



LACOMBE REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP (LREMP)

Regional Emergency Social Services Analysis

2015

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DISCLAIMER

This information is the property of the LCREMP (the Client) and may be used by the Client or those consulted by the Client, including Emergency Response Management Consulting (ERMC), for the purposes outlined in the scope of work.

Information and data utilized in this document have been gathered from interviews with representatives from each of the eleven members of the LREMP:

- ❖ Lacombe County
- ❖ City of Lacombe
- ❖ Town of Blackfalds
- ❖ Town of Bentley
- ❖ Town of Eckville
- ❖ Village of Alix
- ❖ Village of Clive
- ❖ Summer Village of Gull Lake
- ❖ Summer Village of Half Moon Bay
- ❖ Summer Village of Birchcliff
- ❖ Summer Village of Sunbreaker Cove

The information contained in this document is the application of ERMC's professional expertise and professional opinion, subject to the accuracy and content of available information and the scope of work. The user of this information accepts full responsibility for any errors or omissions contained therein.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Canada, Emergency Management (of which ESS is a part of) is dealt with “from the bottom up”, meaning that local authorities are responsible for handling emergency situations, but can request assistance from the provincial government if local resources and capacity is overwhelmed. In turn, the provincial government can request assistance from the federal government as needed.

Below are the provincial regulations and standards related to ESS:

- Food Retail and Food Services Code (2003)
- Public Health Act - Food Regulation: Alberta Regulation 31/2006
- Public Health Act - Housing Regulation: Alberta Regulation 173/1999
- Minimum Housing and Health Standards (1999)

The LREMP contracted the services of Emergency Response Management Consulting (ERMC) to provide an Emergency Social Services Assessment (herein referred to as “ESSA”) for the LREMP. An ESSA is a subjective quantitative assessment of the emergency social services level of preparedness for each member of the partnership in anticipation of the development of a Regional Emergency Social Services Plan.

Regional Emergency Social Services (RESS) is a function of a regional emergency response organization designed to assist with the provision of those basic services considered essential for the immediate and continuing well-being of persons affected by a disaster.

2. METHODOLOGY

The first step in the process was to identify and agree on the interview criteria for inclusion in the Preparedness Assessment Tool. This criterion is used to assess identified necessary elements in Emergency Social Services which have been used in development of “Best Practice” Regional ESS plans. Reference Appendix A for assessment template.

The second step was to identify the most likely candidates for the interviews. Each of the member partners were sourced for the following potential contact information:

- Director of Emergency Management (DEM) and/or alternates
- Chief Administrative Officers where appropriate
- FCSS Staff leadership
- FCSS staff if in place
- Emergency Social Services staff if appointed
- Community Social Service staff if appointed

3. CONSIDERATIONS

The ESS assessment was completed with the following taken into consideration:

- A Regional Emergency Management Partnership is in place that includes all of the intended participants in this assessment
- The completed ESS assessment would provide direction for the LCREMP in their Emergency Social Services enhancement for the region
- Recognition that FCSS support exists throughout the region in various levels of support for families and communities but does not necessarily address issues and concerns during a major emergency or crisis that would exceed the support capabilities of each individual partner

4. KEY FINDINGS/OBSERVATIONS

1. Individual communities within the partnership are capable of handling very small emergencies from a social services support focus (one to few families) for short term support
2. Most communities are not prepared for a severe / long term crisis in terms of resident support for basic needs
3. Most partners would welcome the efforts in development of regional support to draw on the strength and capabilities of the region
4. Summer village disasters typically impact secondary residences however it must be considered that in an emergency short term local support would be required

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1

ERMC recommends that the Lacombe Regional Emergency Management Partnership proceed with the development of a consistent, user friendly and comprehensive Regional Emergency Social Services Plan (RESS). The format and structure of the plan should be consistent with current standards and the plan will have specific function plans or guidelines developed to assist the region in dealing with the emergency social services requirements of the region's population in response to specific hazards and risks. ERMC recommends the following elements be addressed in the comprehensive RESS plan:

- Immediate actions process / checklists
- ESS management organization for the region as integrated into the existing LREM plan that defines authorities and protocols
- Alerting and notification requirements for mobilizing region ESS organization (ESS Branch Director in REOC and support organizations at respective Reception Centres, Volunteer Control Centres and Donations Control Centres)
- Reception Centre management functional plan
- Volunteer management
- Donations management
- Resources available within the region and access process
- Mutual aid agreements and/or memorandums of understanding for support
- Integration of third party support organizations
- Crisis Communication protocols including Reception Centre media relations
- De-activation process
- Recovery and post crisis analysis
- Maintenance and support requirements for the plan

Recommendation #2

ERMC further recommends that the Lacombe Regional Emergency Management Partnership proceed with the development of a stand-alone Reception Centre Manual to support the RESS plan.

This Reception Centre manual will include the "how to" for the establishment, operations of and demobilization of a reception centre and include such items as:

- criteria for selection of approved reception centres
- list of regional approved reception centres
- regional resource contacts

- checklist for reception centre activation (opening to closure)
- basic floor plans of centre process layout (VISIO format) for locations of tables/computers for intake and registration, where meals will be served, where cots may be set up and areas for briefings and other service delivery, e.g. accessing clothing and personal grooming items
- resource lists for the different reception centres
- accommodation for individuals with a variety of physical and psychological illnesses – as well as dealing with the stress of the evacuation itself
- specific criteria for activities relating to plan maintenance, plan distribution, plan updates
- checklists and forms for all positions within the reception centre
- Ready-To-Go kits for Reception Centre personnel
- training/exercise schedule for managing emergency social services and ESS service delivery

Recommendation #3

Upon completion of the development of the RESS and RC plans, ERMCC recommends familiarizing the respective partners with the plans and follow up with training exercises to validate.

Recommendation #4

Add the responsibility of maintenance and support of the above-mentioned plans to the annual contract administration roles and responsibilities.

6. SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

Through a quantitative analysis, this report captures the existing status of ESS in the LCREMP and the recommendations for further development. The next phase will be to consider these recommendations and present for appropriate approval to move forward in the region's emergency social services enhancement.

Appendix A – Individual Partner Assessment Tool

ESS Element	In Place & Working	Requires further development	Not available for reference
Included in Emergency Management/Response Plan			
Identified as Branch in ICS organization with Roles/Responsibilities			
Existing Emergency Social Services Plan			
Existing Evacuation Plan(s)			
Existing return to normal recovery plan for evacuees			
Mutual Aid Plans/Agreements/MOU			
Reception Centre Manual(s)			
Reception Centre Kits			
Identified Reception Centres			
Reception Centre – criteria/assessment readiness			
FCSS/ESS/CSS Director			
FCSS Staff			
Volunteer Organizations			
NGO Affiliations			
Emergency Notification System			
Personal Preparedness Program			
ESS Training / Exercise Program identified and practiced			
Comments:			

Appendix B – LREMP Reference Map

