



STAFF REPORT

DATE: January 24, 2020 **FILE:** 0550-04 Board

TO: Chair and Directors,
Regional Board

FROM: David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: PROPOSED EMERGENCY PROGRAM ACT MODERNIZATION

PURPOSE/PROBLEM

To consider providing a response to the request from Emergency Management BC with respect to the modernization proposals for the *Emergency Program Act*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached report was reviewed at the December 5, 2019 meeting of the Regional Board at which time the following resolution was passed:

Anderson/Cornfield: SRD 1102/19

THAT a further report on the implications of the proposed Emergency Program Act modernization be prepared for the Board's consideration.

Changes being proposed to the *Emergency Program Act* may have far reaching implications for local government. This submission focuses on potential impacts to the Regional District in the areas of local authority/responsibility, regulatory impacts and financial implications. Attached to this report is a summary of the proposed changes and their potential implications followed by a more detailed section by section analysis of the discussion paper which should provide the Board with the information needed to determine whether it wishes to provide feedback on the proposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received;
2. THAT a submission be provided to Emergency Management BC regarding the proposed revisions to the *Emergency Program Act* based on the information contained in the January 24, 2020 report from the Chief Administrative Officer.

Respectfully:

David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

SUMMARY OF SECTIONS 1 - 10

Section 1: Key Definitions

- The inclusion of “significant Indigenous cultural sites or the environment” to Regional District Emergency Management activities. could create conditions where the Regional District would need to allocate resources to address non-Regional District assets. The inclusion of infrastructure protection for all cultural sites, including Indigenous sites, would be desirable to ensure fairness and transparency when applied to local services and significant at-risk cultural values.
- The proposed new definition of ‘Emergency’ could greatly enhance the scope of the Province to activate local emergency management plans and capacity based on a broad application of the additionally added definitions noted under ‘emergency’.
- Supportive of a mechanism that would allow for Non-Treaty BC First Nations communities to ‘opt-in’ to the Provincial Emergency Management provisions under a Band Council Resolution platform. This would enhance local emergency management relationships and support the principle of shared responsibility.
- Supportive of reducing cross border issues and enhancement of integrated planning. This would support a model of inclusion within a region-wide framework under development within the Regional District.

Section 2: Defining the Four Pillars of Emergency Management

- Definition clarity for key terms and stating the BC context relating to the terms ‘emergency and hazard’ will be critical to the determination of changes in responsibilities and provincial expectations of the Regional District. Careful consideration must be given to changes that may create new responsibilities for the Regional District that do not currently exist and will create new resource and cost pressures.
- Not supportive of initiatives where there are new cost implications on local governments, especially where those costs are currently covered by the Provincial Government.

Section 3 Minister Responsible for Emergency Management

- A definition of catastrophic events will be helpful to determine what conflicts there might be between the modernized Act and other legislation or Regional District bylaws.
- While this a positive move forward for recovery, the discretion to apply the extraordinary powers available should remain the responsibility of the Regional District to apply as necessary.
- The establishment of an initial 14-day SOLE with extension of 14 days, will reduce administration and logistical issues faced by Regional District Emergency Operations activities.

Section 4: Entering into Agreements

- This would support the Regional District’s Strategic Priorities related to Indigenous Relations. Supportive of this change

Section 5: Enhancing Confidence in the Emergency Management System

- Further FOIPPA (privacy impact analysis) review of this item is recommended to determine how and when this consolidated information could be accessed and shared within the context that it was collected for use in emergency management related activities, including recovery activities.

Section 6: Preparedness for Provincial Ministries, Crown Corporations and Agencies

- Potential impacts, costs and interdependencies with other legislation are unknown.
- Additional discussion within practicing Land Use Planning and Community Planning subject matter experts is recommended.
- Potential impacts, costs and interdependencies with other legislation, are unknown.

Section 7: Local Authorities

- The Regional District will require additional capacity and funding mechanism to ensure that infrastructure and community-based recovery plans are relevant and have sufficient evidence-based detail to be considered for provincial funding.

Section 8: First Nations as Partners

- Aligns with Regional District Indigenous Relations Strategic Priority
- Careful consideration must be given to changes that may create new responsibilities for the Regional District that do not currently exist and will create new resource and cost pressures.

Section 9: Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure

- Supportive of the intent to enhance integrated planning.
- Supportive if concerns for personal, confidential, adequate and realistic disclosure identified in this proposal are adequately addressed. The critical service providers will need to agree to confidentially disclose adequate and realistic levels of hazard, risk, vulnerability and return to operations to allow for integrated planning.
- Not supportive of initiatives where there are new responsibilities, regulatory processes or financial implications on local governments, especially where those expectations and or costs are currently covered by the Provincial Government or other partners.

Section 10: Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs

- The Regional District will need to seek additional clarification as to how and if this item will impact collective bargaining or the use of volunteers, NGO's under contract or other such non-traditional social service and faith-based service providers.
- Changes to the definitions contained in the proposed modernized Act, may have unintended consequences for other local government volunteer service areas.
- The Regional District will need to assess potential impacts to regional economic health and the business community and continuity.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

Section1: Key Definitions

Proposal - It is proposed to define “emergency” as a present or imminent event or circumstance that:

- a. is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure, or a force of nature; and
- b. requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect health, safety or well-being of a person or community or to limit the damage to property, significant Indigenous cultural sites or the environment; or
- c. any other situation prescribed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently "emergency" means a present or imminent event or circumstance that

(a) is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure or the forces of nature, and

(b) requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of a person or to limit damage to property.

The definition of an emergency currently does not include significant Indigenous cultural sites or the environment nor does it include situations prescribed by Cabinet.

Implications for the SRD:

Protective Services staff time will be required to revise emergency plans based on new definition.

SRD will be provided with greater flexibility when responding to emergencies.

This inclusion of significant Indigenous cultural sites could create conditions where the Regional District would need to allocate resources to address non-Regional District assets.

Additional Comments:

The definition of an “emergency” is essential to emergency management legislation. In the *Emergency Program Act*, the term “emergency” gives meaning to other important concepts such as emergency plans, emergency programs, emergency measures, and states of emergency.

The current *Emergency Program Act* limits the definition of an emergency to a specific set of causes, which raises a question as to whether some events or circumstances may fall outside the scope of the Act. Similar legislation in other provincial jurisdictions generally use broader language that puts an emphasis on defining an emergency based on what could or does result from an event. Many other jurisdictions have also included damage to the environment in the definition of an emergency. However, the proposed definition goes well beyond traditional limits associated with emergency response (eg. Cabinet prescriptions) and could inadvertently deprive citizens of rights without due process of law.

Recommendation:

THAT “emergency” be defined as: A present or imminent event or circumstance that:

- a. Is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure, or a force of nature; and
- b. Requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect health, safety or well-being of a person or community or to limit the damage to property, significant Indigenous cultural sites or the environment.

Proposal - Add the ability for the Minister to prescribe by regulation a new “Local Authority”. This could include a Treaty First Nation whose Final Agreement defines it as a Local Authority, an appropriate body within the Stikine, or a group of willing First Nations, municipalities and/or electoral areas that wish to form a unified Local Authority for the purposes of undertaking some or all emergency management functions.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

First Nations are not yet adequately recognized as partners in emergency management in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Although the SRD already provides emergency preparedness services in a quasi-unified manner, this does not necessarily provide the ability to incorporate First Nations interests in a holistic way. The change would provide increased legislative ability to enter into a regional emergency program with First Nations.

Recommendation:

THAT the modernized *Emergency Program Act* add the ability for the Minister to prescribe by regulation a new “Local Authority”.

THAT the Act clarify the responsibility the Minister and the of the director of EMBC to include the following:

- Lead the coordination of all provincial government emergency management activities;
- Provide advice and assistance to other authorities – provincial and local authorities – in their emergency management responsibilities.

Section 2: Defining the Four Pillars of Emergency Management

Proposal – To Define Mitigation As:

The phase of emergency management in which proactive steps are taken to prevent a hazardous event from occurring by eliminating the hazard, or to reduce the severity or potential impact of such an event before it occurs. Mitigation protects lives, property, cultural sites, and the environment, and reduces vulnerabilities to emergencies and economic and social disruption.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently Mitigation is not defined in the *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

The Strathcona Regional District may be required to quantify the level of acceptable risk it will mitigate against.

Possible significant increase in staff time in all departments.

Possible increase in tax requisition to fund mitigation activities.

Additional Comments:

Mitigation is a key element of emergency management which to date has received relatively little emphasis in spite of increasing disaster costs. Mitigation actions can provide significant return on investment. Greater attention or investment in prevention and mitigation can prevent disasters or significantly reduce the social, economic, cultural, and environmental costs and damages when events occur. In Canada, \$63.2 million invested in the Manitoba Red River Floodway in 1960 has saved an estimated \$8 billion in potential damage and recovery costs.

Traditionally, emergency management in Canada has focused on preparedness and response.

Recommendations:

THAT if mandatory emergency mitigation modifications are required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial and/or federal funding.

Proposal – To Define Preparedness As:

The phase of emergency management during which action is taken to ensure readiness to undertake emergency response and recovery. It includes, but it not limited to, hazard, risk, and vulnerability assessment, planning, resource planning, volunteer management, training, exercises, public/stakeholder education, and continuous improvement.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently Preparedness is not defined in the *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Minimal increase in Protective Services staff time required to revise current emergency plans

The Strathcona Emergency Program already operates on a similar understanding and implementation of the concept of preparedness.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support defining Preparedness as proposed.

Proposal – To Define Response As:

The phase of emergency management during which actions are taken in direct response to an imminent or occurring emergency in order to prevent, limit and manage impacts. Response includes the initiation of plans and actions to support recovery and may include deployment of registered volunteer resources.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently 'Response' is not defined in the *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Minimal increase in Protective Services staff time required to revise current emergency plans.

The Strathcona Emergency Program already operates on a similar understanding and implementation of the concept of response.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support defining 'Response' as proposed.

Proposal – To Define Recovery As:

The phase of emergency management during which action is taken to re-establish social, cultural, physical, economic, personal and community well-being through inclusive measures that reduce vulnerability to emergencies, while enhancing sustainability and resilience. It includes taking steps to repair a community impacted by an emergency and restore conditions to a level that could withstand a potential future event or, when feasible, improve them to increase resilience in individuals, families, organizations and communities.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Recovery is not recognized in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Significant increase in staff time in all departments.

Additional Comments:

Lack of recovery planning and tools prolongs recovery and does not support resilience. Forward looking recovery measures allow communities not only to recover from recent disaster events, but also to build back better in order to help overcome past vulnerabilities.

The failure to plan can hinder the ability of communities to create a larger vision of their future in the aftermath of extreme events, or restrict the identification of options, thereby missing opportunities to achieve complementary goals and objectives such as reducing hazards exposure while achieving smart growth and sustainable development policies

Recommendation:

THAT if mandatory recovery planning is required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial and/or federal funding.

THAT the Province rename the *Emergency Program Act* (EPA) to the Emergency Management Act in order to reflect the four phases of emergency management, as recognized by the nature of emergency management.

THAT the Province commit to maintaining a minimum staff level at Emergency Management BC to ensure consistency of support.

THAT the Province provide greater clarification and explanation including implications for the EPA Emergency Management Regulation, and how promotion and support will be funded.

Section 3: Minister Responsible for Emergency Management

Proposal –State of Local Emergency (SOLE)

The duration of a SOLE be set at 14 days (replacing 7 days) with extensions of 14 days (replacing 14 days) at a time approved by the Minister or designate. Extensions may include changes to the geographical scope of the SOLE.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

A SOLE expires 7 days from the date it is made unless it is earlier cancelled by the minister, the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the local authority or the head of the local authority. The local authority may, with the approval of the minister or the Lieutenant Governor in Council, extend the duration of a declaration of a state of local emergency for periods of not more than 7 days each.

Implications for the SRD:

An additional timeframe within which to exercise emergency powers during a response would be beneficial.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support extending the SOLE duration to 14 days.

Proposal – Provincial State of Emergency (PSOE)

The duration of a PSOE be set at a maximum of 28 days (replacing 14 days), with extensions of 28 days (replacing 14 days) at a time approved by the LGIC. Extensions may include changes to the geographical scope of the PSOE.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

A PSOE expires 14 days from the date it is made, but the Lieutenant Governor in Council may extend the duration of the declaration for further periods of not more than 14 days each.

Implications for the SRD:

An additional timeframe within which the Province could exercise emergency powers during a response would be beneficial.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support extending the Provincial State of Emergency duration to 28 days.

Proposal – Powers Available During State of Local Emergencies and Provincial State of Emergencies

Clearly set out the powers available to the Minister and to Local Authorities, respectively, by listing these powers. Clarify that the Minister and Local Authorities may do all acts and implement all procedures necessary to mitigate, prepare for, respond to or recover from the effects of an emergency.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently the emergency powers are available to the Minister and Local Authorities during the response phase and do not extend to the recovery phase.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased flexibility to utilize emergency powers over a greater timeframe.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Continued Use of State of Local Emergency

Introduce a new provision to allow the Minister to grant a Local Authority the use of specific powers for a “transition period” between response and recovery of up to 90 days. A Local Authority would make an application to the Minister, citing what powers are required and demonstrating that they are in the public interest; necessary or desirable to ensure a timely and effective recovery; and proportionate in the circumstances. The Minister could approve multiple extensions, for up to 90 days each. Local Authorities would be required to report publicly on their use of the transition powers.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently the *Emergency Program Act* does not allow for special specific powers for a “transition period” between response and recovery of up to 90 days.

Implications for the SRD:

Greater flexibility, support and access to emergency powers when recovering from a disaster.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Powers During Catastrophic Events

S. 10(1) would clarify that for the duration of a provincial state of emergency, the Minister may do all acts and implement all procedures considered necessary to mitigate, prepare for, respond to or recover from the effects of an emergency; and,

S. 26 would clarify that unless otherwise provided for in a declaration of a state of emergency, if there is a conflict between the emergency management Act, the regulations, orders, or authorized actions made under the Act, and the regulations, orders, or authorized actions under other Acts, the emergency management Act and its regulations, orders, or authorized actions prevail.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently the emergency powers are available to the Minister and Local Authorities during the response phase and do not extend to the recovery phase.

Implications for the SRD:

Greater flexibility, support and access to emergency powers when recovering from a disaster.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Section 4: Entering into Agreements

Proposal – Access Support

Clarify that the Minister can enter into agreements with international jurisdictions. Agreements could include arrangements with one or more other jurisdictions to share resources in relation to emergency management.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently the *Emergency Program Act* does not clarify that the Minister can enter into agreements with international jurisdictions.

Implications for the SRD:

Possible increased ability to receive logistical support from international jurisdictions following a disaster.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Partnership with First Nations

Provide clear authority for the Minister and for Local Authorities to enter into emergency management agreements with First Nations. Agreements could address issues such as collaborative hazard and risk assessment and/ or planning; delivery of emergency management services or programs; and/or joint recovery activities.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

First Nations are not yet adequately recognized as partners in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Clarifies that such agreements constitute a legitimate approach to collaborating with First Nations.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Section 5: Enhancing Confidence in the Emergency Management System

Proposal – Transparency

Clarify that the Minister can enter into agreements with international jurisdictions. Agreements could include arrangements with one or more other jurisdictions to share resources in relation to emergency management.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not clarify that the Minister can enter into agreement with international jurisdictions

Implications for the SRD:

Possibly an increase in support and timely response from international jurisdictions following a catastrophic event.

Increased resource and knowledge sharing.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Quality Assurance

Require provincial ministries, Crown corporations and agencies, Local Authorities, and critical infrastructure owners/operators to register their emergency management plans with EMBC and enable EMBC to audit emergency management plans. In the spirit of continuous improvement, audit results would be shared with the planning body and made public.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently these entities are not required to register their emergency management plans with EMBC.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in Protective Services staff time to coordinate the registration and audit process.

Recommendation:

Additional information is needed to understand the implications if a local authority deviates from or refuses to change their established emergency plan, as well as financial implications to implement required changes. If mandatory emergency planning and modifications to plans are required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial funding. Consideration also needs to be given to oversight, and the capacity of EMBC to take on this role under its existing structure.

Section 6: Preparedness for Provincial Ministries, Crown Corporations and Agencies

Proposal – Business Continuity Plans

Require all ministries, Crown corporations, and agencies to have programs and plans to deal with the continuity of services. This could include school districts, universities, colleges, health authorities, and others;

Enable the prescription (in regulation) of standards for plan content, process, training, exercising and review; and

Establish a mechanism to enable EMBC to collect, review, and audit business continuity plans.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not legislate that these entities must have programs and plans to deal with continuity of services.

Implications for the SRD:

Business continuity planning ensures that organizations delivering critical services can continue to deliver those services following disruptions. This would require the Strathcona Regional District to purchase of business continuity equipment, such as a generator.

Increase in staff time across all department to develop an organizational business continuity plan that satisfies the legislative requirements.

Additional Comments:

The feasibility of assigning emergency planning and other duties by way of regulation is questionable. Emergency management practices have evolved considerably over the last two decades and will continue to do so. The process of updating and changing provincial emergency responsibilities through amendments to a regulation can be cumbersome and not well suited to responding to changes in the dynamic emergency management environment.

A further matter in the context of provincial emergency management responsibilities is the extent to which the legislative framework should capture public organizations such as school boards and health authorities, which do not fall under the definition of a government corporation. The Renteria Report (2014) acknowledged concerns of many stakeholders respecting emergency management plans and capacities across specific sections (pg. 19). While organizations with various degrees of independence from government do engage with government in the emergency planning process, the question of government's responsibility to ensure coordination of planning, response and recovery duties when and where necessary should be considered.

Recommendation:

THAT the following be provided in the modernized *Emergency Program Act*

- An authority for the Minister responsible for the *Emergency Program Act* to require other ministries, after consulting with them, to prepare business continuity plans.

- An authority for the Minister responsible for the *Emergency Program Act* to require, after consultation, that a minister, government corporation, or other prescribed public bodies prepare business continuity plans.

THAT the provincial government must provide guidance and templates for the preparation of emergency and business continuity plans for Crown agencies and critical private sector services.

Proposal – Continuity After a Catastrophe

Require the Province to develop continuity of government plans that ensure the continued operation of the executive, judicial, and legislative arms of government.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The Province is not currently required to develop continuity of government plans that ensure the continued operation of the above branches.

Implications for the SRD:

Greater support through provincial continuity of operations.

Additional Comments:

Emergency management is an important functional area in several ministries. They will require resourcing to enhance their catastrophic event plans and capacities. Also, a variety of ministries and agencies that may not have traditionally had active emergency management roles will also need to become more active in developing plans for catastrophic events. For example, ministries and other agencies will have to adequately address the post-event needs of vulnerable populations such as the elderly, disabled, and those facing language barriers.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal with the understanding that unless the Province provides all Ministries with a commitment of new resources to complete ministry and agency-specific plans, and without the resources to exercise and implement these plans in practice, preparedness will not increase substantially.

Section 7: Local Authorities

Proposal – Mitigation and Development - Building and Development

Require Local Authorities, and the Province (through the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s subdivision approval authority in unincorporated areas) to give greater consideration of current and future risk for new development approvals in hazardous areas; and,

Require sustainable long-term mitigation measures when building and development is approved in hazardous areas.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

It is presumed that legislative changes, if any, would be implemented through the *Local Government Act* or *Community Charter*.

Implications for the SRD:

Regional District departments may see additional expectations to identify hazard areas, conduct referral activities and enforce mitigation actions imposed by hazard lead provincial ministries.

The Regional District may require enhanced land sustainability documentation and engineering studies for development in potentially hazardous areas.

The Regional District may be compelled to participate in or fund mitigative works should those works be considered necessary to alleviate a condition or mitigate a natural hazard as describe in the *Act*.

Recommendation:

THAT any changes to development be retroactive and not be bounded to areas that have already been developed.

THAT Mitigation strategies would have to proven, and best on best engineering practices in order to be implemented

Proposal – Mitigation and Development - Hazard and Risk Identification

Include legislative and regulatory requirements for Local Authorities to identify, understand and assess hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities, and establish associated mitigation plans for risks and consequences.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not legislatively require mitigation plans for risks and consequences.

Implications for the SRD:

The SRD may have to define and/or quantify a level of acceptable risk that triggers necessary mitigation measures.

A detailed and professional HRVA (hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment) would cost an estimated \$10,000 - \$150,000 per area at a minimum.

Increased staff time across all departments.

Increased tax requisition to implement mitigation measures and conduct professional HRVAs.

Additional Comments:

There is a plethora of hazards, risks and vulnerabilities within any geographic area. Currently the Strathcona Emergency Program recognizes the threat of a nuclear attack, however aside from offering a community warning system (Connect Rocket) and developing a plan for the effects and coordination of a nuclear attack no other mitigation measures such as protective equipment or underground public shelters have been funded. It is not clear whether the modernized *Emergency Program Act* require local authorities to develop and implement mitigation plans for every possible hazard, risk and vulnerability.

Recommendation:

THAT if mandatory professional HRVAs and mitigation plans are required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial and/or federal funding to cover the costs associated with evaluation and mitigation.

Proposal – Mitigation and Development - Collaboration and Coordination

Enable the Minister or designate to direct Local Authorities to collaborate and coordinate at a regional scale for risk assessment, mitigation planning and mitigative works and enable the establishment of non-regulatory or regulatory incentives to enhance regional collaboration and coordination for risk assessment, mitigation planning and mitigative works.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Current legislation does enable the Minister to designate collaboration across regional level.

Implications for the SRD:

The Strathcona Emergency Program already collaborates and coordinates across a regional level.

Increase in Protect Services staff time to engage in mitigation planning and mitigative works.

Additional Comments:

Whole-of-society partnerships based on effective collaboration, coordination and communication are key components of emergency management, however the effectiveness collaboration of directed or forced collaboration remains to be seen.

Recommendation:

This proposal requires greater clarification and explanation including implications for the EPA Local Government Emergency Management Regulation, and how promotion and support will be funded.

Proposal – Preparedness for Local Authorities - Standardization of Programs and Plans

Establish a comprehensive list of requirements including hazard, risk, and vulnerability assessment; mitigation plans; response; recovery; business continuity plans; training; exercising; and a review cycle; and through regulation, provide detailed program and plan content requirements.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not legislate the establishment of the comprehensive list mentioned above.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in staff time across all departments.

Increase in tax requisition to support proposed activities.

Recommendation:

THAT if mandatory items are required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial and/or federal funding.

Proposal – Preparedness for Local Authorities - Collaborative Planning and Partnerships

Require Local Authorities to provide plans to neighbouring jurisdictions (Local Authorities and First Nations), to the Province, and stakeholders such as critical infrastructure operators, school districts, and health authorities and consider any feedback.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require Local Authorities to provide plans to neighbouring jurisdictions and others listed above.

Implications for the SRD:

Possible minimal implication as the Strathcona Regional District currently provides plans to the agencies listed above upon request. However, if the consultation process is formally established by statute

Additional Comments:

Emergency Management requires cross-agency, cross-government and inter-jurisdictional coordination and integration to ensure effective delivery of emergency management services.

The Strathcona Regional District is a member of the Mid-Island Emergency Coordinators and Managers, which is a Society that exists to provide planning, support and leadership in emergency management to Vancouver Island communities in order to better protect them.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Preparedness for Local Authorities - Collaborative Planning and Partnerships

Enable Local Authorities and First Nations to enter into agreements with one another for the purposes of integrated or multi-jurisdictional plans.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not provide a clear legislative framework that enables Local Authorities and First Nations to enter into agreements to do integrated or joint planning and to voluntarily form unified Local Authorities to do some or all emergency management functions.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased opportunity to enter into multi-jurisdictional emergency management agreements with First Nations.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Preparedness for Local Authorities - Collaborative Planning and Partnerships

Introduce a requirement for Local Authorities preparing emergency management plans to consult with First Nations. Consultation standards for Local Authorities could be specified in regulation or guidelines.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require Local Authorities preparing emergency management plans to consult with First Nations.

Implications for the SRD:

Consultation requirements are unknown at this time. Increase in Protective Services staff time to consult with First Nations.

Recommendation:

THAT this requirement be modeled on the current requirement in the *Local Government Act* for Regional District's to consult on First Nations on Community Plans. Municipal Affairs and Housing gives tips on how to engage, Emergency Management BC should provide similar engagement guidelines.

Proposal – Recovery for Local Authorities - Tools to Support Recovery

Enable Local Authorities, in consultation with the Minister responsible for the *Community Charter*, *Vancouver Charter* and *Local Government Act* and the Minister responsible for emergency management, to make emergency amendments to an Official Community Plan, Regional Growth Strategy, zoning, or bylaws.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

It is presumed that legislative changes, if any, would be implemented through the *Local Government Act* or *Community Charter*.

Implications for the SRD:

The Regional District will need to seek additional clarification and guidance from the Ministry responsible for Local Government to determine what impacts this proposal might have on statutory requirements pertaining to the *Local Government Act* – and beyond measures.

Additional Comments:**Recommendation:**

This proposal requires greater clarification and explanation including implications for the EPA Local Government Emergency Management Regulation, and how promotion and support will be funded.

Section 8: First Nations as Partners

Proposal – First Nations as Partnership

Expand the definition of “emergency” to include actions to protect community well-being, significant Indigenous cultural sites and the environment.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Community well-being, significant Indigenous cultural sites and the environment are not currently included in the definition of “emergency” in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in staff time required to consult with First Nations about integrating significant Indigenous site locations into emergency planning.

More flexibility provided in defining what an emergency is and when the emergency plan should be activated.

Additional Comments:

There have been several emergencies, such as the breach of the Mount Polly mine that did not fit the current definition of emergency. The environment is essential to communities and inclusion within the definition enhances the capabilities of all response agencies.

The British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS) currently lists the following response goals (below) in order of priority. The environment is listed as #7 and community well-being and significant Indigenous cultural sites were assumed to be social losses as stated in #8.

BCEMS Goals

1. Provide for safety and health of all responders
2. Save lives
3. Reduce suffering
4. Protect public health
5. Protect critical infrastructure
6. Protect property
7. Protect the environment
8. Reduce social and economic losses

Recommendation:

THAT the definition of “emergency” to include actions to protect community well-being, significant Indigenous cultural sites and the environment be supported.

Proposal – First Nations as Partnership

Provide clear authority for the Minister responsible for emergency management and for Local Authorities to enter into emergency management agreements with First Nations or First Nations groups, including Treaty First Nations. Agreements could address issues such as collaborative hazard and risk assessment and/or planning; delivery of emergency management services or programs; mutual aid; and/or joint recovery activities.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not legislatively recognize First Nations as potential partners in the governance and operations of emergency management.

Implications for the SRD:

This proposal could provide an increased ability and legislative clarity regarding how the Strathcona Regional District could enter into a regional collaborative arrangement, such as the recent arrangements that have been entered into listed below.

- The Collaborative Emergency Management Agreement between the Tsilhqot'in National Government, Canada and BC;
- The Central Okanagan Regional Emergency Plan, which supports local governments, the Regional District of Central Okanagan, and the Westbank First Nation; and
- The Tofino-Ahousaht Protocol Agreement on areas of mutual interest, including infrastructure, health and emergency planning.
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Additional Comments:

The Strathcona Regional District's Emergency Program currently prioritizes regional collaboration with First Nations regarding emergency planning, with a few examples listed below.

<https://agenda.strathconard.ca/SRDAttachments/SRDBoard/Open/BRD/19-Sep-18/20180914-BOARD-Community-Emergency-Preparedness-Funding-Applications.PDF>

<https://agenda.strathconard.ca/SRDAttachments/SRDBoard/Open/BRD/24-Jul-19/20190716-Regional-Community-Wildfire-Protection-Plans---Award-of-Contract.PDF>

https://agenda.strathconard.ca/SRDAttachments/SRDBoard/Open/BRD/09-Oct-19/20190927-Community-Resiliency-Investment_1-COMBINED-CORRECTED.pdf

Recommendation:

THAT Strathcona Regional District supports providing clear authority for the Minister responsible for emergency management and for Local Authorities to enter into emergency management agreements with First Nations or First Nations groups, including Treaty First Nations.

Proposal – First Nations as Partnership

Introduces a requirement for critical infrastructure owners/operators to provide non-sensitive information to First Nations upon request. (Note: information would also be provided to Local Authorities and/or the public upon request.)

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require critical infrastructure owners/operators to provide non-sensitive information to First Nations and Local Authorities upon request.

Implications for the SRD:

Data ownership and access agreements and protocols would need to be developed.

Increased ability to plan for emergencies due to increased access to data.

Additional Comments:

This proposal is supported but also requires greater clarification as it is anticipated that there will be pushback from the targeted organizations to the proposal, primarily because this information is currently not shared due to cited security concerns regarding intentional acts against such assets. These concerns around confidentiality, secure data storage and data access protocols would need to be addressed. Additionally, in order for the information to be useful during response, Local Authorities need to access and integrate this information into operational emergency plans. Clear parameters should be set to understand when and how this information is shared with Local Authorities and how data access will be restricted.

Recommendation:

THAT clear parameters should be set to understand when and how this information is shared and how data access will be restricted.

Proposal – First Nations as Partnership

Require consideration of Indigenous and traditional knowledge in the development of hazard risk and vulnerability assessments by provincial entities and Local Authorities. The entity conducting the assessments could be encouraged to communicate the results to affected First Nations.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require consideration of Indigenous and traditional knowledge in the development of hazard risk and vulnerability assessments.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in staff time across all departments.

Additional Comments:

To ensure the use of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, as appropriate, to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk assessment and the development and implementation of policies, strategies, plans and programmes of specific sectors, with a cross-sectoral approach, which should be tailored to localities and to the context.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – First Nations as Partnership

Establish that provincial entities and Local Authorities must consider cultural safety and inclusiveness when developing and implementing emergency management plans.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not legislate that provincial entities and Local Authorities must consider cultural safety and inclusiveness when developing and implementing emergency management plans.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in Protective Services staff time.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal provided that specific requirements are established in regulation and supported by policies and guidance material.

Section 9: Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: A Cross Sector Approach

Establish a power to allow for creation of a registry that captures specific critical infrastructure assets and their respective emergency management planning documentation, which may include information on risks, contacts, operating procedures, resource requirements, and resource availability. This registry would also serve to clarify which critical infrastructure operators and respective assets are subject to the regulatory requirements, as it may include “tiers” to ensure appropriate attention is paid to the assets and systems with greater risk and/or consequence.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* and emergency management requirements for operators such as Hydro, Oil and Gas, and Transportation are all covered under a quilt of legislation and there isn’t coordination. There is a need to address this gap and reflect an all of society approach to emergency management.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased chances of continuity and restoration of critical infrastructure during an emergency.

Additional Comments:

It is vital that critical infrastructure function through an emergency – a community’s ability to respond and recover from an emergency requires restoration of and access to water, food, electricity communications and other critical infrastructure.

Any change to the legislation in this regard would need to be supported by a definition of “critical infrastructure assets”.

The Renteria Report (2014) defined “critical infrastructure” as those physical and information technology facilities, networks, services and assets, which is disrupted or destroyed, would have a serious impact on the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians or the effective functioning of governments in Canada.

Recommendation:

THAT the modernized *Emergency Program Act* set default standard requirements that define what Critical Infrastructure is.

THAT this proposal outline how such information would be provided; and provide for the confidentiality of the information.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Risk and Resource Needs

Require critical infrastructure operators to develop specific emergency management planning documentation, which would be inclusive of planning for hazards created by the critical infrastructure, business continuity planning for service disruptions, and considerations for downstream impacts of service disruptions.

Additional Comments:

In 2013, Manitoba introduced changes to its *Emergency Measures Act* to require private sector critical service providers to prepare business continuity plans, as well as authority for the Minister responsible to order these providers to take requires measures during a state of emergency, including the implementation of any part of a business continuity plan.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased likelihood of continuity and restoration of critical infrastructure during an emergency.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal provided that this proposal outline how such information would be provided; and provide for the confidentiality of the information.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Information Sharing and Security

Require that emergency management planning documentation be developed into two parts:

1. Information such as risks to critical infrastructure, risks caused by the critical infrastructure, general operating procedures, consequence of loss, estimated restoration timelines, anticipated resource requirements, and primary contact information; and,
2. Sensitive information that exposes vulnerabilities and any additional details within the plan such as additional staff contact information, internal procedures.

Require that Part 1 be provided to the Province, and/or made available upon request to Local Authorities, First Nations, and/or the public.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* provides some specific powers during a State of Local Emergency to local authorities in relation to the restoration of essential facilities and the distribution of essentials supplies. However, the current *Emergency Program Act* does not set out responsibilities to private sector and non-government organizations regarding planning for and the mitigation of emergencies, nor are requirements for critical infrastructure owners to provide information about their assets or their emergency plans regarding those assets.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased likelihood of continuity of critical infrastructure during an emergency.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal provided that this proposal outline how such information would be provided; and provide for the confidentiality of the information.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Quality Assurance

Require certain critical infrastructure operators to provide a “Statement of Assurance” that would advise of measures they have taken to ensure that their emergency management documentation is of adequate quality. The Province would have authority to engage an accredited subject matter expert to validate the “Statement of Assurance”.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require certain critical infrastructure operators to provide a “Statement of Assurance”.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased chances of continuity and restoration of critical infrastructure during an emergency.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal provided that this proposal outline how such information would be provided; and provide for the confidentiality of the information.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Quality Assurance

Conduct prioritized audits of emergency management planning documentation. These audits would be done by either EMBC alone, or with the assistance of ministries with leadership/regulatory roles for a particular sector.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

While the Minister has the authority under the current *Emergency Program Act* to review and recommend changes to a local authority's emergency plan, the Minister does not have authority to require that a local authority make changes to their plans in situations where a cooperative approach has not been productive to address a significant issue with the plan.

Additional Comments:

The Strathcona Regional District has concerns on expanding the authority of the Minister responsible for the Act to require a local authority to change its local emergency plan or make modifications. Checks and balances need to accompany an increase in the authority for a Minister to recommend modifications to a local authority plan. Clearly outlined parameters and benchmarks must be included in a schedule, including the process for requiring a local authority to make modifications to the emergency plan. Additional information is needed to understand the implications if a local authority deviates from or refuses to change its established emergency plan, as well as financial implications to implement required changes. If mandatory emergency planning and modifications to plans are required, a mechanism should be considered to provide provincial funding similar to the structure employed in the USA. Consideration also needs to be given to oversight, and the capacity of EMBC to take on this role under its existing structure.

Most other jurisdictions in Canada provide the Minister responsible with the authority to review and, if necessary, require changes to emergency plans. Manitoba has a clear and comprehensive scheme under Section 8 of that Province's Act for the Minister to require revisions to local authority emergency plans as well as those across the provincial government. Ontario's Act provides authority for the Minister to set standards for plans under Section 14 of that Province's Act.

The Renteria Report (2014) references the expectation of many stakeholders in BC have with respect to provincial government leadership in setting standards respecting emergency plans. Specifically, the report stated that Emergency Management BC must "provide more clarity regarding the expectations of local authorities in the area of emergency management" in support of his recommendation that EMBC's authority be augmented to set minimum standards for emergency management programs.

Recommendation:

Consider the addition of authority to provide that Minister responsible for the Act may make an order requiring a local authority to change its local emergency plan where the Minister has reviewed the plan and recommended modifications. The authority should only be available to the Minister after the Minister has recommended modifications to an emergency plan and the authority should be in sync with the authority of the Minister to require revisions/changes to provincial emergency plans established by other ministries, government corporations and other agencies.

Consideration needs to be given to oversight, and the capacity of EMBC to take on this role under its existing structure.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Testing and Integration of Plans

Require critical infrastructure operators to conduct mandatory exercises for specific assets as designated by the Province through regulation or policy at a defined frequency and level (tabletop, full-scale, etc.). Require critical infrastructure operators to invite provincial regulators and emergency management authorities, as well as local participants such as Local Authorities, First Nations, and local organizations, to the mandatory exercises.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not require critical infrastructure operators to conduct mandatory exercises.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in staff time required to participate in additional exercises. Staff would become more knowledgeable regarding the ability of critical infrastructure providers to maintain business.

Additional Comments:

Emergency exercises are one of the best ways to prepare teams to respond effectively to an emergency. Exercises enhance knowledge of plans, allow members to improve their own performance and identify opportunities to improve capabilities to respond to real events.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Preparedness for Critical Infrastructure: Improving Information Sharing

Require critical infrastructure operators to provide emergency management information as requested by EMBC (or another provincial agency at the request of EMBC) including sensitive event-specific information, additional contact information, or internal procedures.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Currently the *Emergency Program Act* does not set out responsibilities of private sector and non-government organization (NGOs) for emergency planning or for the provision of information regarding their assets.

Implications for the SRD:

Minimal staff time would be required as this would be a direct arrangement between the critical infrastructure operator and the province, however this agreement may allow the Province to better support Local Authorities during an emergency.

Additional Comments:

Although this information could be useful for emergency management purposes, the definition of “critical services” requires clarification, as this could have a financial impact on local businesses that are deemed “critical.”

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal provided that consideration also needs to be given to oversight, and the capacity of EMBC to take on this role under its existing structure.

Section 10: Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs**Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: Helping Volunteers Help BC**

Increase support and formal oversight of volunteers.

Increase access to broader resources, including volunteers affiliated with third parties such as NGOs, and continue the ability of NGO's, philanthropic organizations, societies, and other organizations to enter into agreements with BC.

Create more equitable treatment between a person ordered to provide support in an emergency and one who willingly provides support.

Recognize that service provider organizations can be impacted by emergencies and may need support during response and recovery.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not provide sufficient protection for volunteers given their key role in emergency management.

The first priority of the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS) is to provide for the health and safety of all first responders and volunteers.

Implications for the SRD:

A core component of the Strathcona Emergency Program is its volunteers.

Currently the province does not provide sustainable funding for important volunteer emergency volunteer programs such as Light Urban Search and Rescue, Emergency Support Services and Emergency Radio Communications.

Currently the province does not provide a standardized training program for Emergency Radio Communications, though it provides this for Search and Rescue and Emergency Support Services.

Currently there is no legislative guidance or support to incorporate emergency animal care into the Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer program, though many residents consider their animals as members of the family. The legal duty to care for the animal must remain the responsibility of the owner however animals could be better integrated into Emergency Support Services by supporting training for animal registration, temporary shelter and assistance with fostering animals.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support a modernized *Emergency Program Act* that increases support and formal oversight of volunteers.

THAT Light Urban Search & Rescue be considered a Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer stream for response and/or catastrophic response/recovery planning and that this stream be provided with sustainable funding in place for training and tools.

THAT, as part of the EPA Modernization, Emergency Management BC implement sustainable funding grants and/or sources for administration of Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer groups.

THAT the modernized *Emergency Program Act* provide a standardized training program for Emergency Radio Communications.

THAT, as part of the EPA Modernization, Emergency Animal Care organizations such as the Canadian Animal Disaster Response Team be considered a Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer group.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: New Definitions: Registered Volunteers

Registered volunteers would be specialized disciplines prescribed by regulation and:

- Receive no remuneration for their service;
- Be provided with civil liability protection under the Act, workers' compensation and liability insurance;
- Obtain and retain registered status with the Province or other entities according to the regulation;
- Operate under Local Authority or direction of the requesting agency;
- May provide direction to convergent volunteers;
- Operate in all phases of emergency management; and,
- May receive time limited employment protection according to the Act.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not provide sufficient direction for the relationship between Local Authorities and volunteers despite their key role in emergency management.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased clarity and support for the Strathcona Regional District's Emergency Program volunteers.

Increase in Protective Services staff time required to implement this criterion and develop a plan for its inclusion.

Additional Comments:

Employment protection should extend to cover travel to and from the emergency until emergency personnel are no longer required to provide assistance.

Recommendation:

Support amendments to the act that further protect emergency workers against loss of employment are a benefit to volunteers. Further, additional amendments are recommended to protect emergency workers in the areas of liability, Worksafe provisions and damage to equipment.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: New Definitions for Convergent Volunteers

Convergent volunteers would not be registered and would:

- Receive no remuneration for their service;
- Arrive on scene offering support and assistance;
- Be supervised by the Local Authority, the Province, or a registered volunteer to be able to receive workers' compensation and other benefits; and,
- Receive civil liability protection under the Act.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

A core component of Emergency Management BC and local government emergency programs centres around volunteers but the legislation doesn't reflect this.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in Protective Services staff time required to implement this criterion and develop a plan for its inclusion.

Increased capacity to manage convergent volunteers during an emergency.

Additional Comments:

The Province could examine section 66.1 of the *Wildfire Act* as a potential model for this legislation of civil liability protection for volunteers.

Recommendation:

THAT the modernized *Emergency Program Act* clearly articulate the role of volunteer groups.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: New Definitions for Service Providers

The new legislation will include an explicit authority for the Minister (or designate) and Local Authorities to enter into agreements with Service Providers. Service Providers may be a registered charity, philanthropic organization, society or other organization. Such agreements could:

Authorize the Service Provider to deliver emergency response or recovery services or arrange for the deployment of staff or affiliated volunteer personnel. For clarity, personnel deployed on behalf of a Service Provider will be protected under workers' compensation and insurance policies secured by the Service Provider.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The currently *Emergency Program Act* does not explicitly authorize a Local Authorities to enter into agreements with Service Providers.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in Protective Services staff time to prepare and enter into agreements.

Increased ability to partnership and collaborate with Service Providers in the community.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: Legal Certainty

Ensure that the new legislation contains an authority to prescribe classes of registered volunteers, rules around supports for volunteers, and develop and implement a supporting regulation. Having the ability to prescribe classes of registered volunteers in a regulation allows for flexibility over time to accommodate new areas of specialized volunteer disciplines. Policy instruments would continue to be used for discipline-specific program rules and guidelines such as reimbursement rates and safety conditions.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

The current *Emergency Program Act* does not contain an authority to prescribe classes of registered volunteers.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased guidance for coordinating volunteer program.

Increased staff time to implement these guidance protocols.

Recommendation:

That the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: Job-Protected Leaves

Carry forward the existing Section 25 of the EPA that provides that persons ordered to assist during a declared Provincial State of Emergency or a State of Local Emergency cannot have their employment terminated for complying with that order.

Establish job-protected leave without pay for “registered volunteers.” This provision would be restricted to those registered volunteers specifically requested by a Local Authority or a BC agency to support emergency response. Job-protected leaves would not be conditional on a State of Local Emergency or Provincial State of Emergency being declared.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

Expansion of Section 25 of the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Increased support for volunteers.

Additional Comments:

Employment protection should extend to cover travel to and from the emergency until emergency personnel are no longer required to provide assistance.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: Ensuring Fairness to Employers

Require Local Authorities or a BC agency requesting the registered volunteer to:

- Document their initial request for the volunteer;
- Confirm the duration of the deployment;
- Confirm that the volunteer was in fact present for the emergency response; and,
- Make this documentation available on request of the employer.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

This requirement is not contained in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Increase in Protective Services staff time to submit documentation at the request of the employer.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Proposal – Strengthening Support for Volunteers and NGOs: Protection from Civil Liability

Include a civil liability protection provision for registered and convergent volunteers, boards of search and rescue societies, authorized persons offering support from another jurisdiction, persons authorized or ordered to provide assistance under a State of Local Emergency or Provincial State of Emergency, provincial government employees and officials, Local Authority employees and officials, the Minister and the Provincial government as a whole, similar to what is set out in the Wildfire Act.

How this proposal differs from the current legislation:

This provision is not set out in the current *Emergency Program Act*.

Implications for the SRD:

Potential increased legal protection for staff and volunteers.

Recommendation:

THAT the Strathcona Regional District support this proposal.

Prepared by: S. Koopman, Emergency Services Coordinator

Attachment: Copy of November 15, 2019 report to the Regional Board