations are made.”*

KMs:

- On March 4, I received a letter from UBCM President Trish Mandewo that requests a joint working group to address the development of regulations under the EDMA.
- We worked closely with local governments on the development of the EDMA through a joint working group called the UBCM Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee.
- While that committee is no longer meeting, I think setting up a new joint working group is a great idea and my ministry will be in touch with the UBCM to work towards some terms of reference and to identify potential participants.
- We intend to move forward with a limited set of regulations in the next few months, but those will not be focused on local governments.
- Regulations for local authorities and the modernized disaster financial assistance program are not part of that limited set we’re intending to bring forward in the remaining months of this mandate, and those are the types of regulations for which continued engagement through a joint working group will be most valuable.

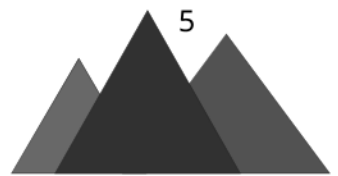
2. Re: desire for local governments to see draft regulations

E.g.:

- *“Local governments want the same access that First Nations have to draft legislation. It’s imperative that mayors, councils, chairs, and boards get to see the draft regulations before they become law.”*

KMs:

- Government is still in the early phases of working in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples on a range of legislation, and the EDMA was one of those pieces of legislation that was done in close consultation and cooperation with First Nations Peoples.
- When the government works with Indigenous Peoples in that sort of process, we are working specifically to respect and uphold our obligations under section 3 of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* to take all measures



necessary to ensure the laws of the Province are consistent with the UN Declaration.

- That's a very specific obligation, and through the Interim Approach established by the Declaration Act Secretariat, it necessitates the sharing of confidential draft legislation.
- When we work with local governments, the context is different. We work closely with them on matters of policy and ensure those policy discussions have a bearing on how legislation is developed.
- With the exception of the sharing that takes place through the Interim Approach, the government does not broadly circulate materials subject to Cabinet confidentiality or solicitor-client privilege, including draft legislation.
- When the EDMA was being developed, we shared and discussed a confidential consultation draft with the UBCM President's Committee.
- I envision a similar approach will be taken as we work towards EDMA regulations of significant relevance to local governments.

3. Re: timeline for regulations

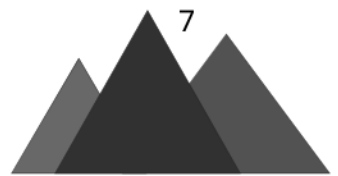
E.g.:

- *"When are local governments going to have to find the resources needed to fulfil their risk assessment and planning obligations under the EDMA?"*

KMs:

- We intend to move forward with a limited set of regulations in the next few months, but those will not be focused on local governments.
 - *If pressed:*
 - We will not be bringing regulations for local authorities forward in this mandate.
 - Currently, we expect these regulations will come in ^{Advice/Recommendations} after further engagement through a joint working group with UBCM and continued consultation and cooperation with First Nations.
- This spring, we'll be releasing a "What We Heard" report to summarize the feedback we collected during our four months of engagement on local authority and disaster financial assistance regulations.
- Many of the EDMA's risk assessment and planning requirements for local authorities existed under the former EPA, and our hope is that the good work done previously by local authorities can be built upon to prepare the risk assessment and planning deliverables contemplated under the EDMA.
 - *If asked:*

- EDMA “emergency management plans” had analogs in EPA s. 6 “emergency plans” (key difference is EDMA requires plans to consider the mitigation phase).
- EDMA “risk assessments” had analogs in Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (LAEMR) s. 2(1) requirements for emergency plans to reflect “the potential emergencies and disasters that could affect any part of the jurisdictional area of the local authority and the local authority’s assessment of the relative risk of occurrence and the potential impact on people and property of these emergencies and disasters.”
- EDMA “business continuity plans” had analogs in LAEMR s. 2(3) requirements for emergency plans to “establish the priorities for restoring essential services provided by the local authority” and to “recommend to service providers the priorities for restoring essential services not provided by the local authority.”



2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/26/2024

Emergency and Disaster Management Act Regulations

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- On November 8, 2023, the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) received Royal Assent. While many powers and duties under the Act are now in force, some components of the Act will only become in force once regulations are implemented.
- One regulation was implemented under the EDMA shortly after Royal Assent, which was necessary to avoid a gap in liability protection and to give effect to employment protection for certain volunteers that work with EMCR.
- Other regulations under the EDMA will be phased in over time. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness will continue consultation and cooperation with First Nations and engagement with other partners to inform the development of regulations.
- Regulations will give effect to planning requirements for lead ministers, municipalities, regional districts, and critical infrastructure owners, as well as new rules for post-emergency financial assistance, compliance and enforcement, and other technical rules.

Background:

- Below are details on major regulation streams. Regulations described below are expected to be deposited from [Advice/Recommendations](#) , with a focus on lead ministers, treaty area and other housekeeping regulations before [Advice/Recommendations](#)
- Broad engagement on regulations for local authorities and post-emergency financial assistance closed January 31, 2024. This included written submissions in response to a public discussion paper, engagement sessions with First Nations, local governments, and small businesses, as well as online forums. “What We Heard” reports will be published in [Advice/Recommendations](#)
- Volunteer regulation: This regulation was deposited on November 15, 2023, and was necessary to avoid a gap in liability protection and to provide continuity in terms of how EMCR works with volunteers. EMCR has committed to continue to consult and cooperate with First Nations on the contents of this regulation and to consider options for changes if necessary.

Confidential

- **“Treaty area”**: The EDMA uses the term “treaty area” to establish where consultation and cooperation must occur with Modern Treaty Nations and where certain agreements can be established with them. These areas will be determined in consultation with the relevant Nations and prescribed in regulation.
- **Definition of “person”**: Like many statutes, EDMA uses the term “person” to refer to both individual human beings, as well as other entities, such as corporate “persons”. The use of this term in relation to Indigenous governing bodies (IGB) is nuanced. EMCR is consulting with First Nations partners and rights holders to ensure that throughout the statute IGBs are included, or excluded, as appropriate, in instances where the term “person” is used.
- **Lead ministers**: Certain ministers will be assigned planning requirements in relation to specific hazards such as wildfire and drought. Cross-government engagement has been conducted and consultations are currently underway with Indigenous partners on these regulations.
- **Local Authorities**: This regulation will bring in planning requirements for municipalities and regional districts, set a scope for regional district planning and risk assessment and may provide rules related to local emergency management organizations or multijurisdictional emergency management organizations.
- **Critical Infrastructure**: This regulation will define critical infrastructure for the purposes of the EDMA. It will also bring planning obligations into place for in-scope critical infrastructure owners. Current plans are to begin with a focus on three sectors: energy and utilities, transportation, and information and communication technology.
- **Post-Emergency Financial Assistance**: This regulation will establish new rules for financial assistance following non-insurable losses experienced from an eligible emergency. It will also establish rules for compensation for damages resulting from provincial or local exercises of emergency powers.
- **Compliance and Enforcement**: This regulation will detail rules for compliance and enforcement, such as cost recoveries.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 06/02/2024

EDMA Indigenous Engagement Requirements (IER) Engagement

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) includes Indigenous engagement requirements (IERs) for regulated entities to consult and cooperate with Indigenous governing bodies (IGBs) and to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and culturally safe practices across all phases of emergency management.
- Now that the EDMA is in force, municipalities and regional districts must start engaging IGBs to identify areas for consultation and cooperation. During the response and recovery phases, consultation and cooperation is required when a regulated entity plans to use certain land-based response or recovery powers.
- Once regulations for municipalities and regional districts are in force, they will be required to consult and cooperate with IGBs on risk assessments and emergency management plans.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) is developing a detailed IER guidance document in collaboration with internal and external partners including the Declaration Act Secretariat, First Nations Leadership Council, and emergency management practitioners.
- The Indigenous Engagement Requirement Funding Program was announced in December 2023 to support First Nations and local authorities as they consider how to implement these new requirements.
- EMCR will be engaging with regulated entities at all levels to ensure that there is a strong understanding of the EDMA IERs ahead of the upcoming 2024 hazard season.

Background:

- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) came into force on November 8th, 2023. EMCR developed EDMA in consultation and cooperation with First Nations as required by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act) and pursuant to action 1.10 of the 2022-2027 Declaration Act Action Plan. The Declaration Act requires the B.C. government to, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples in B.C., take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of B.C. are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Confidential

- The intended objective of the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program is to make funding available to First Nations and local governments to support the implementation of Indigenous Engagement Requirements, and intended outcomes including:
 - Relationship building across jurisdictions through consultation and cooperation with Indigenous governing bodies.
 - Incorporating Indigenous knowledge and cultural safety across emergency management practices.
 - Respecting of the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.
 - Enhancing emergency management outcomes for the safety of all.
 - Providing policy improvements that reflect the lived experience of Indigenous peoples and address the disproportionate impacts on Indigenous Peoples during emergency events.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last Updated: 02/19/2024

Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* emphasizes the importance of consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, and it sets out a suite of engagement requirements for regulated entities.
- Through development of the Act, we heard from Indigenous communities and local authorities that capacity funding will be required to implement the legislation.
- On December 15th we announced the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program as one way we are supporting implementation of the legislation.
- This funding program is intended to be flexible in that recipients can choose one or more eligible activities, as long as the scope of work is related to implementing Indigenous Engagement Requirements.
- Information about the funding program, including a Program Guide, is available online.

Background:

- On December 15, 2023, the Ministry announced \$18M in funding that will be delivered through the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program.
- First Nations in BC are eligible to receive \$45,500 through a signed contribution agreement.
- Local authorities are eligible to receive a funding amount between \$40,000 to \$65,000, reflecting that local authorities vary in the number of traditional territories that overlap their areas of jurisdiction.
- Funding provided to local authorities and First Nations is intended to:
 - support relationship-building across jurisdictions through consultation and co-operation with Indigenous governing bodies,
 - ensure the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and cultural safety across emergency management practices,

Confidential

- support policy improvements that reflect the lived experience of Indigenous Peoples, and
 - address the disproportionate effects on Indigenous Peoples during emergency events.
- Funding award letters and contribution agreements were sent to all First Nations and local authorities by January 22, 2024, and must be returned by March 31, 2024; however, recipients have until March 31, 2025, to use the funding for their chosen eligible activities.
 - Recipients may choose to pool funds to work together to achieve shared priorities, and to report out collectively.
 - A mid-term survey of recipients intended to take place this summer will help inform potential program adjustments, and decisions about future years of funding.
 - The funding program is consistent with the minister’s mandate letter and the *Declaration Act* Action Plan, in that the ministry is striving to “establish Indigenous Peoples as true partners and leaders in emergency management by including First Nations from the beginning and at all levels of planning, decision making, and implementation”.

Key Facts and Figures:

- An Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program informational page on the Ministry website was added on December 15, 2023, and includes the Program Guide and other related resources.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act – EMCR Implementation

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- In November 2019, the Province of British Columbia enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. The actions to achieve the objectives of the Act are articulated in the 5-year “Declaration Act Action Plan” (Action Plan), released March 2022.
- Actions specific to EMCR include:
 - 1.10 Co-develop modernized emergency management legislation (replacing the *Emergency Program Act*) with First Nations. This action is led by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR).
 - Supporting the work led by Ministry of Forests (MOF) on Action 2.11 to integrate traditional practices and cultural uses of fire into wildfire prevention and land management practices and support the reintroduction of strategized burning.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) received royal assent on November 8, 2023. Key policy changes were introduced through a phased approach with recovery and response-related consultation and cooperation requirements in effect immediately.
- EMCR developed the modernized emergency management legislation using a distinctions-based approach. A distinction-based approach means that the Province acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities and concerns of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, while respecting and acknowledging their unique cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments.
- EMCR consulted and cooperated with the First Nations Leadership Council, Modern Treaty Nations, and First Nation Rights and Title holders on the development of EDMA. EMCR also engaged Métis Nation BC, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Indigenous Services Canada, the First Nations Health Authority, and the First Nations Emergency Services Society.

Background:

Status of Action 1.10 is estimated at 65-70% complete. Outstanding components include the co-development of regulations, and related policies. The development of regulations will be phased in and is expected to continue over the next couple of years.

March 4, 2024

Confidential

Key Policy Changes

- Key policy changes that emerged during the development of EDMA include:
 - The affirmation of Indigenous peoples as decision-makers not stakeholders.
 - Addressing the complexities of co-management, including clarifying roles and responsibilities.
 - Requiring consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs) through all stages of emergency management.
 - The incorporation of definitions shaped by Indigenous peoples and organizations.
 - Requiring that emergency management plans consider cultural safety and humility.
 - Requiring government ministers, municipalities, regional districts, critical infrastructure owners, and public sector agencies to include any available Indigenous knowledge in risk assessments and emergency management plans.
 - Requiring the protections of Indigenous knowledge if Indigenous knowledge is provided in confidence.
- Municipalities and regional districts must work with IGBs to identify the areas of an IGB's traditional territory or treaty lands that fall within the local authority's emergency management authority.
- Once these areas have been identified municipalities and regional districts are required to consult and cooperate with IGBs on the development of emergency management plans and before taking specific response and recovery actions.

EDMA Implementation

- The Province is providing \$18 million to communities through the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program intended to:
 - support relationship-building across jurisdictions through consultation and co-operation with Indigenous governing bodies.
 - ensure the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and cultural safety across emergency management practices.
 - support policy improvements that reflect the lived experience of Indigenous Peoples.
 - address the disproportionate effects on Indigenous Peoples during emergency events.
- Collaboration with partners including the First Nations Leadership Council, the Declaration Act Secretariat, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and Indigenous Emergency Management practitioners have been integral to supporting the development of several guidance documents to support the implementation of modernized legislation.

Contact: Ian Foss

Strategic Partnerships and Reconciliation Initiatives

Mobile: ^{Government Financial}Information

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/09/2024

First Nations Community Support

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) provides First Nations communities with emergency management services and supports on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).
- To strengthen overall service delivery to First Nations communities, EMCR maintains several partnership agreements including with the Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG), First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS) and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT).
- In 2022/23, the Province provided \$47.1 million to First Nations through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) and contributed funding to Indigenous partner organizations including FNESS, NVIT, FNLC, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centers (BCAAFC), and the Emergency Planning Secretariat (EPS).

Background:

Agreements

Bilateral Service Agreement

- In April 2017, the Province signed a ten-year \$29.6 million bilateral service agreement with ISC to deliver emergency management services on First Nations reserves equivalent to services delivered to local governments. The bilateral agreement term ends on March 31, 2027. EMCR, ISC and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) are scheduled to begin negotiations to inform a new multilateral agreement to replace the current bilateral in spring, 2024.

Tripartite MoU

- In 2019, as a companion agreement to the bilateral agreement, the FNLC, ISC and BC (represented by EMCR and the Ministry of Forests) signed a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work collaboratively to advance meaningful recognition and enhance the capacity of First Nations across all four pillars of emergency management. EMCR provided \$555,000 in 2022/23 to FNLC to support ongoing implementation of the MoU and support their capacity to engage First Nations on the development of a new multilateral agreement to replace the current bilateral agreement. Of note, MoU meetings are currently on hold while the multilateral negotiations are underway.

February 6, 2024

Confidential

TNG CEMA

- The TNG Collaborative Emergency Management Agreement (CEMA) was initially signed by TNG, EMCR and ISC in 2018. In 2022, the agreement was renewed and in 2023 the Province provided \$1 million to support agreement implementation and \$5 million to support planning and design work for a nation-led emergency center.

Letters of Understanding with FNHA, FNESS and NVIT

- To strengthen collaboration on shared operational and strategic emergency management priorities and initiatives, while integrating community-centric and culturally safe approaches, EMCR renewed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) with FNHA in 2022 and developed new LoUs with FNESS and NVIT in 2023.

Key Facts and Figures:

Summary of Provincial Funding to First Nations and Indigenous Organizations

Recipient	Amount	Year Provided	Purpose
FNLC	\$555k	2021-2023	Ongoing implementation of the Tripartite MoU and capacity support for multilateral negotiations
	\$555k	2021-23	EDMA Development – collaboration and consultation
FNESS	\$10M	2022-23	To support First Nations communities with funding applications, improvements to technology (e.g. Lightship), training, and additional community capacity
	\$850k	2022-23	To support participation of First Nations in provincial and regional risk assessments and engagement on disaster risk reduction data
First Nations and Local Authorities	\$45.5k	2023	Provided to each community to support the implementation of the Indigenous Engagement Requirements (IER) in EDMA
TNG	\$6M	2023	CEMA renewal over four years and planning for an Emergency Management Centre.
BCAAFC	\$255k	2022-23	To plan and deliver services to support First Nations impacted by extreme weather events
EPS	\$200k	2022-23	Administered through Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance to EPS for emergency management initiatives
CEPF	\$47.1M	2017-2024	Cumulative funding provided to First Nations through CEPF since 2017

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Division: Partnerships, Engagement, and Legislation

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/08/2024

T̓ilhqot'in National Government (TNG) Collaborative Emergency Management Agreement (CEMA)

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- A renewed, five-year Collaborative Emergency Management Agreement between the Ministry, BC Wildfire Service, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Indigenous Services Canada, and the T̓ilhqot'in (sill-ko-teen) National Government was signed in 2022.
- Implementation of this agreement is improving the relationship between government and Indigenous peoples as the proposed outcomes focus on Indigenous community-led emergency management, Indigenous self-determination, and community resilience.
- T̓ilhqot'in (sill-ko-teen) leadership in emergency management was again exemplified last August as the nation stood up Rustic Group Lodging at Riske Creek to ensure that T̓ilhqot'in members and neighboring nations have a culturally safe environment in the event of evacuation.
- In June 2023, the Province announced financial investments totalling \$6M to support implementation of the agreement, and to support feasibility studies for key infrastructure priorities in the territory.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* enables to the Province to enter into agreements with Indigenous governing bodies, including Collaborative Emergency Management Agreements, Coordination Agreements, and *Declaration Act* decision making agreements.

Background:

- This tripartite CEMA was originally signed in 2018 following the 2017 wildfires and was renewed in 2022 for a five (5) year term.
- A funding announcement in June 2023 highlighted the Province's investments of \$1M to support remaining years of agreement implementation and \$5M to support feasibility studies related to development of emergency management infrastructure.

Confidential

- A nation-led emergency centre is a key priority for the T̓ilhqot̓in Nation and was noted in both the original and renewed agreements. The need for an Emergency Centre to support regional emergency management needs was identified in the 2022 CEMA, the T̓ilhqot̓in's 2017 *The Fires Awakened Us* report, and in the 2018 Chapman-Abbott report.
- Since March 2023 investment into the feasibility study and planning work for the emergency management centre, the TNG has been engaging with their communities, and stakeholders to continue scoping and planning efforts.
- On August 24, 2023, TNG announced that new evacuee accommodation was available at Riske Creek with temporary lodgings available for up to 100 members and other Indigenous peoples in the event of an evacuation. Although no evacuees were hosted on site, TNG was able to host BC Wildfire Service firefighters, which provided an opportunity to test the facility.
- TNG, BC, and Canada are also implementing the Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement, and through that agreement will be celebrating the ten (10) year anniversary of the declaration of Aboriginal title this June.

Key Facts and Figures:

- The Province signed the CEMA without a five (5) year funding commitment confirmed but provided \$280,000 for agreement implementation in Year 1 (2022/23); the remaining four years of the agreement are supported with \$1M of implementation funding.
- The federal government committed to \$250,000 annually to support agreement implementation, in addition to other program-based investments such as TNG's Wildfire Capacity Building Project.

Contact: Devon Ramsay Partnerships, Engagement & Legislation Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/07/2024

Regional Partnerships, Integrated Disaster Council of British Columbia, and Multijurisdictional Emergency Management Organizations

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Regional partnerships support multijurisdictional emergency management planning needs to strengthen collaboration and support continuous improvement.
- EMCR participates in the following regional partnerships:
 - The Integrated Partnership for Regional Emergency Management (IPREM) in Metro Vancouver was established through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in April 2009 with the Metro Vancouver Regional District on behalf of twenty-one municipalities, one Treaty First Nation, and one electoral area.
 - The Regional Emergency Management Partnership (REMP) was established in March 2016 through an MOU with the Capital Regional District (CRD) on behalf of thirteen municipalities and three electoral areas on Southern Vancouver Island.
- EMCR also works with several organizations to support capacity within BC communities. For example, EMCR Co-Chairs the Integrated Disaster Council of British Columbia (IDCBC), an inter-agency partnership with a variety of unique, not-for-profit, non-governmental organizations, and charities that offer a wide range of services during and after disasters.
- Multijurisdictional Emergency Management Organizations (MJEMOs), as laid out in the new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*, aim to support cross-jurisdictional collaboration in all four phases of emergency management between any combination of the Province, local governments, and Indigenous governing bodies.
- MJEMOs are inherently flexible structures by design. This is to allow members of the partnership to tailor the structure of their agreement to meet the specific needs of their distinct area. Their voluntary nature will nurture a positive sense of regional problem-solving and furthering collective emergency management capacity development.
- EMCR is collaborating with local partners to develop MJEMO guidance tools.

Confidential

Background:

- The regional partnership model supports cross-jurisdictional capacity through cost-sharing arrangements, collaboration, and commitment from partners in a manner that respects autonomy of each signatory while working toward the common goal of strengthening regional emergency management.
- Pursuant to the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS), EMCR’s partnerships with NGOs and charities is coordinated through the IDCBC. IDCBC is governed by a Terms of Reference. Each partner retains the responsibility to deliver services according to their own mandates and to raise and/or acquire funds for their own purposes.
 - During operational periods, and when pre-approved, EMCR may cover eligible response and recovery expenses for member agencies to assist people affected by disasters within British Columbia. However, there is no fiscal impact to EMCR for co-chairing or hosting the IDCBC.
- Multijurisdictional Emergency Management Organizations (MJEMOs) are laid out in the BC *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* and a working group has been established to define the regulations underpinning the guidance for their creation and function.

Key Facts and Figures:

- The Province’s contribution for 2024-25 towards regional partnerships are:

Partnership	2023/24 Contribution
IPREM	\$173,000
REMP	\$125,000

Contact: Thomas Hansen Policy, Engagement, and Legislation	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/09/2024

Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council Task Force

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- In 2021, six major wildfires occurred throughout the Nlaka'pamux (ent-la-cap-um) homeland with catastrophic impacts to Nlaka'pamux communities. The Lytton Creek Complex wildfires resulted in significant structural impacts to the Lytton First Nation and the Village of Lytton.
- On July 11, 2021, BC and Canada wrote letters to Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council committing to work together in support of Lytton recovery.
- A tripartite Task Force and Leadership Table (BC, Canada and NNTC) have been established to support coordination of efforts to build back better.
- We are working with the Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council in a government-to-government relationship premised on the recognition and implementation of Nlaka'pamux (ent-la-cap-um) Nation title, rights, laws, and jurisdiction.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* enables the Province to enter into emergency management related agreements with Indigenous governing bodies, including Collaborative Emergency Management Agreements, Coordination Agreements, and *Declaration Act* decision-making agreements.

Background:

- The Nlaka'pamux Nation homeland includes sixteen First Nations spanning the Fraser, Thompson, and Nicola Rivers region.
- The Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council is a governing entity which currently represents interests of Boothroyd Indian Band, Lytton First Nation, Oregon Jack Creek Band, and Skuppah Indian Band.
- Through the Task Force and Leadership Table five (5) year priorities were endorsed in June 2023, covering subject areas such as strengthening our governance structures, coordinated emergency management, cultural heritage management, and housing.

February 9, 2024

Confidential

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness is working with the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (IRR) and other natural resource ministries to implement Commitment Letters in a coordinated manner that reflects commitments within other agreements.
- On June 28, 2023, the Land and Resource Decision Making Agreement (LRDMA) was signed between IRR and NNTC to advance reconciliation and to establish processes for land and resource decision-making that advance shared decision-making and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- The LRDMA includes a commitment to discuss a *Declaration Act* decision-making agreement that focuses on emergency management.

Key Facts and Figures:

- In the July 2021 Canada provided \$2M and the Province provided \$100,000 to Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council to begin implementation of the actions in the Commitment Letters.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/28/2024

Multilateral Negotiations to replace the current Bilateral Service Agreement

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- BC First Nations and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) have signalled an urgent need to replace the current bilateral service agreement between Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) for the delivery of emergency management services to First Nations communities in B.C.
- Under the current bilateral agreement, signed in 2017 for a ten-year term between the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), EMCR provides First Nations communities with the same suite of emergency services as those provided to local authorities.
- The current service agreement provides EMCR with approximately \$3 million in annual funding to deliver services and supports to First Nations communities across all four pillars of emergency management.
- EMCR is currently working in partnership with FNLC and ISC to develop a new emergency management agreement for First Nations communities that includes the Province, Canada and First Nations.

Background:

Current Bilateral and Trilateral Agreements

- In 2019, as a companion agreement to the bilateral service agreement, the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), ISC and BC (represented by EMCR and the Ministry of Forests) signed a Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work collaboratively to advance reconciliation and enhance the capacity of First Nations across all four pillars of emergency management.
- A Multilateral Negotiations Working Group (Working Group) was stood up on November 30, 2023, to develop a negotiations framework as a foundation to support negotiations. FNLC, EMCR, ISC and the Ministry of Forests participate in the Working Group.

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- Through the Working Group, the FNLC has proposed a four phased approach for the Multilateral Negotiations project:
Intergovernmental Communications
- EMCR sees a new multilateral service agreement as an opportunity to reflect First Nations' increased need for emergency management services and supports, define the roles and responsibilities of all service providers, and address the gap in funding for services that EMCR provides for First Nations over and above the existing agreement.
- FNLC has indicated a desire to complete multilateral negotiations by ^{Advice/Recommendations} ~~by~~ ^{To} meet this deadline, consensus on the scope of negotiations and mandates will need to be confirmed by all working group members prior to the onset of negotiations scheduled for ^{Advice/Recommendations} ~~for~~ ^{dations}

Key Facts and Figures:

- The bilateral agreement provides for contributions totalling \$29.6 million over its 10-year term. ISC provides approximately \$3 million to EMCR per year to support service provided under the agreement.
- In 2022/23, BC provided FNLC with \$555,000 in grant funding to support the ongoing implementation of the Tripartite MoU and FNLC's outreach to First Nations to inform a new multilateral agreement.

Contact: Carol McClintock Partnerships, Engagement & Legislation	Mobile: ^{Government Financial} Information
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/06/2024

2023 Wildfire Recovery

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Following the devastating fire events of 2023, EMCR introduced a dedicated operational and coordination staff to provide direct recovery contact and assistance to impacted communities.
- The dedicated wildfire recovery teams continue to work closely with impacted Regional Districts, Local Governments, and Indigenous Governing Bodies to assist and facilitate community recovery efforts.
- EMCR has provided more than \$2M through Disaster Recovery Expenditure Authorizations to enable impacted local authorities in communities with recovery activities and coordination.
- The 2023 EMCR wildfire recovery teams continue to work closely with Ministry partners and non-governmental organizations as the coordinating body to streamline recovery efforts.

Background:

- The 2023 wildfire season was the most devastating in BC's history, with more than 2.84 million hectares of forest and land burned from 2,256 fires.
- Structure losses were experienced in nine Regional Districts, eight First Nations and two local governments.
- Countless communities have experienced land-based impacts including impacts to infrastructure, economic activities, as well as cultural and traditional activities.

Key Facts and Figures:

High-Level Impact and Activities

- Information provided through the Office of the Fire Commissioner and Regional Districts confirm that as of March 6, 2024, 614 residential structures have been confirmed as either destroyed (507) or partially damaged (107).
- The Insurance Bureau of Canada estimates that the Okanagan and Shuswap area wildfires

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caused \$720M in insured damage.

- EMCR has established a Standing Committee on Community Recovery which is made up Ministry staff responsible for enabling work in the four pillars of community recovery – people and communities, economy, environment and infrastructure. The committee meets regularly to identify community recovery needs and address resourcing accordingly.

Regional Impacts and Activities

North

- Northern B.C. experienced significant land-based impacts from the 2023 wildfires, which lead to impacts on cultural significant structures such as trapper cabins and hunting structures as well as to economic activities such as timber tenure and tourism.
- Community recovery teams have made contact and provide support to 23 communities - 6 Regional Districts or Municipalities and 17 First Nations throughout Northern B.C.
- Recovery efforts are coordinated between Provincial Ministries, Federal Departments such as Indigenous Services Canada, contracted Community Recovery Managers, and multiple external organizations.
- While there were a small number of structure losses in the North during the 2023 wildfire season, clean-up and rebuild efforts are complicated by high rates of uninsurance and uncertainties for buildings on tenured property.
- EMCR continues to work with community organizations to address impacts to food supply because of loss of access to traditional food sources as well as relevant Ministry partners (Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development, and Innovation) to address economic impacts.
- While Ministry of Forests (FOR) is responsible for land-based recovery initiatives, EMCR continues to support in identification of impacts and referring this information to FOR.

Central

- The Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) and the Columbia-Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) experienced significant structure loss because of the McDougall and Bush Creek wildfires.
- Community recovery teams have made contact and provide support to 9 Regional Districts and Indigenous communities throughout the Okanagan, Shuswap, Caribou and South-East of B.C.
- This area experienced approximately 400 structure losses. The majority of these wildfire affected structures were uninsured or under-insured. As a result, much of the wildfire

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debris remains on the landscape.

- EMCR has worked with Ministry of Forests-Archaeology Branch and Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) to aggregate permitting processes.
- EMCR has worked closely with impacted communities and volunteer organizations to support successful transition to more permanent shelter from earlier ESS support.

Southwest

- The 2023 Wildfire Recovery team for the Southwest were initially engaged with two communities, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) and the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD).
- 85 properties were impacted, most of which are secondary homes, 4 have been identified as principal residences.
- The majority of impacted properties were underinsured or uninsured, therefore they are without the means to remove debris and begin to rebuild. A grant was provided to the Gun Lake community in SLRD for \$200K from a private donor to support households without insurance.
- Debris testing for contaminants such as asbestos, to ensure safe removal, also remains a barrier to recovery. There have been anecdotal reports of illegal dumping in the SLRD.
- For SLRD specifically, Gun Lake is a drinking water source; concerns raised include environmental and riparian area non-compliance. These have been discussed with the Regional District and Provincial partners regularly. Water testing was facilitated by EMCR to confirm low contamination risk (ongoing monitoring is in place). Next sampling is planned for week of March 11th, with results anticipated by the end of the month.
- Riparian area permits remain a requirement under WLRS regulations ^{Advice/Recommendations}
Advice/Recommendations

Funding Support

- As of March 5, 2024, the Disaster Recovery Division has approved 14 Disaster Recovery Expenditure Authorizations (DREA) for a total of \$2,007,528.06 since the DREA policy came into effect in November 2023:
 - The Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) has had 5 DREAs approved for a total of \$1,316,344. This funding was used to hire additional staff dedicated to wildfire recovery efforts including cultural coordinators, public information officers, administrative support, planning section chiefs, recovery planners, economic planners and coordinators, and environmental officers.

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- The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) has had 6 DREAs approved for a total of \$599,000. Funding is to support hiring additional staff for recovery efforts, Indigenous engagement, cultural coordination, public information, and development services.
- The Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) has had 2 DREAs approved for a total of \$92,184.06. Funding provided to support water testing in debris impacted areas and to hire dedicated staff for recovery.

Indigenous Considerations

- Throughout Columbia Shuswap, Okanagan, and Southwest regions, EMCR is working with impacted First Nations communities, Indigenous Service Canada (ISC), Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and partner Ministries to identify community recovery needs and coordinate timely recovery efforts.
- Skwllax First Nation suffered significant structural and land-based impacts because of the Bush Creek East wildfire.
 - EMCR has been coordinating recovery efforts for land and economic impacts whereas ISC has taken lead on housing recovery. FOR and WLRS currently lead on requests for high-level, in-person meetings and working with the community to identify additional Provincial commitments.
- Though First Nations communities in the Fraser Canyon did not experience property losses, the community recovery team has worked with those identifying a need for post-wildfire recovery support. This is largely focused on land-based and salmon habitat recovery, including replanting and reseeding, timber and salvage and habitat restoration. FOR and DFO are leading the work to identify needs, with EMCR providing coordination across the recovery sectors.
- Many Indigenous communities are experiencing the cumulative effects of significant fire activity over several years on traditional territory, with food security being a major issue.

Contact: Shannon Tucker Wildfire Recovery Coordination	Mobile: 778 945-1364
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/05/2024

Village of Cache Creek Disaster Recovery

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Over the last decade Cache Creek has experienced recurring floods and wildfires that have adversely affected the community, changing the environment and increasing the effects of naturally occurring disasters.
- Since the May 2023 freshet, EMCR along with ministry partners have been supporting the Village of Cache Creek (VCC) with 26 community recovery projects.
- The Village staff consists of 4 administrators, and 5 public works employees; staff capacity is limited, and the scope and scale of recovery projects warrant additional direct support from the Province.
- To date Ministry partners, particularly MoTI, FOR, WLRS and ENV, have been directly supporting the community in navigating recovery projects, with an immediate focus towards MoTI's Hwy 97 bridge replacement project.

Background:

- VCC is a community situated at the junction of the Bonaparte River and the Cache Creek. It serves as an essential transportation hub and is home to approximately 1,000 residents. The Village has limited funding available due to their small tax base.
- In addition to the May 2023 event, severe flooding occurred in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2020.
- Recovery efforts are ongoing with the majority of EMCR support being focused in three areas:
 - Chairing the Cache Creek Culvert upgrade table;
 - Coordinating with the Community Recovery Manager and Engineering Consultant on supporting projects plan and assisting with funding programs such as DFA, CEPF as well as other Ministry projects; and
 - Holding bi-weekly check-ins between the CAO and senior recovery leadership to continue discussions and support where needed on the larger more complex aspects of the VCC recovery plan.
- The Village has made progress on several public infrastructure files. There are 25 project applications with DFA, 16 pending, 8 approved, and 1 complete. Additionally, MoTI's bridge replacement project along Hwy 97 is underway.

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- 19 private DFA application were filed, 10 small business and 9 homeowners. To date 10 have been paid, 4 were withdrawn, 2 pending, and 3 deemed ineligible.
- The Village’s long-term recovery and resiliency plan is currently in draft. Due to the increasing complexity of the situation and the Village’s limited corporate capacity, ongoing additional support from multiple Ministries is required to help enhance Village Staff capacity and provide subject matter expertise. Further, EMCR has hired a project manager with recovery experience to support the overall effort.
- Along with considerations of the Highway 97 bridge replacement projects the following points will shape the Recovery and Mitigation plan:
 - Planning to address erosion.
 - Developed climate resiliency sub-work plans for both private residential and commercial property along waterways.
 - Enhancing municipal and provincial infrastructure.
 - Associated archaeological and environmental concerns.
 - Inclusion and consideration of housing, social, health, and economic considerations.

Key Figures:

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS PROVIDED	VALUE	COMMITTED DATE
Response costs (Approved EAF’s) - Civil engineering. - Incremental staff costs. - Flood protection works. - Equipment cost.	Approved up to \$725,000	May 2023
Community Recovery Manager	Approved up to \$125,000	June 2023
First Nations Consultation	Approved up to \$19,000	January 2024
Recovery and Resilience Planning Project Management	Approved up to \$75,000	December 2023
DFA Public Applications	To date \$946,506	June 2023- To date
DFA Private Applications	To date \$126,041	June 2023- To date
CEPF - Erosion Mapping and Debris Mitigation Plan Cat 1	Approved up to \$150,000	December 2023
CEPF – Public education Cat 2	Approved up to \$150,000	December 2023

Contact: Stephen Piers Recovery, Policy Planning, and Appeals	Mobile <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/28/2024

Disaster Recovery – Atmospheric River Recovery - Regional

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- EMCR is actively supporting communities impacted by the 2021 Atmospheric River Event through a holistic and community-led or endorsed approach to recovery.
- We know that many people and communities impacted by the November 2021 floods and landslides continue to face challenges and we remain committed to helping them through their recovery.
- Since the atmospheric river event, through the Canadian Red Cross, more than \$35 million in provincial funding has been distributed to over 700 affected households in recovery support as well as over 7,000 households that received support with evacuation and response efforts.
- EMCR also provides direct support to individuals and communities after disaster events through its existing programs such as funding response activities, cost sharing repair and rebuild of public infrastructure, and direct financial assistance to homeowners, businesses, farmers and charitable organizations through the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program.
 - As of February 2024, the Province has paid out \$33.8 million in Disaster Financial Assistance payments to nearly 1,100 households.
- Outside of EMCR's regular programs, the province has provided funding to communities recovering from the 2021 atmospheric river event to ensure key recovery and resiliency activities are supported. This includes funding for Community Recovery Managers, interim housing solutions and flood mitigation measures.
- Most impacted communities have transitioned from acute or short-term recovery actions to longer term recovery and resiliency planning with a focus on mitigation and climate readiness. This includes:
 - Updating flood mapping (i.e., City of Hope, Semiahmoo First Nation);
 - Developing comprehensive flood mitigation plans (i.e., Merritt, Princeton);
 - Supporting regional partnerships focused on watershed and flood resiliency strategies (i.e., Transboundary Flood Initiative, Hatzic Lake Regional Watershed Recovery Table, Lower Coquihalla Flood Table); and
 - Developing medium and long-term multi-sectoral recovery plans.

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- EMCR has provided \$16.85 million in grants for nine flood resiliency and watershed recovery projects in 7 Southwest communities, including 3 First Nations. These funds support disaster recovery works from March 2023 through April 2026.

Background:

- The Atmospheric River Event in November 2021 caused floods and landslides with unprecedented impacts to critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges, extensive losses to the agricultural sector, the evacuation of over 17,000 people, and the tragic loss of five lives. Damage was most acute in the Fraser Valley and the southern interior of the province.
- Recovery is community led and community endorsed. EMCR works with communities to support them in understanding what supports are available. As a community develops its recovery plan, EMCR works closely with staff to identify how activities may be funded existing government programs, non-governmental organizations, and other funding channels.

Attachment: Data tables:

- [City of Abbotsford:](#)
- [City of Merritt:](#)
- [City of Princeton:](#)

Contact: Jordan Turner Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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City of Abbotsford:

More than \$220 million has been committed to the City and residents of Abbotsford through provincial recovery programs and one-time funding.		
\$13.4 million	Direct financial support to homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organization, and farms through DFA	EMCR
\$12.5 million	28 infrastructure projects approved through DFA (for example, repairs to the Lakemount Bridge & Sumas dike)	
\$76.6 million	Barrowtown Pump Upgrades	
\$3.2 million	Supported design work and the construction of a flood wall to protect the pump station and electrical systems	
\$62 million	Build a new well and water-treatment system ensuring reliable water service for more than 165, 000 people.	MUNI
\$6.85 million	Complete flood recovery activities	
\$17 million	Clayburn Creek – removing sediment, and works to prevent future bank erosion and loss of land	ENV
\$19 million	Sumas River and Canal – removing sediment from the river and canal channels, repairing riverbanks, and erosion protections	
\$5.1 million	Vedder Canal – removing sediment to improve river flow and repairing riverbanks damaged by the November 2021 flooding	

City of Merritt:

Over \$63 million has been committed to the City and residents of Merritt through provincial recovery programs and one-time funding.		
\$10.2 million	Direct financial support to homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organization, and farms through DFA	EMCR
\$4.5 million	Flood mitigation projects through Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including \$4 million for two dikes on the Coldwater River	
\$13.2 million	21 infrastructure projects approved through DFA	
\$329,000	Flood mitigation studies	
\$24.3 million	Interim Flood Support Funding inclusive of \$11.75 million for interim housing for flood impacted residents	MUNI
\$9.3 million	Fir Avenue bank stabilization	ENV

City of Princeton:

Over \$15 million has been committed to the City and residents of Princeton through provincial recovery programs and one-time funding.		
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Confidential

\$2.6 million	Direct financial support to homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organization, and farms through DFA	EMCR
\$1.15 million	1 infrastructure project approved through DFA	
\$100,000	Emergency flood hazard assessment of the Tulameen and Similkameen rivers and flood mitigation plan	
\$11.9 million	Interim Flood Support Funding inclusive of \$1.4 million for interim housing for flood impacted residents	MUNI

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/06/2024

Lytton Recovery

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The June 2021 Lytton Creek fire caused catastrophic loss of public and private infrastructure across Nlaka'pamux territory including Lytton First Nation (LFN), Village of Lytton (VoL) and the surrounding regional district. Numerous residents remain displaced, but reconstruction efforts have commenced.
- As of January 2024, the Province has committed over \$58.5 million (see Key Facts and Figures table) to support its ongoing operations and recovery efforts. This includes:
 - \$9.36 million to support ongoing VoL operations and staffing.
 - \$23.4 million to enable debris removal, archeological work and soil remediation for properties in the Village.
 - \$3.4 million to help re-establish essential infrastructure and services.
 - \$2.1 million for future VoL operations.
- Provincial funding supported the restoration of essential infrastructure and services within the VoL. This includes water treatment and sewer infrastructure, municipal services and staffing. Funding supported activities like debris removal, soil remediation, and necessary archaeology work. The objective was to prepare properties for a ready and safe state for the rebuilding phase.
- Several key milestones in the rebuilding process have been achieved. Notably, the VoL has started reviewing applications for building permits and has issued one building permit for a single-family home. Construction is underway. We are aware of other building permits going through the VoL process.
- Under the leadership of LFN and Nlaka'pamux Tribal Council (NNTC), and the Ministry of Forests (Archaeology Branch) attend frequent Kumsheen Heritage Committee (KHC) meetings to discuss archaeological considerations.

Background:

- The Village of Lytton, with a population of approximately 275 residents, serves as a hub for an additional 4,500 individuals residing in the surrounding rural area.

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- Approximately 90% of the VoL was destroyed in the Lytton creek fire including the 124 residences, town hall, police station, ambulance station, public library, and other vital infrastructure. Additional structures in the surrounding Regional District were also lost. LFN experienced substantial losses, including approximately 45 residences on IR18, and 5 commercial properties, including the Band Office. Many Village residents remain evacuated. Some Nlaka'pamux members, including LFN, have returned to interim housing.
- The Nlaka'pamux Nation is made up of 16 Indigenous communities spanning the Fraser, Thompson, and Nicola Rivers region. The Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council is a governing entity which currently represents interests of Boothroyd Indian Band, Lytton First Nation, Oregon Jack Creek Band, and Skuppah Indian Band.
- On July 11, 2021, British Columbia and Canada issued letters of commitment to NNTC, detailing expectations concerning wildfire recovery and rail safety. Canada committed to provide \$2M. BC provided \$100K. These commitments included establishing an Implementation Coordination Task Force. The Province remains actively involved in this Task Force and on related Working Groups.
- Throughout 2023, EMCR continued to work with partner agencies such as Indigenous Services Canada, First Nations Emergency Services Society of BC, First Nations Health Authority, Interior Health Authority, Canadian Red Cross, non-profits, and other Provincial Ministries. Together, efforts focus on identifying and addressing unmet needs in a manner that confronts systemic issues.

Community Recovery:

- During the wildfire response, EMCR served as the lead Provincial agency supporting operations in the VoL and LFN. In Spring 2023, EMCR provided funding for the VoL to hire two new recovery managers to support ongoing recovery efforts.
- As of February 28, 2024, DFA has approved \$28,491.92 in funding for Water Treatment Plant recovery work.
- Following the wildfire, the site underwent soil remediation. Debris removal and site remediation are largely complete.
- The VoL is on a known archeological site, and appropriate steps continue to be taken in the recovery work to comply with the *Heritage Conservation Act* requirements. Ancestral remains, and more than 7,000 artifacts, dating back to as far back as 7,500 years ago have been discovered to date. In December 2023, a contribution agreement totaling \$70,651 was signed with AEW (the onsite archeological company) to facilitate ongoing archaeological fieldwork and analysis.

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- EMCR Community Recovery staff continue to monitor ongoing recovery work being led by other Ministries, including Ministry of Forests (FOR) (Archaeology), Ministry of Health, and Ministry Municipal Affairs. EMCR has also offered assistance to residents, as they navigate insurance extensions with their insurers.
- The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) continues to provide housing supports and financial assistance to help with expenses related to repair or rebuild for those who lost their primary residence. Further, the CRC is offering personalised recovery supports to residents.
- The VoL has moved into a rebuild phase and is requiring less involvement by EMCR Community Recovery staff. FOR is taking a leading role in the oversight of the archeology management requirements in the community.

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Key Facts and Figures:

Funding committed and disbursed as of Jan. 31, 2024:

Source	Purpose	Committed (\$M)	Disbursed (\$M)	Variance (\$M)
FOR (was previously JEDI)	Operational and economic development activities to continue to pay recovery staff for the community of Lytton response efforts.	1	1	
MUNI	To support ongoing core Village operations and municipal recovery.	8.36	8.36	
EMCR	To cover the costs of debris removal, archaeological monitoring, and soil remediation for municipal and all uninsured and underinsured properties in the Village.	18.4	18.4	
EMCR	To cover the cost of critical services to enable the rebuild, municipal infrastructure repairs, recovery staffing, planning, and engagement.	21	3.4	17.6
EMCR	To cover increased costs of debris removal, archaeological monitoring as part of soil remediation.	5	5	
MUNI	Operations funding for the Village in years 2025 to 2027 (inclusive).	2.1	2.1	
Advice/Recommendations				
EMCR ESS	Emergency Support Services for evacuees	0.07	0.07	
EMCR PREOC	Emergency response cost reimbursements	2.6	2.6	
EMCR DFA	Disaster Financial Assistance.	0.06	0.06	
Total Provincial capacity funding committed, as of July 1 2023.		58.59		
Total Provincial funding disbursed			40.99	
Variance				17.6
Insurance funding	Insurance company payout to insured homeowners kept in trust.	1.6	1.6	
Federal funding Infrastructure Canada	Rebuild infrastructure	64		
Federal funding Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan)	Lytton homeowner resilient rebuild program and Lytton business restart program.	13.2		
Total federal funding		77.2		

Contact: Jennifer McGuire
Disaster Recovery Division

Mobile: ^{Government Financial Information}

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/08/2024

Jade Springs

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Lytton wildfire has been devastating for the Village of Lytton and the wider community. It underscores the importance of insurance, which is an essential part of emergency preparedness.
- Unfortunately, the owners of Jade Springs – a business ^{Business Information}
Business Information
- Given the broad extent of the 2021 wildfire recovery needs, the Province, in collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross, provided a one-time debris clean-up program for properties outside the boundary of the Village of Lytton, contracted through the Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD).
- Each eligible property received \$30K, with Jade Springs receiving approximately ^{Business Information}
Informati due to its complexity.
- Following the conclusion of the work, the owner contacted the TNRD about debris that remained on site.
- EMCR supported by creating a list of the remaining concerns on site, as communicated by the property owner, and hired a contractor, on behalf of the owner, to help assess the cost of this identified, additional clean-up. The approximate cost for this work is \$33k.

Business Information

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If asked – perceived inequality between the Village of Lytton and surrounding properties:

- The near entire loss of the Village of Lytton is a unique circumstance, compared to other wildfire losses over the last decade in B.C., including those in the TNRD. The Village lost nearly all government infrastructure, including all Village records, making the early stages of recovery improbable without Provincial intervention.
- The Village of Lytton is also on a known archeology site which required significant attention to ensure recovery activities were compliant with the Heritage Conservation Act and respectful of the significant archeological values underlying the village.
- For nearby residents who lost homes in the TNRD, the Province provided one-time clean-up costs to support the recovery of the wider community.
- Lytton’s recovery is complex and unique, for anyone in the Village to be able to rebuild their lost home, neighbouring properties would also need to be addressed due to the known archeological values.
- Completing all clean-up and archeological work at once was the most cost-effective way to move forward, both for those in the Village and B.C. taxpayers. As such, it was prudent to enter into an agreement with the Village to support this work holistically.
- Again, the Province is not an insurer or a backstop for a lack of insurance when policies are readily available. In this circumstance, there were many residents within the Village who had fire insurance, and it is important that they can rebuild their homes and community.

Background:

- Jade Springs is a private property situated along the Trans Canada Highway, just outside the boundaries of the Village of Lytton, within the jurisdiction of the Thompson Nicola Regional District. Three properties cover approximately 16 acres.
- Prior to the 2021 wildfires that impacted the Lytton region, Jade Springs consisted of a grocery store, a restaurant, a campsite, a rental log cabin, and a residence. In addition to the owners living on site, there were several long-term tenants staying on the property.
- Additional Support Offered by Village of Lytton (VOL) and Lytton First Nation (LFN) to Jade Springs:

Business Information

Confidential

- All above opportunities have been shared by the VOL with the owner of Jade Springs – with no uptake on any of the offerings.
- EMCR is ensuring consistent access to recovery funding for all uninsured business and private residents impacted by 2021 wildfires. Many other uninsured businesses and private residents accessed the funding provided by the CRC and have progressed through recovery.

Contact: Jordan Turner Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/28/2024

Merritt Recovery

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- EMCR is actively supporting communities impacted by the 2021 Atmospheric River Event through a holistic and community-led approach to recovery.
- EMCR provides direct support to individuals and communities after disaster events through its existing programs such as funding response activities, cost sharing repair and rebuild of public infrastructure, and direct financial assistance to eligible homeowners and businesses.
- To date, the Province has provided \$10.2 million to Merritt homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organizations, and farms through Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA), to help recover losses and undertake necessary repairs following the disaster.
- The City of Merritt has received approval for 21 Disaster Financial Assistance projects through EMCR, totalling over \$13.2 million in assistance.
 - One of these projects is the repair to the Middlesborough bridge, anticipated to cost approximately \$12.9M. The project has been approved for DFA for up to \$7.6 million. This project also received \$9.6 million of fiscal year end funding through Ministry of Municipal Affairs, making available up to \$17.3 million to the City of Merritt to rebuild the bridge.
 - Some additional approved DFA projects include \$700,000 for a watermain repair, \$2.2 million for roads and sidewalk repairs and \$1.4 million for the Canford Ave road, water and sewer repairs.

City of Merritt:

Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information

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Over \$63 million has been committed to the City and residents of Merritt through provincial recovery programs and one-time funding.		
\$10.2 million	Direct financial support to homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organization, and farms through DFA	EMCR
\$4.5 million	Flood mitigation projects through Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including \$4m for two dikes on the Coldwater River	
\$13.2 million	21 infrastructure projects approved through DFA	
\$329,000	Flood mitigation studies	
\$24.3 million	Interim Flood Support Funding inclusive of \$11.75 million for interim housing for flood impacted residents	MUNI
\$9.3 million	Fir Avenue bank stabilization	ENV

Merritt concern about loss of Federal Funding for Coldwater Dikes:

- I appreciate the question. I think it is important that we allay some of the concerns raised in the media.
- During the November 2021 Atmospheric River Event, Merritt's Coldwater River dikes (129 and 130) suffered a complete failure at four locations, allowing flood waters to inundate the city.
- In January 2024, EMCR has approved, in principle, the rebuilding of these dikes to the modern, prevailing codes and standards through the DFA program and is working with the City on the completion of their final design and cost recovery plans.
Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information
-
- Again, since the 2021 flood event, the Province has committed more than \$63 million to support flood recovery and resiliency in Merritt. This includes 21 other Disaster Financial Assistance projects, all of which have been given the go-ahead after receiving Merritt's final plans. A total of \$13.2M are approved in principle to date through DFA, with an additional three projects pending approval.
- This is over and above any funding for rebuilding the Coldwater River Dikes which, again, have already been deemed eligible.
- However, there have been questions raised about the risk of losing Federal Funding for this infrastructure project.
 - To be clear, this project is not being approved or funded by the Federal government.
 - Approval and funds are provided to Merritt through the Province's Disaster Financial Assistance program.

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- While the province will seek to cost share this project with the Federal government, this has no bearing on Merritt's ability to rebuild or to be funded.
 - It is the Province which faces a deadline, which may be extended on request, to cost share with the Federal Government.
 - Merritt would like to proceed with the rebuild as soon as possible. We share this urgency.
- To rebuild the dikes to prevailing codes, which involves an expansion of the footprint of the infrastructure, it will necessitate land acquisition which cannot be funded through the DFA program. We understand this. This land acquisition will likely involve City property, private businesses, and private residences.

Advice/Recommendations

- The Province meets regularly with the City of Merritt to discuss flood mitigation and recovery needs. This includes an in-person meeting which took place on March 22, with staff from the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness to discuss their proposed land acquisition formula and next steps.
- This is the land acquisition formula which Merritt is looking to apply to properties in the Coldwater Dike rebuild, as well as other mitigation projects in the area.
- Provincial staff and staff from Merritt are working toward a solution on the proposed land acquisition piece of this project. A decision will ultimately lie with the Ministry of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship.

Questions raised about future risk to Merritt before permanent dikes completed:

- In events that have occurred since the November 2021 floods, temporary repairs to the dikes were supported by the province through response (EAFs) which included the installation of gabions and rip rap for erosion protection.
- If another large event is forecast, the Ministry is prepared to deploy the infrastructure necessary to protect the City of Merritt.

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Background:

- In November 2021, an atmospheric river event hit the Coldwater River watershed and the City of Merritt, resulting in widespread overland flooding due to various dike failures. Hundreds of homes and businesses were impacted with more than 7,000 residents evacuated and widespread damage to municipal infrastructure.
- As part of a comprehensive flood mitigation response, with the aid of senior government assistance, the City developed the Merrit Resilience Plan which includes the installation of naturalized and grey flood infrastructure to protect critical infrastructure. This plan requires the acquisition of over 50 properties.
- Merritt is seeking to acquire full or partial properties to support various aspects of their Flood Mitigation Project, including the rebuilding or creation of new dikes and natural infrastructure. They have developed a robust Flood Mitigation Project and land acquisition package. Advice/Recommendations
Advice/Recommendations
- EMCR met with Merritt staff on March 22, 2024, to discuss the first phase of their proposed land acquisitions.
- Past DFA applications - Merritt received \$144K of Disaster Financial Assistance during the 2018 Freshet event for repairs to the Rotary Park.
- Recovery is community led. EMCR works with communities to support them in understanding what supports are available. As a community develops its recovery plan, EMCR works closely with staff to identify how activities may be funded through existing government programs, non-governmental organizations, and other funding channels.

Contact: Jordan Turner Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/28/2024

Disaster Recovery – Atmospheric River Recovery – Sumas Prairie

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Building on the \$3.2 million announced in April 2023, to help protect people, communities and farmland in the Sumas Prairie from future flood events, the Province committed an additional \$76.6m in February 2024 to support critical capacity upgrades to the Barrowtown pump station in Abbotsford.
- With this latest investment, the Province has committed over \$220 million to support Abbotsford’s recovery from the 2021 atmospheric river events. This includes funding for infrastructure repair projects, including:
 - the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program has received 118 private sector applications in the Abbotsford (Sumas Prairie) area. Funding has been approved for homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charitable organization, and farms. (\$13.4 million);
 - a new well and water-treatment system to ensure reliable, resilient water service for more than 165,000 people in the Sumas Prairie (\$62.0 million);
 - through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, support for Advice/Recommendations costs related to flood recovery (\$6.9 million);
 - 28 infrastructure projects approved through DFA such as repairs to the Lakemount Bridge & Sumas dike (\$12.5 million); and
 - through the Ministry of Environment’s Flood Debris Management Secretariat, support projects in Clayborn Creek, the Sumas River and canal, and the Vedder Canal to remove sediment, repair riverbanks and provide erosion protection (\$41 million)
- Last year, the Province entered into a collaborative framework with Semá:th, Matsqui and Leq’á:mel First Nations, the City of Abbotsford and the City of Chilliwack to develop a flood mitigation plan for the Sumas River watershed.
- The Province has already provided more than \$4 million to establish the Sumas River Flood Mitigation Collaborative Framework and the parties’ participation in the Transboundary Flood Initiative.

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- The Transboundary Flood Initiative, signed in October 2023, brings together the Province, Washington State, local and First Nation governments to develop solutions to addressing flood risks and ecosystem restoration in the Sumas and Nooksack River watersheds.
- We are having conversations with the federal government about their participation, both within and beyond Sumas. We want to see the federal government engaged and strongly supporting funding solutions, and following through on their commitments around this area.

Background:

- The Sumas Prairie was created in the early 1920s by draining Sumas Lake. On November 16, 2021, overflow from the Sumas and Nooksack rivers refilled the lake, forcing the evacuation of 1100 homes in Abbotsford. The Sumas Prairie area was placed under catastrophic flood warning by that evening, with a substantial loss of livestock, including cattle and chickens. It is estimated that up to 630,000 animals died in the Sumas Prairie floods.
- Upgrades to the Barrowtown Pump Station will increase its capacity and resilience to flooding. The improvements include:
 - adding a six-metre floodwall to reduce the possibility of the station shutting down if the Sumas Prairie is flooded;
 - upgrading the debris screen, or trash rack, to reduce fish access to the pumps and prevent large debris from entering the system intake;
 - replacing pump motors to improve station efficiency and operating flexibility, as well as increasing its overall pumping capacity; and
 - transitioning to a dual substation with the addition of a second BC Hydro power feed, to make the pump station's power supply more robust.
- The \$3.2 million provided in April 2023 supported design work and the construction of a flood wall to protect the pump station, including its electrical system.
- Abbotsford has proposed a nature-based "Flood Storage/Habitat Enhancement" project which is a component of the Flood Mitigation Plan submitted by Abbotsford for Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Funding. The project would provide passive flood storage/surge capacity, and enhance the habitat for fish, waterfowl, and wildlife. Any mitigative works in Canada will rely greatly on the outcomes of the management of water in Washington State's Whatcom County.
- Recovery is community endorsed or community led. EMCR works with communities to assist them in understanding what services and programs are available. As a community develops its recovery plan, EMCR works closely with staff to identify how activities may be funded through existing government programs, non-governmental organizations, and other funding channels.

Contact: Jordan Turner Recovery, Policy, and Planning	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/05/2024

Indigenous Community Recovery (Central Region, Northeast Region, Northwest Region, Southwest Region, Vancouver Island Region)

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- EMCR continues to support First Nations communities across the Province to advance recovery from the 2018 freshet through to 2023 freshet and wildfire. In addition to enhanced staffing of the Community Disaster Recovery Team, EMCR deployed 2024 Wildfire Recovery Teams in the North, Central and Southwest/Vancouver Island regions of the Province.
- As of March 7, 2024, EMCR approved \$4.9 million for recovery activities, with \$1.3M paid. Currently, 31 Indigenous community applications for various DFA events are in progress.
- During the 2023 hazard season, 41 First Nations communities were impacted by wildfire and 5 were impacted by freshet. Of these, 20 communities have required recovery assistance due to Wildfire, and 5 have required recovery assistance due to freshet impacts.
- EMCR continues to work with partner agencies such as Indigenous Services Canada, First Nations Emergency Services Society of BC, First Nations Health Authority, Canadian Red Cross, non-profits, and other Provincial Ministries. Together, efforts focus on identifying and addressing unmet needs in a manner that addresses the needs of impacted communities.

Background:

- Community Disaster Recovery and Regional Response teams liaise closely with impacted communities on recovery activities, including the coordination of frequent check-in calls in all regions, and in-person meetings as invited by communities.
- The DFA program and Community Disaster Recovery team participate in regular meetings with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and communities.
- ISC is a key funding provider in recovery through the Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP). EMCR coordinates with ISC on funding to impacted communities beyond what can be provided by EMAP.

Central Region (CTL)

- Over the past year, EMCR has supported 12 First Nations communities in their recovery.

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Active recovery discussions continue with 7 First Nations: Aq'am, Lower Similkameen Band, Lytton First Nation, Okanagan Band, Shackan First Nation, Skwłāx First Nation, Westbank First Nation.

- Recovery priorities include land-based recovery, infrastructure recovery including housing, the coordination and planning of mental health and wellness services, and continued supports for evacuees.
- In January 2024, Skwłāx First Nation hired a Recovery Manager to lead recovery efforts, including land recovery and strategic planning for the restoration of infrastructure, notably 34 residential dwellings.
- As of March 5, 2024, Skwłāx First Nation has shared that foundation installation for interim housing has begun.

Northeast Region (NE) and Northwest Region (NW)

- Over the past year, EMCR has supported 27 First Nations in their recovery. Active recovery discussions continue with 17 First Nations: Blueberry First Nation, Cheslatta Carrier Nation, Doig River First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, Gitwangak Band, Halfway River First Nation, Lake Babine Nation, Nazko First Nation, Prophet River First Nation, Takla Nation, T̓sideldel First Nation, Tsq'escen'/Canim Lake Band, Ulkatcho First Nation, Xení Gwet'in, Xat̓súll Nation, Witset Nation, and Yekooche First Nation.
- EMCR staff have recently received feedback regarding EDMA, highlighting growing concern from northern First Nations communities regarding perceived inequitable resource allocation for the 2023 Wildfire response, in comparison to resource allocation in Central region.
- Recovery priorities include community infrastructure and cultural sites, food security and access to traditional foods, and relocation of historic gravesites.
- Recovery work by First Nations communities has been affected by capacity constraints, and compounded effects of events stemming from 2017.
- Continuing to build strong relationships with First Nations while also building high functioning collaborative networks with partner organizations and Ministries will be an integral part of supporting mid and long-term recovery and climate readiness.

Southwest Region (SW)

- Over the past year, EMCR has supported 6 First Nations communities in their recovery. Active recovery discussions continue with 5 First Nations: Boothroyd Band, Chawathil First Nation, Matsqui First Nation, Sq'ewqel/Seabird Island First Nation, Sumas First Nation.
- Sq'ewqel/Seabird Island First Nation and Sumas First Nation have expressed interest in extending funding for Community Recovery Manager positions.

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- Most First Nations communities in the SW Region have transitioned to mid- to long-term recovery. EMCR Recovery teams continue to provide support on various recovery projects and maintain in active communication on outstanding recovery needs.

Vancouver Island Region (VI)

- Over the past year, EMCR has worked with 3 First Nation communities in recovery. Active recovery discussions continue with 2 First Nations: Halalt First Nation, Penelakut First Nation.
- In Fall 2023, \$4.5 million was approved for works along Chemainus River to support debris management efforts stemming from the November 2021 Atmospheric River event. In addition to recovery work, this funding will better protect Halalt First Nation from future flooding and will increase resiliency to climate change.
- Most First Nations communities in the VI Region have transitioned to mid- to long-term recovery stages.

Contact: Jordan Turner Recovery Policy and Planning Branch	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/28/2024

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) – Atmospheric River Event – Operational Metrics - Appeals

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The 2021 Atmospheric River event is the single largest event in the DFA program's history. The program received 2298 applications for the Atmospheric River (AR) event which resulted in 194 appeals, corresponding to an 8% appeal rate. Regrettably, the unprecedented volume of appeals has resulted in processing delays.
- The DFA appeals team is implementing several measures to speed up response time, including hiring more adjudicators in January 2024.
- In January 2024, the DFA appeals team sent out a letter to all appellants with active appeals cases informing them of how to request a status update and the 3-5 business day response time they could expect to receive a status update once requested. Forty-five (45) of the 107 applicants who received a letter responded requesting a status update. Status updates were provided to all 45 appellants within the specified response time.

Background:

- The key stages of handling an appeal are:
 - (1) reviewing the existing documentation (initial application, applicant's appeal request, DFA program decision letter),
 - (2) identifying the sections of the regulation that apply to the appeal case,
 - (3) obtaining more information, if needed, to determine compliance with the regulation, and
 - (4) making a determination to either uphold or overturn the DFA program decision.
- Every appeal, whether it is a DFA Public or Private appeal, falls under one of two categories:
 - The applicant disagrees with the DFA program's decision that the applicant is not eligible for DFA (i.e. eligibility cases)
 - The applicant disagrees with the amount of financial assistance provided by the DFA program (i.e. amount cases)
- The appeals team does not authorize DFA payments. If a decision is overturned by the appeals team, the file is sent back to the program area to re-open the case, determine an amount and process a payment.

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Key Facts and Figures:

- The appeals team is currently tracking a total of 201 appeals submitted since the AR event, 194 related to the AR event and 7 of them applying to other recent DFA-eligible events.

Appeals Completed –Overturned vs Upheld

Decision	DFA Appeals	% of Total
Overturned	8	8%
Upheld	90	92%
Total	98	100%

Appeals - Eligibility vs Amount

Appeal Type	No. of Cases	% of Total
Amount	90	45%
Eligibility	111	55%
Total	201	100%

Appeals – Public vs Private

Appeal Type	No. of Cases	% of Total
Public	2	1%
Private	199	99%
Total	201	100%

Appeals by Region

Region	DFA Appeals	% of Total
Central	53	27%
North East	2	1%
North West	1	1%
South East	3	2%
South West	126	63%
Vancouver Island Coastal	16	8%
Total	201	100%

Appeals - Status of Cases Received Following the 2021 AR Event

Status	No. of Appeals	% of Total
Completed	98	49%
Work in Progress	41	20%
Received	62	31%
Total	201	100%

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) - Atmospheric River Event Operational Metrics – Public Sector- First Nation Communities and Local Governments

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The 2021 Atmospheric River event received 402 DFA public sector applications for projects in 52 communities.
- Applications were received from across the Province, with the largest number of projects received from Abbotsford (69); Chilliwack (59); Fraser Valley Regional District (49); Langley (25); and Merritt (21).
- Applications were received from 24 First Nations, with the largest number of projects received from Nooaitch Indian Band (4); Lower Nicola Indian Band (4); and Lytton First Nation (4).
- 60% of all projects have been processed. This amounts to over \$32.7 million approved to local governments and First Nations for their recovery.
- 83% of all First Nation projects have been processed. This amounts to over \$2.4 million which is a portion of the overall \$32.7 million approved for recovery.

Background:

Eligibility for DFA – Public Sector

- There are two categories of application types for DFA Public: First Nations and Local Governments.
- Stages of handling an applications”
 - (1) receive a completed Infrastructure Cost Recovery Plan,
 - (2) confirm project eligibility and provide approval in principle,
 - (3) work with community through the 18-month project deadline; and
 - (4) adjudicate and issue payment for submitted claims based on project eligibility.
- Reasons that an applicant may be found to be ineligible for DFA Public include: temporary works, landscaping, normal operating expenses, and enhancements from pre-event

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functionality (replacing a wooden walkway with cement).

- Eligible damages can be claimed at 90 percent, or the amount based on the per-capita table.

Key Facts and Figures:

Table 1: Local Government Key Applications (as of March 4, 2024)

Community	Cost Recovery Plans (Projects)	Projects Approved	Projects Pending	Projects Closed (includes ineligible, withdrawn, complete)	DFA Amount approved in principle
City of Merritt	21	12	-	9	\$13.2M
City of Abbotsford	69	16	14	39	\$12.5M
City of Surrey	2	2	-	-	\$1.4M
Town of Princeton	18	1	13	4	\$1.1M
Cowichan Valley RD	16	2	13	1	\$989,752
District of North Saanich	1	1	-	-	\$520,005
District of Squamish	1	1	-	-	\$411,181
Cultus Lake Park Board	6	6	-	-	\$205,681
District of Hope	5	1	1	3	\$201,584
Fraser Valley RD	49	9	8	32	\$177,518
TOTALS	188	51	49	88	\$30,705,751

*Top 10 (DFA amount) Local Government applications based on approved cost recovery plans

* Chilliwack has a large number of projects (59), however they are not included in the above table as DFA is working with the community for supporting documents.

Table 2: First Nation Key Applications (as of March 4, 2024)

Community	Cost Recovery Plans (Projects)	Projects Approved	Projects Pending	Projects Closed (includes ineligible, withdrawn, complete)	DFA Amount approved in principle
Nooaitch Indian Band	4	3	-	1	\$633,700
Matsqui First Nation	1	-	-	1	\$389,464
Spuzzum First Nation	3	-	-	3	\$292,482
Lower Nicola Indian Band	4	2	1	1	\$223,442
Seabird Island Band	2	2	-	-	\$124,953
TOTALS	14	7	1	6	\$1,664,041

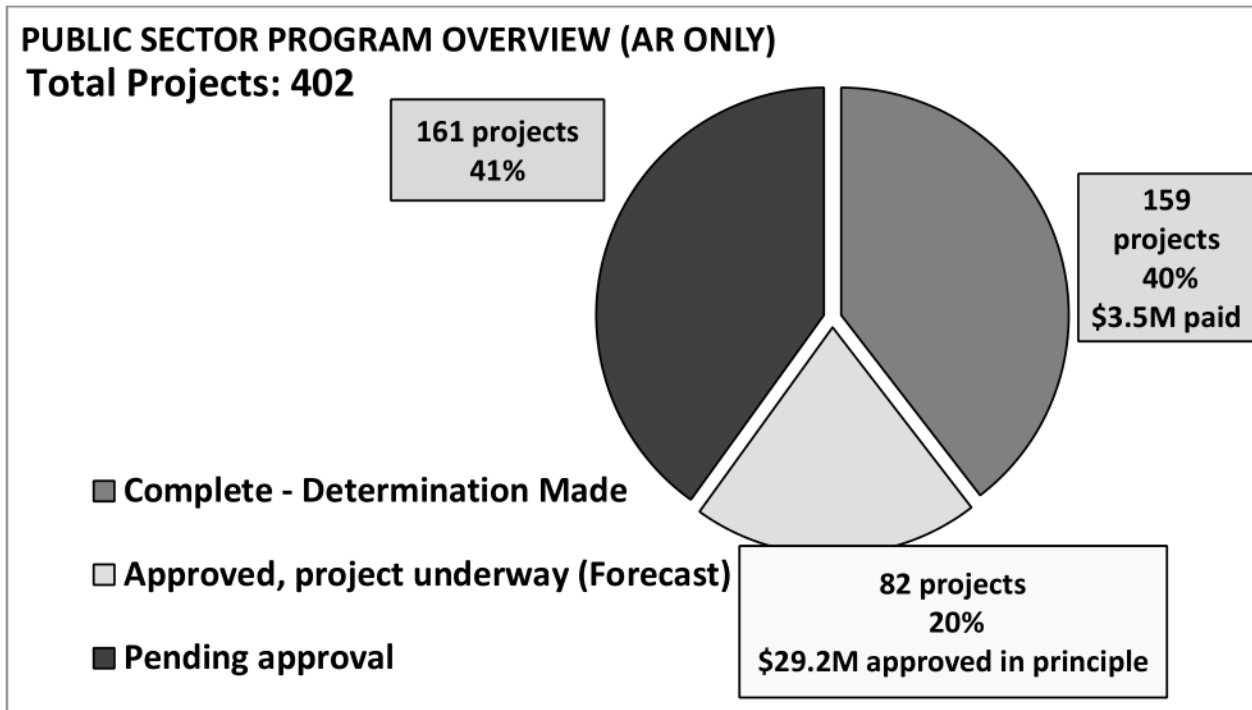
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Table 3: DFA Atmospheric River Program Overview (March 4, 2024)

Community	Cost Recovery Plans (Projects)	Projects Approved	Projects Pending	Projects Closed (includes ineligible, withdrawn, complete)	DFA Amount approved in principle
Nooaitch Indian Band	4	3	-	1	\$633,700
Matsqui First Nation	1	-	-	1	\$389,464
Spuzzum First Nation	3	-	-	3	\$292,482
Lower Nicola Indian Band	4	2	1	1	\$223,442
Seabird Island Band	2	2	-	-	\$124,953
TOTALS	14	7	1	6	\$1,664,041

*Top 5 (DFA Amount) First Nation applications

* Lytton First Nation has 4 projects, however they are not included in the above table as DFA is working with the community for supporting documents.



Contact: Catherine Morrison Recovery Funding	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) - Atmospheric River Event 2021 Operational Metrics – Private Sector

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program operates under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* and the ensuing Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation and is obliged to provide compensation in compliance with this legislation.
- The 2021 Atmospheric River event was the single largest event in the DFA program's history. The program received 2298 applications associated with this event.
- Applications were received from every region of the province, with the largest number of applications received from Abbotsford (684); Merritt (491); Chilliwack (239); and Princeton (190).
- Most applications were from private homeowners (58%) with an average payout of \$33,000.
- 100% of private sector applications have been processed. This was a monumental task, and over \$33.8 million was provided to individuals, families, non-profits, farms and small businesses to assist them in their recovery.

Background:

Eligibility for DFA – Private Sector

- There are four categories of application types for DFA: individuals, families, non-profits, farms and small businesses. Each category has specific eligibility such as meeting the definition of a principal residence or minimum income thresholds for small businesses.
- Stages of handling an application (1) confirm an applicant's basic eligibility, (2) refer the file to the provincially-funded evaluator who prepares an estimate of damages recommended for payment under the DFA program, and (3) make a determination on the application.
- Reasons that an applicant may be found to be ineligible for DFA include: land erosion; pre-existing damage; damage to non-essential items and insurable damages.
- Eligible damages, that exceed the \$1,000 deductible, can be claimed at 80 percent to a maximum of \$400,000.

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Key Facts and Figures:

Appendix A

Table 1: Private Sector Application Statistics as of March 4, 2024

Summary – volume & status of applications	January 31, 2024	Percentage
Closed with payment (eligible)	1097	48%
Closed without payment (ineligible or withdrawn)	1029	45%
Transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to be assessed under the 2021 Canada-British Columbia Flood Recovery Program for Food Security	172	7%
TOTAL	2298	100%

Table 2: Private Sector Payment Data by Applicant Category (as of March 4, 2024)

Category	Home Owner	Residential Tenant	Small Business	Charitable Organization	Farm Operation	Total
Total applications received	1,340 (58%)	439 (19%)	336 (15%)	25 (1%)	158 (7%)	2298 (100%)
Total paid and closed	756	198	131	11	1	1097
Total value paid and closed	\$24.6M	\$1.3M	\$7.0M	\$520K	N/A	\$33.8M
Average payment	\$32,513	\$6,423	\$53,922	\$47,264	N/A	-
Min. & max. payments to date	\$364 & \$400,000	\$152 & \$25,583	\$152 & \$400,000	\$995 & \$179,120	N/A	-
Total closed – not eligible or withdrawn	584	241	185	14	5	1029
Transferred to AGRI	-	-	20	-	152	172

Notes on the above data

- To assist in protecting personal privacy, no payment information is provided in the table for applications where fewer than five applications have been closed and paid.
- 172 applications were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AGRI) for support under the Canada-BC 2021 Canada-British Columbia Flood Recovery Program for Food Security.

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Table 3: applications in communities with at least five payments made

Community	Total # of applications	Total # Paid	Total value paid or in process
CENTRAL REGION (CTL)			
Merritt	491	305	\$10.2M
Princeton	190	104	\$2.6M
Spences Bridge	24	6	\$468K
Tulameen	22	12	\$413K
Total for CTL*	759	453	\$13.9M
SOUTHEAST (SE)			
Fernie	16	6	\$53K
Total for SE*	20	7	\$57K
SOUTHWEST (SWE)			
Abbotsford	684	314	\$13.4M
Agassiz	22	10	\$181K
Burnaby	14	6	\$87K
Chilliwack	239	109	\$2.1M
Delta	21	10	\$107K
Hope	50	21	\$707K
Langley	31	9	\$172K
Maple Ridge	8	6	\$82K
Mission	57	17	\$471K
Richmond	15	7	\$228K
Surrey	37	13	\$209K
White Rock	6	5	\$47K
Total for SWE*	1275	591	\$18.4M
VANCOUVER ISLAND (VI)			
Chemainus	31	21	\$377K
Duncan	32	11	\$146K
Nanaimo	15	6	\$245K
Victoria	59	22	\$352K
Westholme	12	7	\$84K
Total for VIR*	243	94	\$1.5M

*total is the total for the whole region, including communities with less than five payments made that are not listed in this chart.

Contact: Catherine Morrison Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) – 2023 Wildfire – Ops Metrics PUBLIC

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- DFA is available to help local authorities cover disaster-related losses that are not covered by insurance, such as wildfire damage to public infrastructure including roads, bridges and other publicly owned infrastructure.
- Ten community applications were received for the 2023 Wildfires (five from First Nation communities and five from Local Governments).
- Requests to support wildfire recovery projects have been received from the Northeast (4) and Central (6) Regions.
- As of March 4, 2024, five projects have been approved in principle for \$53,305.

Background:

Community Specific Wildfire Recovery Details as of March 4, 2024

- Westbank First Nation has one approved project for the completion of post-wildfire damages assessments; results from the assessments will determine if there are any DFA eligible projects.
- The Central Okanagan Regional District has identified damages to parks and trails and communications towers. Three projects have been approved. Staff are working with the community to gather required documentation for the additional projects.
- The Columbia Shuswap Regional District has identified damages to parks and trails, communications towers, firehall, library. One project has been approved. Staff are working with the community to gather required documentation for the additional projects.
- The City of Kelowna is preparing a Cost Recovery Plan for damages to its Glenmore Landfill. Staff are awaiting documentation to determine any DFA eligible projects.
- The City of West Kelowna is requesting danger tree assessments/removal and mitigative works. The mitigative works have been referred to EMCR's mitigation division to explore alternate funding streams. Staff are awaiting the Cost Recovery Plan for the danger trees to determine any DFA eligible projects.

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- The District of Lake Country has identified damages to parks and trails. Staff are working with the community to gather required documentation for the additional projects.
- Tsideldel First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Blueberry River First Nation and Ulkatcho First Nation have damages to hunting trails and cabins in traditional territories.
- The Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation (CDFAR) and Bilateral Agreement with Indigenous Services Canada are limited in their consideration of damages to land and infrastructure in traditional territories that are off reserve or treaty lands. The wildfire recovery team is exploring opportunities within alternative funding sources to be responsive and flexible to the needs of First Nation communities.

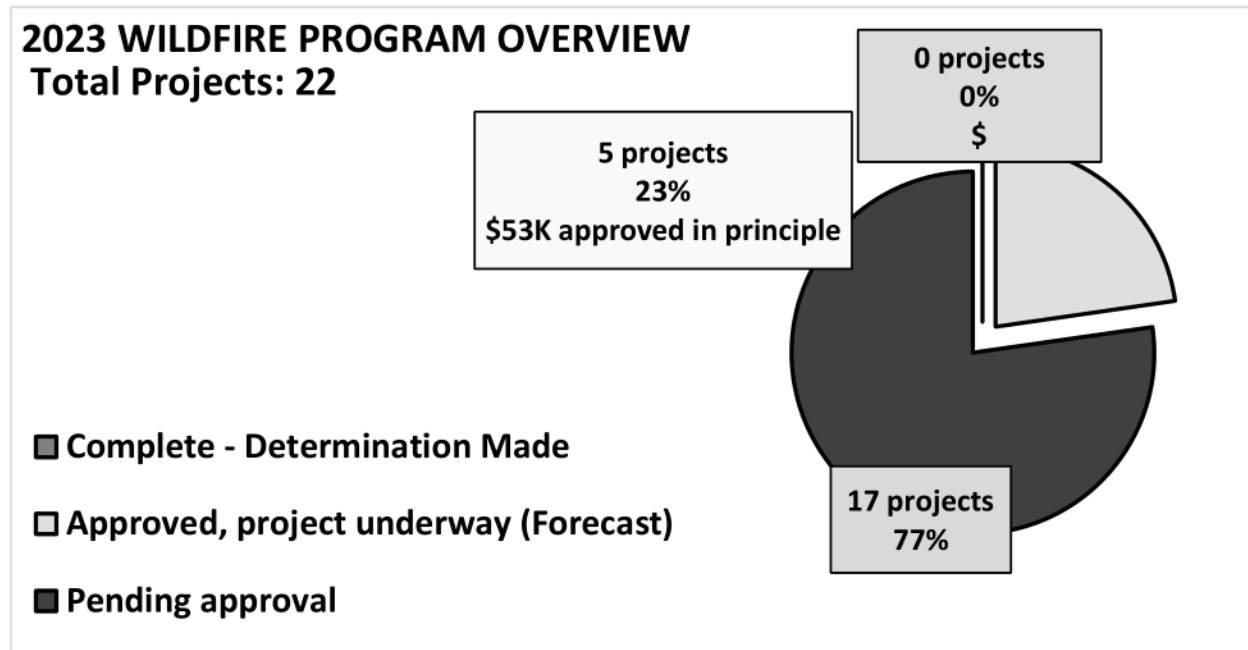
Key Facts and Figures:

Appendix A

Table 1: Community specific wildfire recovery details as of March 4, 2024

Community	Cost Recovery Plans (Projects)	Projects Approved	Projects Pending	Projects Closed (includes ineligible, withdrawn, complete)	DFA Amount approved in principle
Ulkatcho First Nation	-	-	-	-	-
Westbank First Nation	1	1	-	-	\$12,000
Tsideldel First Nation	7	-	7	-	-
Doig River First Nation	-	-	-	-	-
Blueberry River First Nation	-	-	-	-	-
Regional District of Central Okanagan	6	3	3	-	\$28,193
Kelowna, City	-	-	-	-	-
West Kelowna, City	-	-	-	-	-
Lake Country, District	3	-	3	-	-
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	5	1	4	-	\$13,112
TOTALS	22	5	17	-	\$53,305

Table 2: 2023 Wildfire DFA Program Overview



Contact: Catherine Morrison Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date 03/06/2024

Humanitarian Community Recovery Support Agencies Including Canadian Red Cross

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Partnerships with non-governmental organizations during emergency response and recovery is a critical element of an all of society approach to emergency management.
- The Integrated Disaster Council of British Columbia (IDCBC), which is a network of government and non-governmental agencies, is a key element of coordinating humanitarian aid to support local authority and First Nations' needs following a disaster.
- The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) has been a key Non-Governmental Organization providing humanitarian support services in response to large scale events throughout the province, including wildfires and floods.
- The Province continues to work to establish strong relationships humanitarian service agencies. During the 2023 Wildfires, the Province worked with several humanitarian service agencies including the Samaritan's Purse, Salvation Army, and the United Way.

Background:

- Programming provided by CRC has included:
 - Distributing emergency financial assistance payments to households and businesses impacted by evacuation orders.
 - Operating emergency reception centres and group lodging facilities on behalf of local authorities.
 - Providing case management informed support and financial assistance to those impacted by emergency events (i.e., to assist with clean-up, temporary accommodation, debris removal, small business supports, and other emergency-related needs).

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Table 1: Humanitarian Societies engaged during recent major events

Event	Society
2023 Wildfires	Samaritan's Purse
	Mennonite Central Committee
	Salvation Army
	United Way British Columbia
2021 Atmospheric River	Samaritan's Purse
	Mennonite Central Committee
	Salvation Army
	Canadian Red Cross
2021 Wildfires	Samaritan's Purse
	Mennonite Central Committee
	Salvation Army
	Canadian Red Cross

Contact: Cheryl Haight Recovery Funding Branch	Phone: 250-356-8671
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/06/2024

National Flood Insurance

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Flooding is British Columbia's costliest natural disaster, and flood damages continue to increase as a result of climate change, demographic shifts, and further development in high-risk flood areas.
- The 2021 Atmospheric River Event was Canada's 8th worst natural disaster. Over \$33.8 million was paid to over 1,100 households in B.C. for damages incurred due to flooding.
- EMCR was an active participant in the 2022 National Task Force led by Public Safety Canada. This task force produced an analysis of flood insurance solutions for consideration by the federal government. B.C. has continued to seek clarity in the federal government's model and timeline for bringing in a low-cost flood insurance program.
- EMCR has been asked to co-chair the Provincial and Territorial Task Team to further this important work. We are looking forward to bringing B.C.'s perspective to this task team and help to facilitate the development of a timely and meaningful product to support increased flood insurance access for British Columbians.

Background:

- In November 2020, Canada created the Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation (Task Force) with a mandate to explore solutions for a national low-cost flood insurance program for residents in high-risk areas and consider strategic relocation in areas at the highest risk of recurrent flooding.
- In August 2022, the Task Force released its report describing the four models examined as potential solutions to the availability and pricing problem for residential overland flood insurance.
- B.C. favoured a solution that combined components of both the public insurer and the public re-insurer models while retaining the re-insurer scheme overall as the analysis indicates it may result in better disaster risk reduction outcomes. A decision by the federal government remains pending.

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- In spring 2023, the Federal Budget proposed to provide \$15.3 million over three years, starting in 2023-24, to Public Safety Canada to create a publicly accessible online portal where Canadians can access information on their exposure to flooding.
- Discussion with the federal government has continued to seek details and timelines for implementing a low-cost flood insurance program.
- In February 2024, the federal government announced its intention to commence engagement in 2024 through the Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation, with the objective of developing a statement of fact report outlining considerations for minimum market conditions required to successfully implement any flood insurance product in Canada.

Contact: Jennifer McGuire Disaster Recovery Division	Mobile: ^{Government Financial Information}
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/27/2024

Landslide Policy for Undamaged Principal Residences

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The November 2021 Atmospheric River (AR) event caused unprecedented damage to several communities, including extensive damage to homes. In some circumstances, homes were affected by landslides and were deemed unsafe to inhabit due to the landslide risk associated with the property, even though the structure itself did not sustain physical damage.
- The DFA program's landslide policy guides decisions on eligibility for landslide-related claims in disaster events. The Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation (CDFAR) does not allow DFA to be provided to homeowners of principal residences if the structure did not sustain physical damage and does not apply to damage or erosion of land.
- To address this policy gap, EMCR continues to lead and participate in cross-ministry policy discussion regarding landslide hazards facing residents in multiple jurisdictions with the intent of finding timely solutions acceptable to impacted residents and local governments. This work remains a government priority and is ongoing; a definitive timeline for a resolution cannot be provided at this time.

Background:

- Once a DFA event has been declared, the DFA program assists qualifying applicants who have sustained eligible and uninsurable losses because of certain types of disasters. The DFA program may provide applicants with financial assistance to restore uninsurable losses that are essential to a home, livelihood, or community service.
- The DFA program operates under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA – previously the Emergency Program Act) and the ensuing Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation (CDFAR). The regulation does not allow DFA for homes that did not sustain direct physical damage. This raises concerns over people continuing to live in unsafe homes/high-risk areas for future landslides.
- Following the atmospheric river event, DFA claims were submitted by seven homeowners in the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) and three homeowners in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). The applicants are homeowners of principal residences that did not suffer direct physical damage to the structure yet were deemed unsafe to continue

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occupying. Subsequent geotechnical reports have confirmed that the homes are no longer safe to inhabit and mitigative works are likely to be cost-prohibitive or ineffective.

- At this time, DFA cannot be provided to these 10 properties because the homes did not sustain physical damage (which is a requirement under the regulation).

Key Facts and Figures:

- When required by the regulation, BC Assessment values are used in calculating DFA. Assistance for structural damage is limited to the lesser of the costs to repair, rebuild, or replace, and assessed value of the structure.
- Assessed value of structures only applies to eligible structures on the property (i.e., does not include land) and may not include all the improvements as indicated on the notice of assessment.
- DFA is provided for each accepted claim at 80% of the amount of total eligible damage less \$1,000, to a maximum of \$400,000 (private sector, i.e., homes).

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated: 02/12/2024

Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Last year's wildfire season was one of the largest and most damaging on record and we know wildfire seasons are going to become longer and more severe due to climate change.
- We know there are lessons to be learned and improvements to be made, and that's why we've worked closely with the Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies to implement their advice and expertise as we prepare for the 2024 season.
- The Task Force was made up of experts with a depth and breadth of knowledge and expertise in emergency and wildfire management, and has provided focused, constructive, and practical recommendations.
- Dedicated delivery teams have been working on real-time implementation of the Task Force's advice since October, to be ready for the 2024 season.
- Aligned with feedback from the Task Force, we've already make improvements to the way we prepare for and respond to wildfires, including enhancing the BCWS wildland firefighter recruitment strategy, expanding First Nations bootcamps, and upgrading air and ground fleet.
- The Task Force's recommendations provide a solid foundation for continuing to build a year-round wildfire management approach that integrates the Ministry's many partners, including First Nations, the forest industry, local authorities, and other groups.

Background:

- The Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies ("Task Force") was established in October 2023 to review lessons from recent seasons and provide advice to government on improvements to be implemented before and during the 2024 season. The Task Force wrapped up its work in March, 2024.
- The Task Force was co-chaired by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and the Ministry of Forests (FOR) and included members from First Nations, local authorities, structural fire departments, emergency management organizations, wildfire management experts from other jurisdictions, and senior officials from EMCR, FOR and the Premier's Office.

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- The Task Force focused on nine specific deliverables:
 - Enhance **Wildfire Predictive Services** current technology including the use of Artificial Intelligence and other technologies (FOR lead)
 - Planning for incorporation of **local volunteer resources for wildfire response** (FOR lead)
 - Improve **integration of rural and municipal fire departments into BC Wildfire Service** response in the wildland urban interface (FOR lead)
 - Review and update the **Wildfire Emergency Response Strategy** (FOR lead)
 - Strengthen community participation in all disciplines of **FireSmart** (FOR lead)
 - Identify effective expansion opportunities in **wildfire prevention programs** (FOR lead)
 - Enhance the **Evacuation Registration Assistance (ERA) tool** to provide fully digital support for evacuees (EMCR lead)
 - Modernize and enhance community delivery of **Emergency Support Services (ESS)**, including post-wildfire support (EMCR lead)
 - Identify opportunities to assist First Nations and local authorities to improve **evacuation order and alert awareness and compliance** (joint EMCR/FOR lead)
- The Task Force was asked to provide action-oriented advice, and delivery teams have been integrating this advice to make improvements for implementation for the 2024 season.
- The Task Force’s recommendations focus on strengthening communication and integration among emergency management partners; taking a citizen-centered approach; and building capacity across all partners.

Contact: Madeline Maley Division Regional Operations	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Premier’s Expert Task Force on Emergencies – Emergency Support Services

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Premier’s Expert Task Force on Emergencies (“Task Force”) was established in October 2023 to review lessons learned from recent wildfire seasons and provide advice to government on improvements in advance of the 2024 wildfire season. The Task Force wrapped up on March 1, 2024.
- Emergency Support Services (ESS) needs to be more accessible and responsive to surges in demand for support so that evacuees who need government assistance can have their basic needs met in a timely manner. The Task Force was asked to consider improvements to evacuee care that focused on enhancing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool and modernizing and enhancing community delivery of ESS, including post-wildfire support.
- Ministry of Forests (FOR) and Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) teams have been integrating the Task Force’s advice in real-time to make improvements. These changes will be rolled out as they are finalized for implementation, with many recommendations targeted for implementation by the end of May 2024, in advance of the traditional start of the wildfire season.
- EMCR carried out significant engagement to ensure that a broad range of experiences and expertise was considered in making recommendations and implementing improvements.

Background:

- The Task Force was co-chaired by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and the Ministry of Forests (FOR) and included members from First Nations, local authorities, structural fire departments, emergency management organizations, wildfire management experts from other jurisdictions, and senior officials from EMCR, FOR, and the Premier’s Office. See Appendix A below for full membership list.

Task Force Mandate

The Task Force focused on nine specific deliverables:

1. Enhance Wildfire Predictive Services current technology including the use of Artificial

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Intelligence and other technologies (FOR lead)

2. Planning for incorporation of local volunteer resources for wildfire response (FOR lead)
3. Improve integration of rural and municipal fire departments into BC Wildfire Service response in the wildland urban interface (FOR lead)
4. Review and update the Wildfire Emergency Response Strategy (FOR lead)
5. Strengthen community participation in all disciplines of FireSmart (FOR lead)
6. Identify effective expansion opportunities in wildfire prevention programs (FOR lead)
7. **Enhance the Evacuation Registration Assistance (ERA) tool to provide fully digital support for evacuees (EMCR lead)**
8. **Modernize and enhance community delivery of Emergency Support Services (ESS), including post-wildfire support (EMCR lead)**
9. Identify opportunities to assist First Nations and local authorities to improve evacuation order and alert awareness and compliance (joint **EMCR/FOR** lead)

ESS Recommendations

- Task Force recommendations related to ESS considered how to better support, evacuees, ESS responders, and program partners in large-scale emergencies.
- The Task Force is in the process of finalizing their recommendations.
- Overarching recommendations related to ESS include:

Engagement

- The Task Force conducted targeted engagements with key partners and stakeholders, including First Nations, local governments, and other organizations that were directly impacted by the 2023 fire season. Efforts were also made to meet with partners and stakeholders that specifically requested an opportunity to meet with the Task Force.
 - In October 2023, EMCR also initiated an extensive engagement process related to ESS modernization, which intersects with two of the Task Force's deliverables. Findings from this engagement informed Task Force deliberations. Please see **Table A** for additional information on participation in these engagements.
 - In early 2024, EMCR also launched a public survey to collect direct feedback from British Columbians regarding evacuee care. The survey was responded to by over 2,500 people.

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- A What We Learned Summary Report is being finalized (as of March 4, 2024).

Contact: Madeline Maley Division: Regional Operations Division	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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Appendix A

Task Force Membership

- Teresa Dobmeier (Co-Chair), Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
- Eamon O'Donoghue (Co-Chair), Forests
- Doug Caul, Office of the Premier
- Shannon Salter, Office of the Premier
- Madeline Maley, Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
- Ian Meier, Forests (BC Wildfire Service)
- Kukpi7 Rosanne Casimir, Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc
- Chief Corrina Leween, Cheslatta Carrier Nation
- Dan Derby, Fire Chiefs Association of BC
- Scott Hildebrand, Thompson Nicola Regional District
- Thom Porter, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (retired)
- Wayne Schnitzler, First Nations Emergency Services Society
- Tanya Spooner, City of Prince George

Table A: ESS Engagement Participants (grouped by meeting)

Regional District of Central Okanagan	Tourism Industry Stakeholder Session (BC Hotel Association, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association)
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	Tourism Industry Stakeholder Session (Tourism Industry Association of BC)
Skwlax First Nation, Adams Lake Indian Band and Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc	Northeast Regional Session
City of Vernon	Northwest Regional Session
City of Penticton and Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen	Southwest Regional Session
Tsal'alh First Nation, District of Lillooet, and Lillooet Tribal Council	Vancouver Island Coastal Regional Session
Kanaka Bar First Nation and Siska First Nation	Central Regional Session
City of Kamloops and Thompson-Nicola Regional District	Southeast Regional Session
Peace River Regional District	Indigenous Sessions (two sessions)
Fort St. John, Dawson Creek and Chetwynd	Carrier Sekani Family Services
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (including Smithers)	ESS Responder Session
Métis Nation BC	NGO Response Partners

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/03/2024

Emergency Support Services (ESS) Modernization

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) has worked with key partners including local authorities and First Nation governing bodies to continue to enhance the ESS program. This is a multi-year initiative that has been undertaken in several phases and reflects a commitment to continuous improvement.
- During the fall of 2023, EMCR launched a new phase of ESS modernization. This work builds on earlier work to digitize ESS, including the 2020 introduction of the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool, and the 2022 introduction of e-Transfer.
- Current efforts will incorporate learnings from the 2023 wildfire season, 2023 Ombudsperson recommendations, the advice of the Premier’s Expert Task Force on Emergencies, as well as inputs from the community and public consultation process (See Task Force Estimates note for details of consultation). EMCR has been integrating the Task Force’s recommendations in real-time to make improvements to the ESS program in advance of the season ahead.
- Initiatives for 2024 will build surge capacity to better respond to large-scale emergencies and support evacuees in a timelier manner and create more pathways for evacuees to access the supports they need.

Background:

- Over the years, ESS modernization has included changes to policies, tools, procedures, and responder training and the implementation of a new digital Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool which provides for:
 - Digital registration of evacuees including self-serve pre-registration to reduce lineups and congestion in evacuation centres.
 - Interac e-Transfer functionality to provide evacuees with greater flexibility in obtaining culturally appropriate emergency supports.
 - The digital submission of invoices which reduces reimbursement times for vendors supplying ESS supports to evacuees.
- As of March 4, 2024, 91 communities have onboarded to use the ERA tool.

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Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) Tool

- In 2019, a proof of concept was successfully piloted in four communities: Prince George, Kamloops, Regional District of Central Okanagan and Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. The results of the pilot supported the decision to proceed with further implementation of the ERA tool.
- The provincial release of the ERA tool occurred on April 1, 2020 and was accelerated to support physical distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by reducing lineups and congestion in reception centres.
- In June 2020, a Supplier Portal was added to ERA, which enabled digital submission of invoices from suppliers to EMCR and decreased time to reimbursement.
- In the summer of 2022, based on learning from the 2021 wildfire and atmospheric river events, an Interac e-Transfer function was added to enable direct transfer of funds to eligible evacuees. This empowers evacuees by providing more choice in where they shop for clothing, food and incidental supports and reduces reliance on traditional paper-based referrals (sometimes referred to as vouchers).
 - In calendar year 2023, evacuees received 3,744 e-Transfers valued at \$2,644,997.
 - The majority of these e-Transfers were issued during the last two weeks of August 2023 to support evacuees in the southern interior.

Cultural Safety and Humility in Evacuee Care

- EMCR has incorporated cultural safety and humility into the ESS program, including the introduction of policies to better meet the needs of Indigenous communities through First Nations Community Navigators policy and establishment of Cultural Activity Location Supports policy (where evacuees can gather and access cultural care services).
 - First Nation Community Navigators and Cultural Activity Location Supports were used to support communities during wildfire 2023, primarily in the north and central regions.
- EMCR in partnership with First Nations Health Authority has been offering monthly training sessions for ESS responders focused on improving cultural safety and trauma informed care in reception centres.
 - Over 150 responders have participated since December 2023, with sessions planned for March, April and May 2024.
- In May 2023, changes were made to communication with evacuees based on concerns brought forward by First Nation partners. ESS responders no longer advise evacuees that “alcohol, tobacco and gratuities are not eligible expenses” as this language was received as culturally unsafe.

Streamlined Training for New Responders

- EMCR worked with the Justice Institute of BC to develop and deliver new online training for

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the ERA tool and to support existing volunteers to become comfortable with the tool.

- Based on community feedback, ESS training is being further streamlined and a new one-day course will be available to new responders in May 2024.
- This course will provide responders with the skills they need to issue evacuee supports using ERA using a trauma informed approach.
- This new course will significantly reduce the time it takes to train new responders, as well as convergent volunteers who may present during an emergency event.
- To improve accessibility, the new course will be available in three formats: instructor led, in-person; instructor led, online; and, self-paced (no instructor), online.

New Pathways to Access ESS and Continued Partnership with Service BC

- The introduction of ERA has also resulted in new opportunities for the province to support communities that may be challenged to meet the demand for ESS during large scale events.
- For example, during the 2021, 2022, 2023 wildfire seasons, EMCR worked with staff from other ministries to support evacuees, and coordinated remote aid by relying on support from ESS teams from unimpacted communities to provide supports over the phone using the ERA tool.
- ESS-EMCR worked with Service BC to support the large-scale evacuations in Regional District Central Okanagan in August 2023. Service BC agents made over 10,000 contacts through phone calls and text messages to evacuees who registered for supports, ensuring they were directed to provincially sourced commercial accommodations.
 - In addition, Service BC staff were deployed to reception centres to provide in-person support, including authentication using the Service BC App (to enable ERA e-Transfer) and assistance in replacing identification.
 - The partnership between EMCR and Service BC has resulted in a 2024 Budget commitment to: “broaden support for evacuees by funding specially-trained Service BC call centre agents who provide virtual navigation for accessing information and emergency services. Other new Service BC staff can be deployed directly to impacted communities to facilitate critical emergency services, such as funding distribution and on-site replacement of official documents.”¹
 - Increased provincial support means that fewer evacuees need to visit an in-person reception centre during a large-scale evacuation. For example, evacuees who billet with friends or family, can call Service BC to receive support for food, clothing and incidentals through e-Transfer.

Emergency Support Services Program Guide

- The ESS Program Guide (December 2022) replaced the ESS Field Guide which was last updated in 2010.
- Over time, the gap between the ESS Field Guide and current ESS practices increased. The

¹ https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2024/pdf/2024_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf Page 18.

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goal of the 2022 release was to ensure that program guidance reflected current practice and included improvements to cultural safety and humility, as well as the introduction of new tools like ERA.

- Following release of the Program Guide in December 2022, several communities wrote to the Minister, Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) to raise concerns related to a perceived expansion of responsibilities and a lack of consultation on changes covered by some local media.
- In response to concerns, the ESS Program offered to meet directly with communities that wrote to the Minister and held regional engagement sessions with ESS directors and emergency program coordinators. 90 min sessions were held across all six EMCR regions designed to review the feedback received to date and discuss possible changes in advance of further updates to the Program Guide. Meetings concluded on June 6, 2023.
- The Program Guide was again updated on October 27, 2023 to reflect additional feedback provided by communities. The Program Guide will continue to be a living document and will be updated to reflect current practices and community feedback moving forward.

Contact: Chrissy Oliver Provincial Response Programs	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Emergency Support Services (ESS) – 2023 Wildfire Response

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- During the 2023 wildfires, approximately 48,000 people were placed on evacuation order. Approximately 137,000 people were placed on evacuation alert.
- Based on data available through the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool, of the approximately 17,000 evacuees¹ that needed assistance from Emergency Support Services (ESS) to meet their basic needs for shelter, food, clothing, incidentals, and transportation in 2023, the majority of these evacuees were evacuated due to wildfire.
- Previous work to modernize ESS benefited the 2023 wildfire response. Over \$2 million was provided directly to evacuees via e-Transfer during the last two weeks of August 2023 (\$2,029,979 from August 15th to 31st), which enabled evacuees to choose where to obtain food, clothing, and other support. Before the introduction of e-Transfer capability, evacuees were limited to voucher-based support from suppliers registered with the ESS program. (Table A: Monthly summary of funds e-Transferred to evacuees in 2023)
- Given the large-scale and rapid evacuations experienced due to wildfires in 2023, local ESS teams were at times challenged to meet the increased demand for supports in a timely manner.
- Lessons learned and innovations developed during the 2023 wildfire season will be considered as EMCR seeks to make improvements to evacuee care, including partnership with Service BC to increase provincial surge capacity to support Indigenous governing bodies and local authorities in responding to more frequent, large-scale emergencies.

Background:

- The 2023 wildfire season was the most destructive in B.C.'s recorded history based on hectares burned (>2.8 million hectares burned overall; >2.4 million hectares in the north). The human impacts were also severe.
- 39 communities (Indigenous governing bodies and local authorities) provided support for evacuees between May and September 2023.

¹ Note: The use of approximately 17,000 reflects that this data is based on the best data available using the ERA tool. There are some communities that do not always use ERA and those evacuees may not be fully captured in this estimate. During wildfire 2023, all large host communities used the ERA tool.

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EMCR Partnership with Service BC/Ministry of Citizens Services

- EMCR ESS Program staff worked with Service BC to support the large-scale evacuations in the Regional District Central Okanagan. Service BC agents made over 10,000 contacts through phone calls and text messages to evacuees who registered for assistance, ensuring they were directed to provincially sourced commercial accommodations.
 - In addition, Service BC staff were deployed to reception centres across the province to provide in-person support, including authentication using the Service BC App (to enable receipt of ERA e-Transfer) and assistance in replacing identification.
 - The partnership between EMCR and Service BC has resulted in a 2024 Budget commitment to: “broaden support for evacuees by funding specially trained Service BC call centre agents who provide virtual navigation for accessing information and emergency services. Other new Service BC staff can be deployed directly to impacted communities to facilitate critical emergency services, such as funding distribution and on-site replacement of official documents.”²

Impact of Structure Loss

- Human impacts also included the loss of hundreds of structures, including 253 primary residences, with the most extensive impacts in the Central Okanagan and Shuswap, resulting in significant recovery efforts.
 - Several communities continued to support evacuees who had lost their primary residence through ESS until the final extension ended on January 15, 2024.
 - These communities included: Burns Lake, Kamloops, Kelowna, Salmon Arm and Keremeos supported evacuees.

Lodging

- EMCR worked to ensure group lodging and industrial style camps were available across BC to receive evacuees if needed. This included, but was not limited to partnerships with the following not-for-profit organizations and host communities:
 - Lodging stood up in partnership with Tk'emlups te Secwepecmc in Kamloops which primarily supported evacuated First Nation communities.
 - A group lodging site with support from City of Kamloops at McArthur Island, staffed by Samaritans Purse. Samaritans Purse also established and operated group lodging in Kelowna to support the large-scale evacuation in August 2023.
 - The Canadian Red Cross ran a group lodging site at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George.

ESS Deployments

- The EMCR Roving ESS Team is made up of ESS subject matter experts who are employed as ‘as and when’ government staff. Members are deployed from June to August supporting host communities with provincial group lodging, just in time training for convergent volunteers, ERA support and the coordination of ESS.

² https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2024/pdf/2024_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf Page 18.

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- In 2023 the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre's (PECC) Evacuation Branch supported local responses across BC with ESS responder deployments:
 - 22 ESS volunteer responders; and,
 - 6 ESS teams (Prince George, Saanich, Williams Lake, Smithers, Terrace and Burns Lake) were coordinated by the province to provide remote support to Kelowna and Kamloops using the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool (ERA). This does not include teams that worked together without provincial coordination.

Table A: Monthly summary of funds e-Transferred to evacuees in 2023

2023	Funds transferred
January	\$6,678.00
February	\$6,589.00
March	\$2,828.75
June	\$3,785.00
July	\$81,978.50
August	\$2,037,557.00
September	\$416,843.25
October	\$58,463.00
November	\$28,983.00
December	\$1,291.00
Total	\$2,644,996.50

Contact: Chrissy Oliver
Provincial Response Program

Mobile: ^{Government Financial Information}

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2023

Evacuee Reimbursement – West Kelowna 2023

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The McDougall Creek Wildfire resulted in one of the largest mass evacuations in B.C. history. The West Kelowna reception centre faced challenges processing the high volume of evacuees that rapidly arrived at the centre resulting in longer wait times before receiving accommodations and food.
- The local authorities who ran reception centres made tremendous efforts to ensure that everyone who needed Emergency Support Services (ESS) had access.
- The Province took action to support local authorities to deliver support to evacuees more quickly. This included training additional ESS responders, engaging the Service BC call centre to provide support calling/texting registered evacuees, and initiating immediate transfer of evacuees from the queue to suitable lodgings.
- People on evacuation order from their primary residence who went to the West Kelowna Reception Centre and covered their own costs due to the long wait times, but would have otherwise relied on ESS, were able to apply for reimbursement.
 - 475 reimbursement claims were received between September 2023 to February 2024 and resulted in \$422,828.50 in payments to evacuees.

Background:

- ESS is intended for evacuees who are unable to support themselves with their immediate needs (like food and shelter) after/during an emergency. Because ESS is normally provided shortly after it is requested, it is not routinely provided retroactively.
- On August 28, 2023, Minister Ma advised that a reimbursement process was being developed for evacuees who attended the West Kelowna Reception Centre and covered the costs of certain supports on their own due to wait times but would have otherwise relied on ESS.
- Reimbursement was available for commercial accommodation costs and food for the period between August 17 through August 23, 2023. This period was not extended for the duration of the evacuation order as EMCR was confident that all evacuees had reasonable access to ESS by August 24 (Email and reimbursement application attached for reference).

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Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement

- Receipts were required to be reimbursed for commercial accommodation.
- Receipts were not required for food. Evacuees were provided with reimbursement for food based on the ESS meal rate (up to \$53 per day) for each household member.
- Transportation or incidentals were not eligible for reimbursement. Unlike food and accommodation which is impacted by the amount of time an evacuee is on order, incidentals are a pre-set, one-time payment. Evacuees were able to be provided funds for incidentals when the evacuee received supports, even if receipt of those supports were delayed. As such, the delay in accessing ESS was not a barrier to receiving incidentals through the existing process.
- Gas cards are typically only provided for events when evacuees travel over 100 kms to the nearest reception centre. This distance threshold was not met for evacuees travelling to West Kelowna (for example from Lake Country).

Applications for Reimbursement and Payment

- 475 reimbursement claims were received between September 2023 to February 2024.
- The reimbursement process resulted in \$422,828.50 in payments to evacuees.
 - 314 or 66% of claims were fully approved.
 - 124 or 26% of claims were partially approved.
 - 37 claims or 8% were denied.
- 15 claims were appealed, 4 of which resulted in payout.

Contact: Chrissy Oliver Division: Provincial Response Programs	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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APPENDIX 1: Email to Evacuees Seeking Reimbursement – September 2023

Subject: EMCR Reimbursement Application for Emergency Support Services

Hello,

You are receiving this email because you contacted the Government of British Columbia requesting reimbursement for expenses related to your evacuation from your home due to wildfire in August 2023. A process is now in place for you to apply for reimbursement, and this email will provide information on the process and eligibility.

Emergency Support Services (ESS) are intended for uninsured evacuees who are unable to support themselves with their immediate needs, like accommodation, during an emergency or immediately after. The Province aims to support people immediately in their time of need in these situations; however, the McDougall Creek Wildfire resulted in one of the largest mass evacuations in the province's history. As a result, there were challenges supporting the high number of evacuees resulting in longer wait times to conduct a needs assessment. We apologize if you experienced long waits. Due to the exceptional circumstances, the Government of British Columbia is providing reimbursement for eligible evacuees.

If you were on evacuation order from your primary residence and went to the West Kelowna Reception Centre but were unable to access support between August 17 to August 23, 2023, you may be eligible for reimbursement for commercial accommodation (like hotel, Airbnb, and campground) and food. You can apply for reimbursement using the form attached to this email.

You are required to provide receipts for any commercial accommodation claimed. Expenses for food will be reimbursed up to \$53 per day in alignment with ESS rates and receipts will not be required. The application period will close at 11:59 pm on October 15, 2023.

In addition to completing the attached form, please register with the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool and authenticate your profile using the BC Services Card app. This will enable validation of your identity to confirm eligibility and ensure more timely processing of your application. Please register at the following link: <https://era-evacuees.embc.gov.bc.ca/registration-method>.

For questions related to the application process please email: EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca or you may also call 1-800-585-9559 during regular business hours.

We thank you for your patience as we continue to work through this reimbursement application process.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness



**APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
Meals and/or Accommodations related to
West Kelowna Reception Centre**

Emergency Support Services (ESS) are intended for evacuees who need immediate support to meet their basic needs during an emergency event. This application for assistance is for individuals who were evacuated from their primary residence, were directed to the West Kelowna Reception Centre by their First Nation government or local authority but were unable to access ESS in a timely manner due to the high volume of evacuees seeking supports. Evacuees can claim daily meal rates and commercial accommodation charges during the period between August 17-23, 2023. Commercial accommodation claims require supporting receipts to be reimbursed.

In addition to completing this Application for Assistance, please register with the Evacuee Registration & Assistance (ERA) tool and authenticate your profile using the BC Services Card app. This will assist with validation of your identity to confirm eligibility and ensure more timely processing of your application. Please register at the following link: <https://era-evacuees.embc.gov.bc.ca/registration-method>.

This Application also includes a Direct Deposit Form. If direct deposit information is not provided, additional verification of your identity will be required prior to payment being issued.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 15, 2023

Eligibility Dates August 17 – August 23, 2023.
(Including commercial accommodation charges for the night of August 23rd)

APPLICANT INFORMATION (Required)

Name (Last, First, Middle)		Date of Evacuation Order (MM/DD/YYYY)	
Property Address Street		City/Town	Province
			Postal Code
Mailing Address (# different from the property address) Street		City/Town	Province
			Postal Code
Residence Telephone Number () -	Cellular Telephone Number () -	E-mail Address (Correspondence will be sent to this address)	
<p>LIST THE NAMES AND DATES OF BIRTH OF ALL FULL-TIME OCCUPANTS WHO RESIDED IN THE HOME AT THE TIME OF THE EVENT, AS THEIR PRIMARY RESIDENCE, AND ARE BEING ADDED TO THIS APPLICATION AS CLAIMANTS.</p> <p><i>Please note: Individuals listed on this form are not eligible to submit an additional claim for reimbursement:</i></p>			
1.	DOB:	4.	DOB:
2.	DOB:	5.	DOB:
3.	DOB:	6.	DOB:
<p>For Residential Tenant/Renter Applicants:</p>			
Provide Registered Building Owner(s) and/or Landlord(s) Name(s)		Contact Telephone Number () -	

TO APPLY, PLEASE COMPLETE, SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM, WITH ANY REQUIRED RECEIPTS TO:
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness,
Block A – Suite 200 2261 Keating Cross Road Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A5
or via email to EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca



**APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
Meals and/or Accommodations related to
West Kelowna Reception Centre**

MANDATORY INFORMATION				
Failure to complete this section may result in your application being assessed as ineligible.				
1. Were you evacuated for any period between August 17-23, 2023?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
If yes to #1 above:				
i. What date did the evacuation order come into force for your residence?	Date:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		
ii. What date were you allowed to return to your residence?	Date:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		
2. Do you have insurance coverage for your residence that covers additional living expenses? This type of insurance is commonly referred to as Loss of use coverage, Coverage D Insurance, or Living Expenses Coverage.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
3. As the Homeowner or Tenant, do you occupy this property as your primary residence?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
4. To date, have you received any Emergency Support Services related to this event?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
5. Has any <u>other</u> individual who is identified as a household member on this application received any Emergency Support Services related to this event?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
6. Is the address provided the primary residence for all household members on the application?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
7. Are you now residing in the residence?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
8. Have you been registered for the Evacuee Registration and Referral (ERA) tool using the BC Services Card app?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
9. Are you claiming for reimbursement of commercial accommodation expenses? If Yes to #9, ensure Appendix A is completed and returned along with this Application. Backup documentation (i.e. receipts from hotel/campground/Airbnb etc.) also need to be provided.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
10. Are you claiming reimbursement of meals paid for at your own expense? If Yes to #10, provide details on which days/meals you are claiming for. In the table below, check each box for each meal that is being claimed. For example, if a full day is being claimed, all three boxes in the row need to be checked. Do not check boxes for meals provided or which you have already received per diem supports.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
	August 17, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 18, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 19, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 20, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 21, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 22, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	August 23, 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Is every individual on this application claiming the same meals as per the table above? If No, to #11, please detail which meals are not being claimed by specific individuals.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
Other claimants as Identified on Page 1	Which meals are <u>NOT</u> being claimed (i.e. 08/17 Breakfast, 08/22 B/L/D, 08/23 Dinner)			
Individual #1				
Individual #2				
Individual #3				
Individual #4				
Individual #5				
Individual #6				

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Emergency Management and Climate Readiness,
Block A – Suite 200 2261 Keating Cross Road Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A5
or via email to EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca



**APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
Meals and/or Accommodations related to
West Kelowna Reception Centre**

NOTICE OF COLLECTION:

Personal information on this form is collected by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) under section 26(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). The information will be used to evaluate your application to determine eligibility for Emergency Support Services. If you have any questions about the collection of this information, email EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca or call 1-800-585-9559.

AUTHORIZATION OF INDIRECT COLLECTION:

By including the personal information of other individuals on this form I confirm that I have the permission of those individuals to provide their personal information to EMCR.

SHARING OF INFORMATION:

EMCR (or its agent) may disclose information to, or collect information from, other Provincial Government Ministries and Crown Corporations, as permitted by FOIPPA, to verify that the information provided on this form is accurate.

DECLARATION:

I do solemnly declare that the foregoing representative statements are to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, true in every particular detail, and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously, believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of the *Canada Evidence Act*.

I understand that by signing this application I am confirming that any funds recovered through civil litigation, insurance or other sources that are attributable to expenses covered by this assistance program, up to a maximum amount of what I will receive through this assistance program, must be repaid to the Province.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

TO APPLY, PLEASE COMPLETE, SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM, WITH ANY REQUIRED RECEIPTS TO:
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness,
Block A – Suite 200 2281 Keating Cross Road Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A5
or via email to EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca



**APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
Meals and/or Accommodations related to
West Kelowna Reception Centre**

APPENDIX A

APPLICANT NAME:

EXPENSE LOG				
Please document commercial accommodation expenditures associated with your evacuation that were personally paid for and not eligible for reimbursement through insurance.				
Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Commercial Accommodation Name	Cost	Description of expense	EMCR Office use Only
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		

All accommodations expenses claimed must be supported by receipts and should be attached to your email submission. If your application is being physically mailed in, copies of original receipts must be provided.

THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF ALL EMAIL ATTACHMENTS COMBINED SHOULD NOT EXCEED 20MB. IF THE AGGREGATE OF ALL FILES EXCEEDS 20MB, MULTIPLE EMAILS MAY NEED TO BE SUBMITTED AND SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED (e.g. Email 1 of 3, Email 2 of 3...)

All applications should be emailed to EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc if possible.

If physically mailing in your application, please send it to:
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
Attn: ESS Reimbursement Applications
Block A – Suite 200, 2261 Keating Cross Road
Saanichton, B.C.
V8M 2A5

Direct Deposit forms are strongly recommended to be included as an additional identity verification method. Applications without a Direct Deposit form will undergo secondary identification verification processes conducted by EMCR’s application adjudicators.

TO APPLY, PLEASE COMPLETE, SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM, WITH ANY REQUIRED RECEIPTS TO:
Emergency Management and Climate Readiness,
Block A – Suite 200 2261 Keating Cross Road Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A5
or via email to EMCR.ESSApplications@gov.bc.ca

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

State of Emergency Travel Ban

Last Updated: 03/04/2024

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- We recognize the enduring impacts of last year's wildfire season on people, communities, and industries across B.C., which was the most severe in the province's history. We are committed to supporting them through recovery efforts.
- Decisions around states of emergencies and travel orders are not made lightly.
- Following the 2023 wildfire season, both the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and the Ministry of Forests engaged with people, small businesses, the tourism industry, the agriculture sector and others. Together, we've gained valuable insights on lessons learned and how to enhance the way we prepare for and respond to wildfire emergencies.
- Improvements include a commitment to a robust decision-making process acknowledging that some situations evolve rapidly.

Background:

- On August 18th, 2023, there were more than 4,500 people on evacuation order and more than 23,500 under evacuation alert. By August 19th, 2023, those numbers increased significantly to more than 28,000 people on evacuation order and approximately 36,000 on evacuation alert.
- A declaration of a Provincial state of emergency was declared on August 18th, 2023, due to wildfires threatening lives, sites of heritage value and property, including homes and other structures.
- The use of temporary accommodations for non-essential purposes in the southern interior area was significantly impacting the availability of temporary accommodation for critical purposes, including use by evacuees and by personnel providing emergency and critical services, including wildfire response.
- While the Province had proactively established group lodging options with select communities as part of our preparedness efforts, the historic number of people evacuated and on evacuation alert had potential to significantly overwhelm available supply. That's why the Province introduced travel restrictions for the purpose of temporary

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accommodation in select communities, ensuring appropriate accommodation for evacuees and front-line responders alike.

- Using an order made under the Provincial state of emergency, the Province placed limited-term restrictions on staying in temporary accommodation.
- The order was necessary to help ensure accommodation was available for critical-response personnel and the tens of thousands of people evacuated due to wildfires.
- Exceptions were included in the order for people requiring essential stays, including:
 - Providing emergency or critical services;
 - Sheltering for evacuees;
 - Travelling for health or medical reasons;
 - Transporting essential goods and supplies;
 - Attending court or complying with a court order;
 - Attending a funeral service;
 - Avoiding the risk of abuse or violence;
 - Exercising parental responsibilities;
 - Moving or assisting with moving to a different principal residence;
 - Carrying out a temporary work-related purpose, including volunteer work;
 - Attending classes or training; and,
 - Exercising an Aboriginal or treaty right.

Contact: Madeline Maley Regional Operations	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/23/2024

Response Preparedness Posture

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- General preparedness for emergencies requires an understanding of disaster risk and is a shared responsibility in B.C. among people, all levels of government, public institutions, critical infrastructure providers, not-for-profit agencies, and the private sector.
- EMCR provides preparedness guides for people and businesses as part of a whole-of-society approach to risk reduction and response readiness.
- EMCR maintains year-round weather forecasting and a robust 24/7/365 staffing model to ensure constant readiness for emergency response to disasters anywhere in the Province, including flooding, wildfire, drought, extreme heat and cold and seismic events.
- EMCR hosts regional Seasonal Readiness Calls in the fall and spring of each year for First Nation and Local Authority Emergency Programs, with a focus on ensuring the readiness of all partners for seasonal natural hazards, such as wildfire, flooding, heat and drought.

Background:

- In BC, a local authority is responsible for the direction and control of its emergency response and must establish and maintain an emergency management organization and prepare local emergency plans.
- The *Emergency Program Regulation* assigns responsibility for the development of hazard specific emergency response plans and procedures to specific ministries (e.g., assigns responsibility for wildfire response plans to the Ministry of Forests).
- New regulations that serve the same purpose as the *Emergency Program Regulation* will be drafted for EDMA.

Flood Readiness

- Flooding in BC is typically driven by freshet snowmelt (during the spring/early summer) and heavy precipitation (possible anytime of year, but most common during fall storms or when occurring at the same time as freshet snowmelt).
- Flooding of coastal areas due to ocean storm surge is also possible in BC.

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- Roles and responsibilities for flood preparedness and response are outlined in the Provincial Flood Emergency Plan.
- The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship's (WLRS) River Forecast Centre (RFC) produces snowpack and river flow analyses, and issues flood warnings, watches, and advisories to inform emergency managers and the public about current and upcoming flood conditions and risk.
- The Province, First Nations, and Local Authorities use local floodplain mapping in conjunction with RFC information to further refine predictions of flood risk and inform flood readiness activities.
- EMCR pre-positions flood control assets (e.g., sandbags) in consultation with communities to ensure the assets are ready for rapid deployment to areas with imminent flood threat.
- EMCR is working with communities and other partners to identify and address flooding vulnerabilities created by recent atmospheric river, drought and wildfire events.

Wildfire Readiness

- Mapping and publishing of wildfire risk, as well as readiness for tactical wildfire response (on both crown land and in partnership with First Nation and Local Authority wildfire response plans) is largely undertaken by the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS).
- As the Province's lead agency for coordinating emergency management activities in BC, EMCR works closely with the BCWS in all aspects of provincial wildfire readiness.

Extreme Temperature Readiness

- EMCR supports the response to extreme temperature events by First Nations and local authorities, including through the funding of communities' emergency warming and cooling shelters.
- Following the 2021 heat dome event, the province established the BC Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures (BC HEAT) Committee, led by the Ministry of Health, and supported by EMCR.
- In 2022, the BC HEAT Committee developed the BC Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS) that established criteria and response actions for a two-level system of heat alerts (Heat Warnings and Extreme Heat Emergencies).
- The BC HARS outlines key messages for the public and provides recommended actions for public health officials, EMCR, communities and other provincial heat response partners during heat events, including the issuance of emergency intrusive alerts.

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- The BC HEAT Committee updated the BC HARS for summer 2023 and will review and update it again in advance of summer 2024.
- In December 2023, the BC HEAT Committee developed public health and planning recommendations intended to reduce the impacts of exposure to extreme winter weather on people experiencing homelessness in BC.

Drought

- Roles and responsibilities for drought and water scarcity response are outlined in the BC Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan (updated in April 2023).
- EMCR can assist First Nations and local authorities with drought response. This may include emergency livestock feed, supporting First Nation and local authorities drinking water plans – including the transportation of alternate drinking water or the co-ordination of local authority mutual aid, such as traditional foods.
- In summer of 2023, EMCR created and provided First Nations and Local Governments with a Water Scarcity Response Plan Template that was intended to supplement their local emergency management plans, and a Water Scarcity Emergency Exercise Toolkit.

Seismic Event (Earthquake and Tsunami) Readiness

- EMCR maintains 24/7/365 readiness to launch the Provincial Emergency Notification System (PENS) to notify communities and emergency management partners of tsunami warnings, advisories or watches.
- PENS includes intrusive emergency alerts to radio, TV, and cellular devices to notify the public in the event of a tsunami warning.
- EMCR is responsible for maintaining the Provincial Earthquake Immediate Response Strategy, which details the roles, responsibilities and integration of the province and its partners in responding to a catastrophic earthquake.
- The Federal Government will launch an Earthquake Early Warning system in spring 2024.

Contact: Pader Brach Regional Operations Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

BC Emergency Alerts

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- People and communities across British Columbia are experiencing extreme weather emergencies – such as heat, wildfires and floods – like never before due to climate change.
- During emergencies, we need to help people be safe and informed by providing urgent and life-saving information as quickly as possible. That’s why our government continues to prioritize the expansion and delivery of the B.C. Emergency Alert system.
- The Province has the ability to issue emergency alerts for tsunamis and extreme heat emergencies, as well as for wildfires and floods on behalf of communities. The RCMP may issue alerts for civil emergencies and Amber Alerts.
- Emergency alerts were an important tool in last year’s wildfire season and helped people get access to timely, potentially life-saving information when they needed it.
 - The Province issued 24 emergency alerts for wildfire on behalf of communities.

Background:

- A Broadcast Intrusive Public Alert is for an imminent threat to public life or safety and is issued through radio, television and/or wireless devices and governed by the National Public Alerting System, a collaborative Federal-Provincial-Territorial initiative.
- The Canadian Radio-TV and Telecommunications Commission mandates that all radio, television and cellular providers transmit Broadcast Intrusive alerts.
- In 2015, the Alert Ready (public facing brand) broadcast intrusive public alerting system was launched in Canada and adopted in B.C. to issue radio and television alerts. In 2018, B.C. added the ability to deliver broadcast intrusive alerts to compatible wireless devices.
- Under the National Public Alerting System:
 - The Province is the primary authorized issuer of all broadcast intrusive alerts in B.C. except for Amber and police incident alerts, which are issued in B.C. by the RCMP under the delegated authority of the Province.
 - The Federal government through Environment and Climate Change Canada is the authorized issuer of Broadcast Intrusive alerts for extreme weather events such as storm surge and severe thunderstorms.

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- The Federal government through Natural Resources Canada will be launching its earthquake early warning system in April 2024. These are automated broadcast intrusive alerts that will direct public in impacted areas to drop, cover and hold on and may provide seconds to tens-of-seconds warning.
- There are also many subscription-based, non-broadcast intrusive alert products in use across Canada and B.C. by First Nations and local authorities (e.g., Alertable, Voyent). Many of these systems include applications for mobile devices and will receive and re-broadcast B.C. emergency alerts.
- First Nations and local authorities may also use sirens and go door-to-door as part of local alerting systems.
- Under the *Emergency Program Act's* Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation, local authorities have the responsibility to “establish procedures by which those persons who may be harmed or who may suffer loss are notified of an emergency.” New regulations under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* are forthcoming.
- For tsunamis, the Province uses the Provincial Emergency Notification System to alert First Nations and local authorities, key partner agencies and media outlets by phone, email and fax. Through this system, a broadcast intrusive public alert can also be issued for tsunami warnings.
- The Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control co-chair a committee of public health experts in all health authorities to support planning and response efforts related to public health impacts for significant heat events.
 - The BC Heat Alert Response System (HARS) details the triggers for two alert levels: heat warning and extreme heat emergency.
 - The aforementioned committee will recommend a broadcast intrusive alert for an extreme heat emergency through the EMCR Regional Operations.

Key Facts and Figures:

- Alerts issued in 2023:
 - 24 B.C. emergency alerts were issued for wildfire.
 - 2 test alerts were issued on May 10, 2023 and November 15, 2023.

Contact: Yana Stratemeyer-Trinczek Division: Regional Operations Branch: Provincial Response Programs	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 03/04/2024

Extreme Heat & Cold Preparedness Initiatives

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Province recognizes that the tragic loss of life associated with the 2021 extreme heat event, and the understanding that climate change will drive more frequent extreme temperature events in the future, demand strengthened preparedness activities.
- In 2022, to prepare for future extreme heat events, the Province introduced several key initiatives:
 - The establishment of the BC Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures (BC HEAT) Committee, led by the Ministry of Health, and supported by EMCR;
 - The development by the BC HEAT Committee of the BC Heat Alert Response System (BC HARS) that established criteria and response actions for a two-level system of heat alerts (Heat Warnings and Extreme Heat Emergencies);
 - The publishing of the Prepared BC *Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide*; and
 - The initiation of an Extreme Heat Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning stream through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) (updated in 2023 to the Extreme Temperature Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning stream).
- In 2023, to prepare for future extreme cold and winter weather events, the BC HEAT Committee developed and published public health recommendations intended to reduce the impacts of extreme winter weather on people experiencing homelessness in BC.
 - These recommendations serve as a reference for winter weather planning for governments and organizations that support people experiencing homelessness (a population at increased risk of severe outcomes from extreme winter weather).
- The Prepared BC *Severe Winter Weather and Storm Preparedness Guide* was updated prior to winter 2023.
- EMCR also works directly with First Nations and local authorities to support their response to extreme temperature events, including through the funding of communities' emergency warming and cooling shelters.
 - As of fall 2023, communities are now able to upload the locations of their emergency warming and cooling shelters to the EMCR EmergencyInfoBC online emergency map platform.

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- ClimateReadyBC, the Province of B.C.'s online platform for disaster and climate risk reduction, includes data and resources on extreme heat, extreme cold and winter storm hazards which can support communities, organizations, and individuals in understanding and reducing current and future risk.

Background:

- The BC Coroners Service identified more than 600 deaths as being heat-related during the 2021 heat dome.
 - On June 07, 2022, following a Death Review Panel, the BC Coroners Service released their report Extreme Heat and Human Mortality: A Review of Heat-Related Deaths in B.C. in Summer 2021.
 - The Report recommended EMCR be the lead agency coordinating government response to non-health related impacts of extreme heat events; issue intrusive emergency alerts during Extreme Heat Emergencies; and distribute a Prepared BC Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide.

Coordination of Government Response to Extreme Heat Events

- The BC HARS was rapidly operationalized for summer 2022 to ensure clear identification and coordination of public health actions and messaging intended to reduce heat-related illness and mortality during Heat Warnings and Extreme Heat Emergencies.
- Following further consultation with First Nations, local authorities and other heat response partners, the BC HARS was updated and once again operationalized for 2023.
- The BC HEAT Committee now meets year-round to ensure that the severity, duration and potential impacts of extreme temperature events are monitored, and that provincial response efforts to these events are appropriately coordinated.

Issuance of an Intrusive Emergency Alert During Extreme Heat Emergencies

- EMCR has developed emergency alerting procedures for an Extreme Heat Emergency and, on the advice of the BC HEAT Committee, will issue an intrusive emergency alert for such an event.

Prepared BC Extreme Heat and Severe Winter Weather Preparedness Guides

- The *Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide* and *Severe Winter Weather and Storm Preparedness Guide* were developed in partnership with the Ministry of Health, BC Centre for Disease Control, and Environment and Climate Change Canada.
- The guides assist people in understanding, preparing for and responding to extreme heat

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and winter weather events, and are available in hardcopy or by download from www.PreparedBC.ca in English, French, Punjabi, Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese.

Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) Extreme Temperature-Related Funding Streams

- The CEPF supports First Nations and local authorities in better understanding and reducing the risks associated with extreme temperatures and other natural and climate-driven hazards.
- Starting in 2023, extreme temperature projects were included as eligible project types under the CEPF Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation (DRR-CA) stream, replacing the previous Extreme Temperature Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning stream. DRR-CA funds foundational studies such as risk assessments and mapping, non-structural, and small-scale structural projects.
- The DRR-CA stream has approved funding for three extreme temperature related projects (for a total of \$219k), all of which are small-scale structural (e.g., air conditioning for public cooling centres, misting stations).

Key Facts and Figures:

Year	CEPF Funding Stream	# Projects	Allocation
2022	Extreme Heat Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning	37	\$1.9M
2022	Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation (extreme temperature related projects only)	3	\$0.2M
2023	Extreme Temperature Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning	10	\$0.4M

Contact: Pader Brach

Division: Regional Operations

Mobile: ^{Government Financial Information}

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last Updated: 03/04/2024

Drought

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) is the lead ministry on drought response. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) is working closely with WLRS and other partner ministries to ensure communities and public are aware of current drought conditions and the efforts required to conserve water resources, by adhering to water conservation and restrictions set by the Province and communities.
- The Province continues to assist communities with their water scarcity response planning and is ready to help support other planning efforts throughout the drought season.
- Drought will be included as a key topic for the EMCR-hosted seasonal hazard preparedness sessions for First Nation and local authority emergency program coordinators starting in spring 2024. These sessions provide information on seasonal hazards conditions, including a long-term weather outlook, and readiness actions being planned and taken.
- If a community would like to discuss drought preparedness planning or requires assistance, they can contact their local EMCR regional office to discuss eligibility for livestock feed, supporting drinking water plans, including the transportation of alternate drinking water, or the co-ordination of local authority mutual aid.

Background:

- Drought is a recurring feature of climate driven shortfall in precipitation over an extended period, resulting in a water shortage. In BC, drought typically results from combinations of insufficient snow accumulation, hot and dry weather, or a delay in rainfall.
- A water scarcity event occurs when the combined need from all community uses (water demand) exceeds or is at risk of exceeding the supply available under normal operations (water supply).
- During periods of prolonged drought, drinking water systems can become impacted due to low supply and impacts to infrastructure such as water intake levels.

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- Drought monitoring is coordinated by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and updates are paused over the winter season due to freeze up conditions. Drought level reporting will start again in the spring as melting begins.
- The North Eastern/Peace Region of BC has been in elevated drought levels during the past year. The remainder of the province has seen elevated levels going into the fall season.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada’s spring outlook is for warmer and drier conditions to continue.
- The EMCR drought mandate as outlined in the British Columbia Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan includes the following EMCR responsibilities:
 - Provides advice and the historic context of response activities in regions related to loss of supply (potable water and firefighting).
 - Provides support to First Nations and local authorities during emergency response activities.
 - Supports provincial emergency response coordination, including the activation of Provincial and Regional Emergency Operations Centres.
- In 2023, EMCR requested local government and First Nation and local authority Emergency Program Coordinators complete a drought response form on a voluntary basis. This form was used to develop situational awareness about drought-related risks for First Nation and local authorities.
- EMCR will be working with WLRS to support ensuring that communities are aware of drought support available for planning and potential responses to lack of drinking water.

Contact: Pader Brach Regional Operations	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated: 03/08/2024

Regional Flood Vulnerabilities

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Climate change has increased the frequency and significance of flooding. Existing river system vulnerabilities have been increased by events such as the wildfires and the atmospheric rivers. These factors coupled with the snowpack levels, spring temperatures, and spring rains may impact the amount of flooding within a particular community.
- As of March 1st, 2024, the provincial snowpack remains very low, averaging 66% of normal (34% below normal) across British Columbia compared to March 1st, 2023's provincial average of 91%. Due to the low snow conditions, below normal spring freshet flood hazard is expected this season, especially in the Interior. The low snowpack could significantly affect ongoing drought and wildfire concerns into summer 2024.
- The Province continues to work with communities that face systemic flooding concerns to ensure they are both prepared and aware of mitigation funding opportunities.
- Projects include raising of berms and temporary repairs to dikes, erosion mitigation work, riverbank restoration, and critical infrastructure repairs. The completion of these projects will help to diminish anticipated flooding vulnerabilities.
- The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) continues to lead provincial efforts to assess and remove human-made and natural debris within central and southern BC watercourses, as well as to assess sediment deposition in these systems, resulting from the 2021 Atmospheric River thereby helping to reduce potential flooding vulnerabilities across multiple jurisdictions.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) regional offices are hosting Hazard Preparation Sessions, starting at the end of February, which provides an opportunity for First Nations and local authorities to learn about seasonal risks and preparedness activities from River Forecast Centre (RFC), BC Wildfire Service (BCWS), Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), and other partners.
- In preparation for Freshet 2024, EMCR will be supporting communities by providing sandbags, and prepositioning sandbag machines and other flood control assets as necessary. In addition, EMCR provides flood assessment flights and deploys BC Wildfire Service crews as needed to assist with the filling and positioning of sandbags.

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Background:

Regional Flood Vulnerability – Central (CTL)

Cache Creek

- The village of Cache Creek was impacted by the 2017, 2021 and 2023 Freshets.
 - The Village of Cache Creek has 2 risks. Cache Creek can be impacted by freshet and significant rain events and the Bonaparte River can be impacted by freshet and historic wildfires such as the Elephant Hill Wildfire.
 - Following the 2023 flooding, the Village of Cache Creek has been working on long term flood mitigation strategies and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) has announced plans to replace a bridge structure over Cache Creek and Highway 1.

Nicola River, including tributaries (Spius Creek)

- The Nicola River watershed was impacted by flows from the Coldwater River during the November 2021 Atmospheric River event and the Lytton Creek wildfire and will likely have increased flows during freshet which may impact the Upper Nicola Indian Band (UNIB) and the City of Merritt.
 - The primary risks along this river system will be overland flooding or increased ground water (UNIB and Merritt) and erosion, further impacts to Highway 8, and further build up of woody debris in the section between Merritt and Spences Bridge.
 - In August 2022, an intense localised rain event resulted in a mud flow onto 4-6 properties along Highway 8; these properties remain impacted by the past debris flow.

Other Risks, Hazards, and Regular Impacts During Freshet include:

- Debris flows from intense thunderstorms especially for areas in the Central region that were heavily impacted by 2023 wildfires.
 - Hummingbird and Wiseman Creeks near Sicamous are examples of past thunderstorm or wildfire events and risks of steep creek flooding and debris flows.

Regional Flood Vulnerability – Northwest (NWE)

City of Terrace

- The City of Terrace completed a \$2.5 million slope stability project in April 2023 to address infrastructure issues associated with a landslide near McConnell Crescent, supported through EPA Funding.

Dutch Valley

- The Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS) continues to monitor erosion and flood concerns in the Dutch Valley area. This area is prone to flooding and has been subject to provincially supported erosion protection work in the past. With financial support from EMCR during the 2022 freshet season, geotechnical work was completed in this area in

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preparation for additional erosion protection work to be completed as emergent work under the EPA. The risk to this area has decreased and the plan was paused.

Granite Creek

- Properties along Granite Creek within RDKS are being closely monitored. Diking work in this area has been considered, however, RDKS has been unable to advance a process forward to create a local service area due to opposition from the property owners. RDKS has invested \$40,000 of its own funds to purchase 2,000 feet of tri-water bags, which are similar to tiger dams, to provide temporary flood protection, as required. They have yet to be deployed.

Stikine Region

- EMCR continues to monitor potential flood situations in the Stikine Region where EMCR acts as the local authority. An area of concern is the unincorporated community of Atlin, which experienced flooding in both 2021 and 2022. This was attributed to the elevation of lake levels caused by glacier melt during the late summer months.

Regional Flood Vulnerability – Southeast (SEA)

Grand Forks

- The City of Grand Forks was significantly impacted by flooding in 2018 and the construction of permanent flood protection works remain ongoing.

Regional Flood Vulnerability – Northeast (NEA)

Peace Region

- There has been long standing drought in the Peace region at level 4 to 5 throughout the winter season with other NEA regions ranging from level 3 to 4. These levels combined with reduced snowpack and less than seasonal precipitation suggest low to medium level risk for freshet flood events.

Cariboo Regional District (CRD)

- Several homes are uninhabitable due to ongoing slope instability caused by the 2020 Freshet. A State of Local Emergency (SOLE) and two evacuation orders remain in place on two homes located on Maple Drive within the Regional District near Quesnel. The NEA Region continues to work with the CRD should additional Life Safety assessments be required.

City of Williams Lake

- Erosion within the Williams Lake River Valley is an ongoing issue for the City. Infrastructure continues to be threatened by floods and landslides in this area, including homes and critical infrastructure. A Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) project aimed at armoring the Williams Lake River was completed in the Fall of 2023.

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District of Wells

- In November 2023, Emergency Mitigation works were approved for repair of Lowhee Creek Dike in community. The work was performed and due to delayed winter seasonal norms managed completion in January 2024. This work should assist in prevention of community flooding in freshet 2024 with future additional reinforcement of subsequent dike sections being examined.

Nazko First Nation

- ISC supported recovery and mitigation projects (2023/2024) that were completed this year with only the relocation of the cemetery remaining. Mitigation works completed include constructed berms in four locations, which should continue to reduce flood impacts to Nazko's infrastructure. Further redesign of berm around Indigenous Government store is being investigated to include newly purchased property adjacent in collaboration with MOTI involving a right of way.

Regional Flood Vulnerability – Southwest (SWE)

Squamish Lillooet Regional District and Fraser Valley Regional District

- The Fraser, Coquihalla, Chilliwack, Harrison, and Lillooet River systems were all impacted by the November 2021 ARE.
 - Ministry of Forests has indicated the Fraser River Diking infrastructure was not impacted by the 2021 Atmospheric River, though recovery from this catastrophic event is still ongoing in 2024 with ongoing work with communities in the Squamish Lillooet Regional District and Fraser Valley Regional District.
- More recently, overland flooding was experienced in the Squamish Lillooet Regional District and Village of Pemberton due to a 2024 Atmospheric River, fortunately with limited private and public damage according to preliminary reports.
 - Events such as this one, which also generated elevated risk in other areas of the Sea-to-Sky corridor (i.e., District of Squamish, Squamish Nation), illustrate the degree to which short duration, high precipitation events can quickly lead to flood hazard conditions.

Fraser River Flood Risks

- Although the risk of Fraser River flooding during the 2024 freshet is less than past years due to a below median snowpack for the Fraser Basin, some ongoing areas of concern in the Southwest include:
 - Erosion arcs in Abbotsford approaching the Matsqui Dike, Barnston, and Nicomen Island where significant livestock relocation would be required (Katzie First Nation and Leq'a:mel First Nation).
 - Backflow into the Harrison River and Harrison Lake when Fraser River levels are too high to allow for outflow.
 - Residential evacuations in the Glen Valley area of Abbotsford and Bridgeview area of Surrey.

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- Debris and sedimentation removal projects that are still ongoing and yet to be completed include Vedder Canal, Sumas Canal, and Hatzic Lake.

Regional Hazard Vulnerability – Vancouver Island Coastal (VIC)

- The VIC Region has witnessed an increased incidence and impact of atmospheric river and winter storm flooding in several areas of the region, particularly from the Koksilah, Cowichan, Chemainus, Englishman, Kingcome, Bella Coola, Kingcome, and San Juan Rivers.

Central Coast Regional District (CCRD)

- The CCRD has several orphaned dykes that are in varying states of either disrepair, sluffing, or have been breached allowing direct flow onto property/Highway to occur.
- Through a series of emails and interagency collaboration there were steps in place to complete temporary emergency repairs on the dykes, however this was not completed due to insufficient supply of riprap availability in the valley and no alternative way to source the required material. Recently EMCR engaged with MOTI to determine if there was a pathway forward.

City of Campbell River

- Due to several strong atmospheric rivers, the City of Campbell River has had 3 significant landslides to date during 2022-2023. One impacted a hotel, while the other two impacted separate apartment complexes along elevated banks. SOLEs were declared for initial and adjacent properties as well as Geo-Technical Engineer reports completed.

Comox Valley Regional District

- The City of Courtenay historically experiences occasional flooding from the Puntledge River, particularly from the Comox Dam free spilling which can lead to impacts to properties. In the Winter of 2023/24 this led to minor flooding of several properties which EMCR responded to by providing a sandbag machine and incremental costs.

Halalt First Nation:

- Halalt First Nation is leading the Chemainus Watershed initiative in collaboration with Penelakut Tribe, Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Municipality of North Cowichan, FOR, and EMCR. The initiative is seeking to establish a Collaborative Governance Framework with a focus on a riverscape assessment, restoration plan, and restoration plan.
- Ministry of Environments Flood Debris Management Secretariat, through funding approvals from EMCR, has completed response and recovery works along the Chemainus river, including:
 - Priority sites designated for sediment removal have been completed downstream of the Highway 1 bridge and upstream of the Chemainus Road Bridge.
 - A temporary flood protection wall has been installed to protect the Halalt and North

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Cowichan communities from flooding through the winter season.

- Funding has been approved to protect the right bank downstream of the Highway 1 bridge from further destruction. The project is currently in the planning phase as the engineers develop design packages to be submitted to regulators for approval, with a tentative construction commencement date of next summer 2024.

Snuneymuxw First Nation:

- Snuneymuxw First Nation has been impacted by mixtures of king tide events combined with AREs during November 2022 and March 2023. In the 2022 event there was sandbagging efforts, unit crews deployed to assist, flood assessments performed, and evacuations that occurred due to homes taking on water.

Stz'uminus First Nation:

- HESCO Gabion Baskets were installed in 2022 and remain in place. Additional potential supports have been identified and the Nation is engaged with First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) and ISC Critical Infrastructure (CI) branch for long term supports.

Village of Alert Bay:

- Following an atmospheric river in December 2022, there was a seawall that was damaged due to heavy rains and ocean tides. Collaboration was arranged between Namgis Nation, Village of Alert Bay, and EMCR.

Contact: Madeline Maley Regional Operations	Phone: Government Financial Information	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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Snow Survey and Water Supply Bulletin – March 1st, 2024

The March 1st snow survey is now complete. Data from 101 manual snow courses and 107 automated snow weather stations around the province (collected by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's Snow Survey Program, BC Hydro and partners), and climate data from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the provincial Climate Related Monitoring Program have been used to form the basis of the following report.

Executive Summary

- As of March 1st, the provincial snowpack remains very low, averaging 66% of normal (34% below normal) across B.C. (Feb 1st: 61%). Last year, the provincial average was 91% for March 1st.
- The Fraser River at Hope snow index is well below normal at 70%.
- Dry conditions persisted through February until a stormy pattern brought the most significant snowfall of the season in the final week.
- Due to the low snow conditions, below normal spring freshet flood hazard is expected this season.
- Low snowpack and seasonal runoff forecasts combined with warm seasonal weather forecasts and lingering impacts from on-going drought are creating significantly elevated drought hazards for this upcoming spring and summer.
- There are still 4 to 8 weeks left in the snow accumulation season. While conditions may change slightly over this period, current trends in low snowpack are expected to persist.

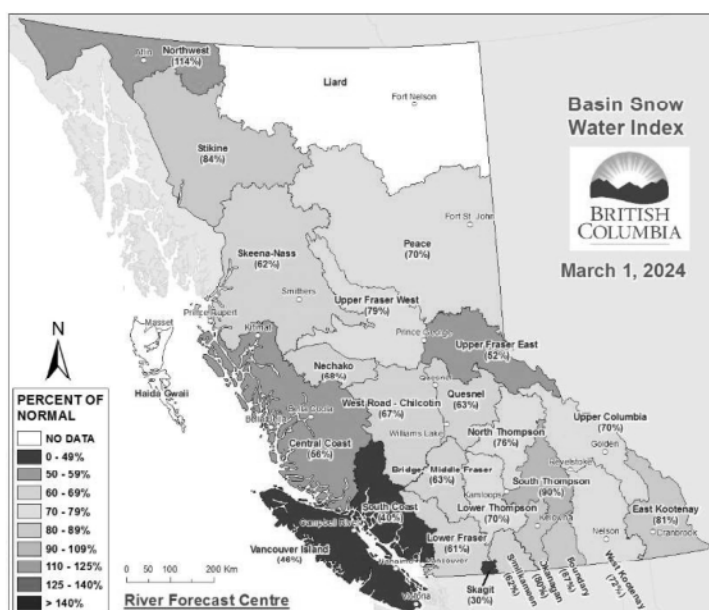


Figure 1. March 1st, 2024 Basin Snow Water Index Map of British Columbia. Larger and colour-friendly versions available in full report.

Table 1. March 1st 2024 Snow Basin Indices in B.C.

Basin	% of Normal	Basin	% of Normal	Basin	% of Normal
Upper Fraser West	79	North Thompson	76	South Coast	40
Upper Fraser East	52	South Thompson	90	Vancouver Island	46
Nechako	68	Fraser River	68	Central Coast	56
Middle Fraser	64	Upper Columbia	70	Skagit	30
Lower Thompson*	70	West Kootenay	72	Peace	70
Bridge*	63	East Kootenay	81	Skeena-Nass	62
Chilcotin*	67	Boundary	87	Liard	N/A [#]
Quesnel*	63	Okanagan	80	Stikine	84
Lower Fraser	61	Similkameen	62	Northwest	114
		Nicola	71	Fraser @ Hope	70
British Columbia 66% of Normal					

* Sub-basin of Middle Fraser # Insufficient data to calculate a Snow Basin Index Normal Period (1991-2020)

Next scheduled snow bulletin release: April 10, 2024

Every effort is made to ensure that data reported on these pages are accurate. However, in order to update the graphs and indices as quickly as possible, some data may have been estimated. Please note that data provided on these pages are preliminary and subject to revision upon review.

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Regional Landslide Vulnerabilities

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Climate change has contributed to an elevated risk of landslides in BC, both through increased frequency and severity of wildfires, intense rainfall events such as Atmospheric River Events (ARE), and through extreme heat and cold weather systems.
- Wildfires can remove vegetation that increases risk of debris flows following intense rainfall. AREs can overly saturate steep gradient terrain, making it less stable and more prone to mass movement, while extreme heat and cold can exacerbate freeze/thaw patterns and destabilize slopes.
- If a landslide impacts homes or communities, the Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) provides supports, including Emergency Support Services (ESS) when there is an evacuation, reimbursement for geotechnical hazard assessments, and coordination of subject matter experts from other ministries and agencies (e.g., Ministry of Forests (FOR), Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), etc.).

Background:

Vancouver Island Coastal (VIC) Region

City of Campbell River

- Due to several strong AREs, the City of Campbell River has had 3 significant landslides to date during 2022-2023. One impacted a hotel, while the other two impacted separate apartment complexes along elevated banks. State of Local Emergency (SOLEs) were declared for initial and adjacent properties as well as Geo-Technical Engineer reports completed.

Highway 4

- In June 2023, a wildfire caused slope instability along the Cameron Lake Bluffs section of Highway 4. MOTI set up rock-fall mitigation barriers and fencing, as well as completed slope stabilization works.
- This stretch of the highway continues to be impacted with temporary closures due to rockslides resulting from heavy rainfall, high winds, and unstable slopes.
 - Temporary closures with no alternative detour route continue to impact local Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs) and Local Authorities.

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- The Regional District of Nanaimo and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District are working with the EMCR Recovery team, Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI), and MOTI to limit disruptions during future closures.

Southwest (SWE) Region

- The SWE region has longstanding, historical landslide risks with the potential for catastrophic impacts in the Pemberton Valley, Squamish Valley, and Chilliwack River Valley (CRV).
- EMCR Regional Office representatives support several Steering Committees that provide feedback and guidance for consideration in the monitoring and study of risk for landslides in these areas. Representation on these committees includes Local Authorities, First Nations, FOR, EMCR, and qualified professionals.
- Since 2021, the province has approved funding for preliminary geotechnical studies in the Pemberton Valley, Sumas Mountain, and CRV, for a combined total nearing \$200,000. In addition, the province has approved funding of large-scale public safety studies for the Pemberton Valley and CRV that collectively totaled approximately \$750,000.
- The CRV is one of the areas most prone to landslide risk in the region during severe rain events. Notable landslides in recent years have been in the Chilliwack Lake Road area and Soowahlie First Nation's emergency egress route, Sweltzer Creek Crescent.
- In the Fraser Canyon, as a result of the 2023 Kookipi Creek wildfire, several parts of the Nahatlatch Forest Service Road and nearby private properties were identified as posing moderate, high, and very high likelihood of landslide hazard. Regional EMCR staff have been working with FOR to ensure adequate signage and communications are in place.

Pemberton Valley and Squamish Valley Landslide History & Vulnerability

- There are several locations in the Pemberton Valley and Squamish Valley where large-scale landslides pose the risk of catastrophic impact. Additionally, the 2021 ARE resulted in landslides that displaced a number of residences.
- A landslide event on Mount Meager or Mount Currie has the potential to cause catastrophic impacts to the Village of Pemberton and Lil'wat First Nation, either through the damming of Lillooet River resulting in overland flooding or by directly sliding into residential values. There has been an increased risk in these locations following the 2021 Heat Dome event due to severe glacier ice melt. Both sites are monitored by Simon Fraser University, with Steering Committee oversight.

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- A landslide event on Mount Cayley has the potential to cause catastrophic impacts to the Squamish Valley, District of Squamish, and Squamish Nation by damming the Squamish River and causing overland flooding. Mount Cayley is monitored by Simon Fraser University, with Steering Committee oversight.
- A landslide event occurred at Reid Road (Jason Creek) during the 2021 ARE, initially impacting eight homes. SOLE and Evacuation Order issued by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) remain active for one property due to imminent landslide risk. A Public Safety Study coordinated by SLRD and approved by EMCR for up to \$250,000 was completed in late 2023, confirming that the imminent risk to one property remains. Further geotechnical assessment of the area was provincially funded following reports of falling debris and excessively turbid water during the recent 2024 atmospheric rivers in late January, with results indicating no additional properties are currently at an unacceptable level of risk. Regional staff have been working with SLRD to look at Response and Recovery options under the new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA)*.
- A landslide risk continues to be present in the Lillooet Lakes Estates area, with SLRD issuing a Do Not Occupy recommendation in 2014. No evacuation order is currently in place. SLRD has been working on mitigation and funding options to support local residents.

Central (CTL) Region

- Debris flows following the 2021 AREs significantly impacted the Highway 8 corridor in November of that year.
- The Central Region has several areas that are prone to rockfall. These areas include Highway 3 (Keremeos/Similkameen River), Fraser Canyon (Lytton to Lillooet), and Nicola River Valley (Highway 8). These rockfall events are typically along highway corridors and are managed by MOTI.
- In 2023, there were additional reports of rockfall in Keremeos and Lower Nicola Indian Band and EMCR supported the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and Lower Nicola with reimbursement of costs and geotechnical hazard assessments.
- Regions with significant burn scars from 2023 wildfires and steep creeks will be at elevated risks of debris flow/slides until forest regrowth can occur.

Northeast (NEA) Region

- The Cariboo region remains vulnerable to accelerated land movement in slow-moving landslides, potentially dramatically impacting residents who have lost their primary residence with no recourse to insurance.

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- The Cariboo Regional District (CRD) has an ongoing SOLE that supports two evacuation orders for two uninhabitable private properties on 702 and 718 Maple Drive near the City of Quesnel. These properties have been uninhabitable since May 2020.
- In September 2023, the City of Williams Lake became aware of further impacts caused by the Hodgson-Dog Creek-Terra Ridge Slide Complex.
 - An ongoing SOLE, declared September 29, 2023, exists for the Terra Ridge open land strata due to landslide impacts. An evacuation order was issued for four residents and the entire Strata was put on evacuation alert; these are ongoing.
- Ongoing structural and geotechnical assessment reports conducted by the City of Williams Lake will inform their next steps; a draft report have been received by the City of Williams Lake. Once the final report is complete, EMCR and the City of Williams Lake will have discussions regarding next steps.
- The Province continues to support the collaborative development of climate-resilient, long-term options for mitigating the impact of the slide complex is ongoing with representatives from MOTI, EMCR, FOR, City of Williams Lake, Williams Lake First Nation, and the CRD.

Contact: Madeline Maley Regional Operations Division	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024 - 25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Ground Search and Rescue Avalanche Response

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Approximately 75% of all Canadian avalanche fatalities occur in B.C. and about 90% of Avalanche Canada's services are delivered in this province.
- In 2021, the Province provided a \$10 million contribution to Avalanche Canada complementing a \$25 million contribution from the federal government in 2019. This funding was intended to provide Avalanche Canada with funding certainty to allow for the continued expansion of Avalanche Safety Programming across the province.
- Additionally, with this provincial and federal funding, Avalanche Canada was able to expand forecasting to provide regular forecasts on Vancouver Island and in Northwest B.C., and launch a new mobile app including hourly weather data from over 80 remote weather stations.
- These programs help keep British Columbians safe by monitoring avalanche risk and communicating it to the public, building awareness of avalanche risk and by supporting the avalanche safety training.
- Where there is an operational need, Ground Search and Rescue Groups (GSAR) are supported by the Province in training for and responding to avalanche involvements. These GSAR Groups rely on Avalanche Canada's forecasting as a vital source of information used to keep their members safe.
- From April 1st, 2023, to February 7th, 2024, there have been 3 fatalities due to avalanches. This is a decrease over last winter, during which 14 fatalities occurred between January 9th, 2023, and March 31st, 2023. As of February 7th, 2024, the snowpack is at record low conditions.
- The Province, through social and traditional media channels, provides avalanche risk and preparedness information so British Columbians can make informed decisions.

Background:

- The provincial and federal funding has provided for program expansion which includes:

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- an increase from three to seven days per week forecasting services on Vancouver Island, in the Northern Rockies and in the area around Atlin, BC
 - a new flexible forecasting system launched for the 2022/23 winter season which increases the precision of the forecasts using 92 subregions grouped into regions of like conditions, from the previously pre-defined 15 regions.
 - increases to its delivery of avalanche safety training for youth and provision of more programs for winter recreationists of all types.
- In 2019, the Province contracted the development of a Volunteer Avalanche Safety Plan, which outlines operational procedures for minimizing snow avalanche risk to GSAR volunteers and aligns with Avalanche Canada and the Canadian Avalanche Association, standards.
 - Operators of recreation activities on Crown Land must be tenured under the Land Use Operational Policy for Adventure Tourism through the Ministry of Forests. Applications for tenures must include a Risk Management Plan to address safety. Applications proposing backcountry snow sport activities in avalanche terrain (e.g., heli-skiing, cat-skiing, snowmobiling, ski touring, etc.) are also required to have an Avalanche Risk Management Plan.
 - Operation of recreation activities by a commercial provider within provincial park boundaries fall under the park use permit system. Applications must have a safety plan and meet all conditions laid out in the park use permit. Activities include heli-skiing, backcountry ski lodges, and ski touring.
 - WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Section 4.1.1, requires all employers whose workers travel through, work around or within a potential avalanche hazard area to have a qualified person conduct a risk assessment and if there is a risk of an avalanche, develop and implement appropriate avalanche safety plans and/or a program.
 - The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure operates the Avalanche Safety Program to keep roads and travellers safe.
 - The Province supports public education on the hazards associated with avalanches through issuing news releases and directing the public to informative sources such as BC AdventureSmart and Avalanche Canada.

Contact: Allan Mole A/Director Division Regional Operations Branch Provincial Response Programs	Mobile <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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2024 - 25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Search and Rescue Program Overview

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The Province acknowledges the valuable service ground search and rescue volunteers provide year-round.
- The Province continues to provide predictable and ongoing funding of approximately \$6M annually to support the Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) volunteers' provision of service across British Columbia – the only agreement of its kind in Canada.
- This annual contribution provided for within EMCR's base budget complements funding totaling approximately \$8M that the Province provides annually to reimburse GSAR groups' operational costs for search and rescue deployments, training, and equipment.
- EMCR continues to assess the tools and capabilities needed to support the GSAR groups and Requesting Agencies in BC. Most recently, EMCR is in the process of procuring a contractor to support an analysis of the Requesting Agencies' needs and to assess where any gaps in search and rescue may exist in the province and training that would enable GSAR groups capacity to support those needs.

Background:

- GSAR is a Provincial Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer program providing support to Requesting Agencies through the commitment of volunteer resources when requested.
- As per EDMA Section 32(2) Requesting Agencies include:
 - a local authority.
 - an Indigenous governing body.
 - a department of the government of Canada.
 - a person who is a party to an agreement under section 8 (minister may enter into agreements).
 - a police or emergency health service.
 - a prescribed person or a person in a prescribed class of persons.
- There are 78 recognized GSAR groups and approximately 3,400 GSAR volunteers in BC. Between April 1st, 2023, and February 6th, 2024, B.C.'s GSAR groups were deployed to support 1,462 incidents. This represents a reduction in annual SAR incident rates since

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2022; however, this the figure of 1,462 returns the province to pre-pandemic incident rates of roughly 1,500 responses annually.

- Since 2022/23 GSAR groups have been funded through an annual budget allocation of approximately \$6 million, distributed through the BC Search and Rescue Association (BCSARA). Previously, provincial funding to groups was provided through ad-hoc grants which did not provide funding certainty for GSAR groups from year to year.
- BCSARA and EMCR have developed a Framework for Search and Rescue in BC that outlines BCSARA’s deliverables to support enhanced administrative and financial oversight of GSAR in BC as a requirement of the funding contribution to GSAR.
- BCSARA disperses the annual provincial funding based on a model that considers several factors, including:
 - The equipment and training requirements associated with each GSAR capability (e.g. rope rescue, swift water rescue, etc.).
 - The capacity (number of trained members) for each GSAR capability that an individual GSAR group is recognized for.
 - Minimum and maximum allocations to strategically direct support to smaller GSAR groups, which are generally located in rural and remote areas of the province.
 - Funding is not distributed equally among all GSAR groups, as their capabilities are based on an operational need.
- In addition to the funding provided to all groups, the province provided nearly \$8M in operational funding last year (FY 2022/23) which included the following:
 - \$5.70M in support of operational tasks.
 - \$2.86M for equipment repair/replacement, mileage, and meals.
 - \$2.84M in aircraft costs (primarily helicopter).
 - \$178,601 from capital gaming grant funds (FY 2022/23) (major equipment or buildings).
 - \$2.21M in community gaming grant funds (FY2022/23) were provided to support equipment and training.
- BCSARA and EMCR are currently undertaking a comprehensive review of program funding and partnership governance structure as recommended in a 2018 consultant’s report.
- The joint management and partnership committees were formed to develop and deliver the framework supporting accountability and effectiveness for future funding.

Contact: Allan Mole, A/Director Division Regional Operations Branch Provincial Response Programs	Mobile: Government Financial Information
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2024 - 25 ESTIMATES NOTE

GSAR - EDMA Implementation

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- With the implementation of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) benefits including protection from legal proceedings are not only available to Ground Search and Rescue Volunteers but to the Ground Search and Rescue Societies who are authorized as Public Safety Providers as well.
- As of February 20th, 2024, 78% of eligible Ground Search and Rescue Groups have applied for authorization as a Public Safety Provider. The requirement for GSAR Groups to apply as a Public Safety Provider has been lifted.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) will work collaboratively with the Ground Search and Rescue Volunteers, the Ground Search and Rescue Groups which are represented by the BC Search and Rescue Association, as well as Requesting Agencies to support updates to EMCR Policy following EDMA coming into effect.
- Through the implementation of EDMA, EMCR has recognized that there is a need to increase our communication and collaboration with Ground Search and Rescue Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers and the Ground Search and Rescue Groups. EMCR is working in collaboration with the BC Search and Rescue Association to develop and implement a communication and engagement strategy for the benefit of all involved with the Ground Search and Rescue Program.

Background:

- Following EDMA coming into effect on November 8th, 2023, EMCR invited all 76 eligible Ground Search and Rescue Groups to apply for authorization as a Public Safety Provider on November 17th, 2023. The objective of this approach was to support every eligible Ground Search and Rescue Group by providing the protection of legal proceedings afforded to Public Safety Providers under EDMA, as well as to use a consistent deployment process across the province.
- The Provincial Administrator hosted an information session on November 27th, 2023, to provide an opportunity for Ground Search and Rescue Volunteers to learn about EDMA and pose questions to the province.

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- Based on feedback from Ground Search and Rescue Groups, extensions to the application deadline were provided twice to provide more time for the Ground Search and Rescue Groups to better familiarize themselves with the statute.
- Over the course of several weeks, it was evident that some Ground Search and Rescue Groups did not want to apply for authorization as a Public Safety Provider. As a result, on January 31st, 2024, the Provincial Administrator removed the requirement for a Ground Search and Rescue Group to be authorized as a Public Safety Provider.
- To accommodate the Ground Search and Rescue Groups which do not wish to be authorized as a Public Safety Provider, an alternative deployment process under Section 32 4 (a) of EDMA will be established. Until then, we will continue to follow the current process for providing available search and rescue resources to Requesting Agencies.
- Ground Search and Rescue Groups are invited by the Provincial Administrator to apply for authorization as a Public Safety Provider at their convenience and discretion.

Key Facts and Figures:

- 59 of the 76 eligible Ground Search and Rescue Groups have applied for authorization as a Public Safety Provider under EDMA.
- 2 of the 78 Ground Search and Rescue Groups in BC are operated by Local Authorities and as such did not need to be invited to apply for authorization as a Public Safety Provider.
- A list of Ground Search and Rescue Groups sorted by Public Safety Provider application status is appended.

Contact: Allan Mole A/Director, Search and Rescue Division: Regional Operations Branch: Provincial Response Programs	Mobile: <small>Government Financial Information</small>
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Appendix A: GSAR Groups' PSP Application status
As of February 8th 2024

GSAR Groups Applied	Region
Arrow Lakes	SEA
Arrowsmith	VIC
Atlin	NW
Barriere	CTL
Bella Coola	VIC
Bulkley Valley	NW
Campbell River	VIC
Castlegar	SEA
Central Fraser Valley	SWE
Central Okanagan	CTL
Chetwynd	NEA
Columbia Valley	SEA
Comox Valley	VIC
Cranbrook	SEA
Creston Valley	SEA
Elkford	SEA
Fernie	SEA
Fort Nelson/Northern Rockies	NEA
Fort St James	NW
Grand Forks	SEA
Hope	SWE
Houston	NW
Kamloops	CTL
Kent Harrison	SWE
Kimberley	SEA
Ladysmith	VIC
Logan Lake	CTL
Mackenzie	NEA
Metchosin	VIC
Mission	SWE
Nanaimo	VIC
Nechako Valley	NW
Nelson	SEA
Nicola Valley	CTL
North Peace	NEA
Oliver Osoyoos	CTL
PEMO	VIC
Penticton	CTL
Prince George	NEA
Prince Rupert	NW
Princeton	CTL
Quesnel	NEA
Ridge Meadows	SWE

Robson Valley	NEA
Rossland	SEA
Salt Spring Island	VIC
Shuswap	CTL
South Cariboo	NEA
South Columbia	SEA
South Fraser/Surrey	SWE
South Peace	NEA
Sparwood	SEA
Sunshine Coast	SWE
Terrace	NW
Tumbler Ridge	NEA
Vernon	CTL
Wells Grey	CTL
West Chilcotin	NEA
Westcoast Inland	VIC
Total	59
GSAR Groups Not Applied	
Alberni Valley	VIC
Archipelago (Haida Gwaii)	NW
Burns Lake	NW
Chilliwack	SWE
Coquitlam	SWE
Cowichan	VIC
Golden	SEA
Kaslo	SEA
Kitimat	NW
Lions Bay	SWE
North Shore Rescue	SWE
Pemberton	SWE
Powell River	VIC
Revelstoke	SEA
Squamish	SWE
Stewart	NW
Whistler	SWE
Total	17
GSAR Groups Administered by LA	
Juan de Fuca	VIC
Central Cariboo	NEA
Total	2

2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Terra Ridge Landslide

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- On September 29th, 2023, the City of Williams Lake issued an evacuation order for four homes on a 55+ strata property, Terra Ridge, as the result of a slow onset slide known as the Hodgson Road Landslide.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) has provided ongoing response and recovery support to the City of Williams Lake and as of February 1st, 2024, has committed \$244,740 to assist in:
 - structural and geotechnical assessments,
 - security for evacuated residences,
 - the hiring of an emergency support services manager; and,
 - additional support towards the accommodation of one evacuated household.
- EMCR supported the City of Williams Lake Emergency Support Services (ESS), which provided temporary accommodation or billeting support for the evacuated individuals. ESS support, designed to be a temporary emergency measure, was extended for one month.
- Ongoing structural and geotechnical assessment reports conducted by the City of Williams Lake will inform their next steps; draft reports have been received by the City of Williams Lake. Once the final report is complete, EMCR and the City of Williams Lake will have discussions regarding next steps.
- The province continues to support the collaborative development of climate-resilient, long-term options for mitigating the impact of the slide with representatives from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), EMCR, Ministry of Forests (FOR), City of Williams Lake, Williams Lake First Nation, and the Cariboo Regional District.
- The Hodgson Road landslide is an active landslide with a well-documented history, which has been ongoing over several decades and is not eligible for Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA).
- We know the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation (CDFAR) has gaps that we need to address to better support people as they recover from emergencies. With the newly released Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA), EMCR is modernizing the disaster financial assistance program, and a new regulation will be made under the EDMA. Engagement on the new regulation closed January 31st, 2024, and EMCR is targeting

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the release the “What We Heard” report Advice/Recommendations

Background:

- On September 15th, 2023, the City of Williams Lake activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in response to an engineering report procured by the Terra Ridge strata. On September 29th an evacuation order was issued for four units, and an evacuation alert was placed on the remaining 76 Terra Ridge properties.
- The landslide affecting the Terra Ridge subdivision is part of a larger landslide complex that includes the Hodgson Slide and the Dog Creek Slide. This is a known historical slide complex with past impacts on residents and businesses in the Cariboo Regional District, the City of Williams Lake, Highway 20, and Dog Creek Road.

Disaster Financial Assistance:

- The DFA program is delivered under EDMA and the CDFAR. The DFA program is obliged to provide compensation in compliance with this legislation.
- While CDFAR was made under the former *Emergency Program Act*, it remains in force and will continue to apply until a new regulation is made under EDMA.
- DFA is intended to compensate for sudden unexpected disasters. DFA does not compensate for losses that are the result of long-term ongoing situations.
 - A residence located on an active landslide, immediately adjacent to an active landslide, or in the run-out zone of known high-hazard-landslide-prone terrain cannot be considered eligible for DFA.

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Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA)

Last updated: February 13, 2024

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

Active DFAA events:

- As of February 1 2024, the Province has 10 active DFAA events with a total estimated cost of \$6.164 billion. The three largest events are as follows:
 - 2021 Atmospheric River Event (ARE) - \$2.900 billion
 - 2021 Spring Flood and Landslides - \$1.070 billion
 - 2020 Spring Flood and Landslides - \$0.571 billion
- The cumulative expenditure to date for these 10 active events is \$2.445 billion. Of the \$6.164 billion projected cost for these events, the Province anticipates up to \$5.224 billion (85%) will be reimbursed through the DFAA program.
- As of the third quarter of the fiscal year 2023/24, the Province has spent \$838 million responding to and recovering from the 2021 Atmospheric River Event.

2023 DFAA Requests:

- In 2023, BC had a spring freshet and a wildfire season which met the DFAA federal cost-sharing threshold with total costs estimated at over \$450 million. The Province has requested financial assistance for these two events and is awaiting confirmation from Canada to confirm DFAA eligibility.

Background:

DFAA Program Overview:

- Once the federal government determines the eligibility of a disaster event through the issuance of an Order in Council (OIC), British Columbia has five years from the date of the OIC, to submit its final claim and confirm the amount of federal cost-share eligible for reimbursement based on an audit of costs submitted.
- Under DFAA, the federal government partially reimburses provincial costs associated with response and recovery activities. This includes both direct provincial costs and supports provided through provincial disaster relief programs such as Disaster Financial Assistance and the Canada-BC Flood Recovery Program for Food Security, supporting the agriculture sector.

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- The Province requests advance and interim payments from the federal government as recovery work progresses. An advance payment of up to 50% of the eligible federal share can be received within the first year of an event and an interim payment request can provide up to 60% of the total federal share. These advance and interim payment requests are assessed by Public Safety Canada against the Province’s estimate of the total eligible event costs.

ARE Costs:

- The initial provincial cost estimates in February 2022 for the ARE were over \$4 billion. As of the third quarter of the 2023/24 fiscal year, the provincial cost has been refined to a forecast of \$2.882 billion, of which \$2.560 billion (89%) may be eligible for reimbursement through the DFAA program. The forecast costs continue to be refined as the scope of specific recovery projects required to recover critical infrastructure are confirmed.
- The majority of the costs from the ARE relate to ongoing recovery activities to repair or rebuild critical highway infrastructure (\$2 billion), debris removal and clean-up from watercourses and funding provided through the Disaster Financial Assistance program to support the recovery of local governments and First Nations, citizens, small businesses, farms and charitable organizations.
- Response costs incurred to date from the ARE is approximately \$400 million for emergency response activities and supporting evacuees.
- The federal government’s \$5 billion commitment to B.C. made in December 2021 related to four DFAA-eligible disasters in British Columbia: the 2021 November Rainstorm, the 2021 Wildfire, and, the 2020 and 2021 Spring Floods and Landslides.
- As of the third quarter of the 2023/24 fiscal year, BC has received \$1.026 billion in advance payments through DFAA for the atmospheric river recovery efforts and \$612 million for the other 3 events: 2021 Wildfire, 2020 and 2021 Spring Flood and Landslides.

Event	(In Millions)		
	1 st Advance Payment	2 nd Advance Payment	DFAA Funding Received
2021 November Rainstorm	\$469	\$557	\$1.026
2021 Wildfire	\$208		\$208
2021 Spring Flood and Landslides	\$355		\$355
2020 Spring Flood and Landslides	\$49		\$49
Total	\$1.081	\$557	\$1.638

} \$612

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DFAA Forecasted Costs and Federal Funding Received:

DFAA Event Name	(In Millions)			
	Total Estimated Cost of Event	Federal Share	Provincial Share	Advance/ Interim Received
2022 Wildfires	88	43	45	12
2021 Atmospheric River Event (Nov Rainstorm)	2.882	2.560	322	1.026
2021 Wildfires	489	406	83	208
2021 Spring Flood and Landslides	1.070	929	141	355
2020 Spring Flood and Landslides	570	480	90	49
2018 Wildfires	181	132	49	66
2018 Spring Freshet	229	175	54	107
2017 Wildfires	403	332	71	192
2017 Spring Freshet	114	72	42	46
2016 June Floods	138	95	43	42
TOTAL FORECAST EVENTS	\$6.164	\$5.224	\$940	\$2.103
2023 DFAA Events – Pending OIC				
2023 Interface Fires	419	338	81	0
2023 Freshet	55	17	38	0
TOTAL	\$474	\$355	\$119	\$0

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/02/2024

Ombudsperson Report: Fairness in a Changing Climate

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- Given the impact of extreme weather events of 2021, it was not surprising the Ombudsperson chose to focus on provincial disaster assistance programs, specifically Emergency Support Services (ESS) and Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA). The Ministry has accepted all 20 of the Ombudspersons' recommendations.
- Work is underway to enhance our disaster assistance programs, including ESS and DFA, so the recommendations from the Ombudsperson were timely.
- We're working to ensure recommendations from the Ombudsperson are reflected in in the ministry's enhanced disaster assistance programs. This work is also being informed by the work of the Premier's Task Force on Emergencies, extensive engagement with people, communities and industries, anticipated updates to the federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements program, and more.
- EMCR is committed to reporting to the Ombudsperson on the progress made in implementing the recommendations on an annual basis.

Background:

- On October 3, 2023 the Ombudsperson released a report titled "Fairness in a Changing Climate".
- This report was in response to the extreme weather events of 2021 and it asked the question "Were emergency supports delivered fairly and equitably?".
- In doing this work, the Ombudsperson looked specifically into how EMCR provided ESS and DFA.
- Some key recommendations include:
 - Support community-led ESS with timely and effective surge support, integrated professional mental health care, and a reliable communication hub for evacuees.
 - Reception centres must be accessible, and ESS supports flexible and responsive.
 - Identify ways to better communicate about the DFA program to those who may need it.

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- Ensure the DFA program has capacity to process applications and appeals in a timely manner.
 - Review policies for equity and collect sociodemographic data relevant to assess disproportionate impact.
 - Support capacity and resilience of community-led delivery of emergency supports.
 - Regularly assess availability of insurance as the impacts of climate-related disasters increase.
-
- EMCR has accepted all 20 recommendations in the report (see attachment 1) for a summary of recommendations and the ministry response.

 - The Ombudsperson has requested an annual reporting of progress on recommendations to be provided in December of each year.

 - EMCR provided the Ombudsperson with a letter on December 15, 2023 outlining the completion of recommendations 12, 15 and 16 which had been identified in the Ombudsperson report for immediate implementation.

Attachment 1: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND MINISTRY RESPONSE:

	Recommendation	Response
1	The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to evaluate the adequacy of training, financial and technical support provided to local authorities and First Nations to transition to the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool by December 31, 2024, and provide additional assistance, as necessary to achieve the successful onboarding of every eligible local authority and First Nation to ERA by March 31, 2026.	The Ministry accepts this recommendation. While the decision to use the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool is that of the First Nation or local authority delivering the services, the Ministry strongly encourages the use of the tool, and provides training and support to First Nations and local authorities who want to onboard. Additionally, the Ministry provides funding through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund to support the modernization of local ESS programs in order to move toward electronic registration and reporting through the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) Tool. The Ministry Service Plan includes a performance measure to track the percentage of eligible communities onboarded and utilizing the Evacuee Registration Assistance tool.
2	The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to, by December 31, 2026, develop and implement a process to support the collection of socio-demographic data on Emergency Support Services consistent with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Racism Data Act</i>	The Ministry accepts this recommendation. Significant consultation with Indigenous communities and other groups will be required to inform the approach. Consideration will also need to be given to how data could be collected and used in a culturally safe manner that respects Indigenous data sovereignty
3	<i>Recommendation 3:</i> The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with First Nations, First Nations Emergency Services Society, Métis Nation BC, the First Nations Health Authority and other Indigenous partners to integrate cultural safety across the entire ESS system, including developing and implementing a process for receiving meaningful and timely feedback about cultural safety in the delivery of Emergency	The Ministry accepts this recommendation. There is an existing process which has been developed between the Ministry and the First Nations Health Authority to support effective collaboration and timely responses to complaints, such as racism, as they are identified. The Province continues to prioritize working closely with its Indigenous partners to ensure culturally safe delivery of emergency management services. Through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, the Ministry provides funding to local authorities for Indigenous cultural safety and cultural humility training with the intent of enhancing cultural safety and humility in the deliver of local emergency management programs and services, including Emergency Support Services

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	Support Services by December 31, 2025, and for ensuring that timely program and policy changes are made in response to that feedback	
4 a	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to strengthen provincial support and resources for the delivery of local Emergency Support Services, including the following steps:</p> <p>a) Develop and implement effective surge support for large- scale Emergency Support Services responses, including consideration of expanded use of “as and when” employees by May 31, 2024.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. Auxiliary employees may be one of many supports within a comprehensive surge strategy</p>
4b	<p>b) Develop a framework that supports flexibility and resilience in local delivery of Emergency Support Services, including a review of cost recovery for Emergency Support Services work by local authority and First Nations staff by May 31, 2025.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts the spirit of this recommendation. The potential impact of changes to the funding model extends beyond the scope of the Emergency Support Services programs and may have significant implications across the emergency response continuum. The Ministry believes there may be an opportunity within the existing system for flexibility to meet unique needs of communities and individuals</p>
4c	<p>c) Develop and implement a strategy for improved communications to evacuees about Emergency Support Services, including a centralized communications website for providing information to evacuees by May 31, 2024.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. In July 2023, the Ministry updated ESS.gov.bc.ca with expanded information on how evacuees can access Emergency Support Services. While First Nations and local authorities oversee communication to evacuees on accessing Emergency Support Services, the Ministry commits to supplementing the communication efforts of First Nations and local authorities with centralized communications</p>

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4d	<p>d) Develop a program for more meaningful provincial recognition of the important contributions made by local Emergency Support Services volunteers by May 31, 2024.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers (PSVL) are recognized annually for their outstanding contribution in each of the disciplines, including Emergency Support Services, during the Volunteer Recognition award ceremony. While the 2022 award ceremony was delayed, there is intent to recognize PSVL for their contribution. The Ministry welcomes additional information on the evidence base for this recommendation, including results of engagement and research into leading practices that informed this recommendation</p>
5	<p>By December 31, 2026, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness take steps necessary to ensure that reception centres are accessible, including working with local governments and First Nations to identify reception centre sites that are already accessible and, as necessary, improving accessibility by developing standards, conducting accessibility audits, and providing funding to address any identified deficiencies and meet any accessibility standards.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. The provision of funding to address local government and First Nation facility accessibility considerations are outside the scope of the Ministry's mandate.</p>
6	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to, by May 31, 2024, increase daily billet rates and broaden lodging options for evacuees, including those with larger households, people with complex health needs and people with pets.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts the spirit of this recommendation. The Ministry will undertake a review of lodging options with the intend of broadening options, however, funding considerations to increase daily billet rates are the purview of Treasury Board.</p>
7	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to, by May 31, 2024, implement alternate ways for evacuees to access ESS if they are unable to attend a reception centre in person.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation</p>

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8	<p>Consistent with its mandate to coordinate evacuee supports, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with other ministries, health authorities, First Nations and local authorities to, by December 31, 2024, develop and implement a strategy, with appropriate funding, to further integrate disaster psychosocial first aid, professional mental health care and social work into the delivery of Emergency Support Services.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts the spirit of the recommendation and acknowledges its central coordinating role. Given the implications on health authority resources both during and after emergencies, the Ministry believes this recommendation would be most appropriately directed at the Ministry of Health</p>
9	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to develop and implement a policy that supports multiple options for accessing Emergency Support Services, that do not rely on the use of vouchers, when e-transfer is not available or appropriate. The policy to be in place by May 31, 2024.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation</p>
10	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities, First Nations and Métis Nation BC to develop and implement by December 31, 2025, a timely, accessible and culturally safe complaints process that can be used by people who are trying to access, or who have accessed, Emergency Support Services.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. As noted in the response to recommendation 3, there is an existing process which has been developed between the Ministry and the First Nations Health Authority which supports effective collaboration and the timely response to complaints including those associated with the delivery of Emergency Support Services. Significant consultation and engagement will be required to action this recommendation</p>
11	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with local authorities and First Nations to, by May 31, 2024, implement a policy and other supports that will assist responders in making fair, consistent and efficient</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts the recommendation.</p>

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	<p>determinations of whether insurance is readily and reasonably available in the context of an Emergency Support Services needs assessment. As risks and costs increase with the impacts of climate change, needs assessments should include the affordability of insurance and insurance deductibles in the determination of whether an evacuee's insurance is readily and reasonably available to them</p>	
12	<p>Effective immediately, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness ensure that any future contracts initiated by the province for delivery of Emergency Support Services require a comprehensive reporting back to the province and affected First Nations and local authorities, including information about the households that received emergency supports and the amount and nature of the support provided by the third-party contractor.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation</p>
13	<p>By September 30, 2024, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness develop, implement, and communicate effective service standards for timely processing of Disaster Financial Assistance applications and appeals, and ensure it has the staff complement necessary to meet those standards</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. A phased continuous improvement approach for client service delivery of Disaster Financial Assistance is already underway and will continue as the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation is modernized under the new legislation. The Ministry notes the timing for the modernized regulation is linked to the federal timeline for review and revisions of the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements program and the implementation of the national low-cost flood insurance program announced in last year's federal budget</p>
14	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness review its communications about the</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation</p>

March 6, 2024

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	<p>Disaster Financial Assistance program with a view to identifying ways in which the program can be better communicated to people who might need it and by May 31, 2024, implement those changes.</p>	
15	<p>Effective immediately, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness communicate status updates to applicants with pending Disaster Financial Assistance applications and appeals, and by September 30, 2024, implement improved communications with and guidance to applicants throughout the application and decision-making process, including appeals.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. The Ministry notes that a phased continuous improvement approach for client service delivery for Disaster Financial Assistance is underway and will continue as the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation is modernized under the new legislation</p>
16	<p>Effective immediately, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness apply a GBA+ and IGBA+ lens in reviewing, revising, and developing Disaster Financial Assistance policies with full implementation of policy changes by September 30, 2025.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. GBA+ and IGBA+ lenses are being applied in the policy development informing the replacement of the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation. While the Ministry seeks to have full implementation of the policy changes by the fall of 2025, it should be noted there is significant consultation and co-development required to inform regulatory development. The Ministry notes there is a dependency on the federal review and update of the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements program</p>
17	<p>By September 30, 2025, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness develop and implement a process to improve the collection of socio-demographic data on Disaster Financial Assistance to support equitable service delivery, consistent with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Racism Data Act</i>.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation. Data collection considerations are being applied in policy development for informing the replacement of the Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation. While the Ministry seeks to have full implementation of the policy changes by the fall of 2025, it should be noted there is significant consultation and co-development required to inform regulatory development. Further there is a dependency on the federal review and update of the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements program.</p>

March 6, 2024

18a	<p>The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness develop plans and a policy framework to meet the needs of people experiencing long-term displacement, considering the impacts of climate change and how people-centred programs might better support climate change adaptation and future resilience, by:</p> <p>a) consulting broadly with the public by December 31, 2024, on modernization of Emergency Support Services and Disaster Financial Assistance as related components of disaster recovery,</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Ministry notes this work is dependent upon a number of interrelated elements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the enactment of modernized Emergency management legislation. • finalizing the Disaster Recovery Framework. • the development a new Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation. • the completion of the federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements review; and • the federal government’s implementation of low-cost flood insurance <p>The Ministry is providing extensive engagement and consultation opportunities for all to provide input to inform a replacement Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation consistent with the recommendation.</p>
18b	<p>b) working with local authorities and First Nations, and across government, to develop and implement by September 30, 2025, integrated plans and policies to support people who experience long-term displacement due to disasters and that are consistent with the principles of administrative fairness, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts recommendation.</p> <p>In partnership with many provincial ministries, the Ministry is working to deliver a finalized Disaster Recovery Framework which will meet the needs of impacted communities and people. This work is applying a cross government lens and focus to supporting communities in times of recovery and is being built through extensive consultation with Indigenous communities, and local governments</p>
19	<p>By June 30, 2024, the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness develop and implement public communications that reflect the current impacts of insurance on the availability of financial supports for disaster response and recovery, and by June 30,</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Ministry will work with the federal government in the development of a national low-cost flood insurance program. The Ministry will develop insurance-focused communications products in conjunction with the Insurance Bureau of Canada..</p>

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	2025, develop a policy and process to reassess insurance availability in BC as risks increase with the impacts of climate change, and a national flood insurance program is implemented	
20	The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness work with Indigenous governing bodies to advance Indigenous self-determination in emergency management including by prioritizing capacity building for Indigenous-led emergency response and recovery and ensuring consistent, appropriate funding for Indigenous communities and organizations. The ministry report on specific actions taken as part of its Declaration Act Annual Report for the duration of the 2022-2027 Action Plan.	The Ministry accepts this recommendation. The modernized emergency management legislation has been co-developed with First Nations. The proposed legislation includes guiding principles that establish a framework for collaboration between different orders of government, reflects the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and formally recognizes First Nations as decision makers.

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2024/25 ESTIMATES NOTE

Last updated Date: 02/28/2024

Funding for the Four Pillars of Emergency Management

Key Messages/Suggested Response:

- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* better reflects the changing nature of emergencies and disasters in British Columbia and shifts the historic focus of responding and recovering towards a four-pillar approach to emergency management (preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery).
- The Ministry's base operations are funded through Vote 21. This provides for close to 400 permanent staff across the province supporting the delivery of programming, spanning across all four pillars of emergency management.
- This includes:
 - Preparedness and mitigation programming such as PreparedBC, ClimateReadyBC.
 - Emergency communications such as EmergencyInfoBC and the public alerting program.
 - Response focused staff who support the operation of the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre and the six Provincial Regional Operations Centres and key programs, such as Emergency Support Services staff who assist communities and evacuees during emergencies.
 - Staff to support community recovery and the delivery of the Disaster Financial Assistance program which provides funding to assist individuals and communities in recovering from eligible events.
 - Mitigation funding programs to address disaster risk reduction in communities across the province – this includes BC funded programs such as the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, and those costs shared with the federal government such as the Green Adaptation, Resilience and Disaster Mitigation program.
 - Working with Indigenous partners, local authorities and other organisations and interest groups to promote effective coordination, collaboration and information sharing amongst emergency management partners.
- The *Emergency and Disaster Management Act – Vote 22* provides the budget for the Disaster Financial Assistance program and a base allocation for costs associated with responding to and recovering from emergencies.
- Voted 22 also provides for statutory spending authorized through the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* which enables the Province to spend whatever is required to respond to and recover from emergencies should the base budget not be sufficient.

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- The Province has supports First Nations and local governments to increase their resilience to disasters through contributions to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund totaling \$369 million.
- The Province has also committed \$18 million to communities to assist in meeting new provisions under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* that require municipalities and regional districts to consult and co-operate with Indigenous Governing Bodies and incorporate Indigenous knowledge and cultural safety across emergency management.

Background:

- The presentation of EMCR's budget in the *Estimates* for the 2024/25 fiscal year provides a higher level of transparency.
- Under *Vote 21 – Ministry Operations* sub-votes have been established for:
 - **Emergency and Disaster Management Operations** - \$39.033 million
 - Provides for costs associated with delivery of emergency response and recovery services, strategic partnerships and agreement management, and policy and legislative development.
 - **Climate Readiness Programs** - \$28.429 million
 - Provides for costs associated with delivery of disaster preparedness and mitigation funding programs, strategic reviews, and training and exercises.
 - **Executive and Support Services** - \$11.585 million
 - Provides for costs associated with the Minister's Office, Deputy Minister's Office, and corporate services functions.
- Under *Vote 22 – Emergency and Disaster Management Act* sub-votes have been established for:
 - **Emergency and Disaster Management Act** - \$30.000 million
 - Provides for costs associated with preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergency incidents and taking emergency measures in addition to incremental ministry staffing cost.
 - Provides for costs associated with Emergency Support Services program, Ground Search and Rescue response, and the reimbursement of response costs incurred by First Nations and local governments.
 - This sub-vote includes the statutory spending authorized through the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.
 - **Financial Assistance** - \$6.420 million
 - Provides for costs associated with the Disaster Financial Assistance program.

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- Note that all costs associated with the Disaster Financial Assistance program are required by the legislation to be funded through a voted appropriation (i.e. Vote 22 or the Contingencies Vote).

Key Facts and Figures:

2024/25 – 2026/27 EMCR Service Plan Financial Summary:

(\$000s)	2023/24	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
	Restated Estimates ¹			
Operating Expenses				
Emergency and Disaster Management Operations	32,416	39,033	38,633	38,633
Climate Readiness Programs	18,429	28,429	38,429	38,429
Executive and Support Services	13,739	11,585	11,584	11,584
Emergency and Disaster Management Act	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Financial Assistance	6,420	6,420	6,420	6,420
Total	101,004	115,467	125,066	125,066
Capital Expenditures				
Emergency and Disaster Management Operations	524	548	53	53
Total	524	548	53	53

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2023/24 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2024/25 Estimates.

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

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