

# Emergency Response and Recovery Plan



*The District of Highlands*

Authorized by the Municipal Council  
of the Corporation of the District of Highlands

May 2004

## **Mayor's Introduction**

It is a fundamental responsibility of municipal government to do all it can to protect life, property, and the environment, and to alleviate suffering and hardship caused by disasters.

We never know when an emergency will hit us, but we do know that floods, fires, earthquakes, plane crashes and other major disasters do happen and will continue to happen. The best we can do is plan and organize so that we are as prepared as we can be. This must be an ongoing process, based on current knowledge and understanding, and on experiences here and elsewhere.

This Emergency Response and Recovery Plan, prepared for the District of Highlands by our Emergency Planning Committee, is designed to provide for the use of public and private resources as necessary so that we can cope with a wide variety of emergencies.

The plan is an important tool in the process of both municipal and personal preparation, awareness, training, and finally, quick, efficient and effective response to a disaster. It is important that Highlanders know about, understand and support the plan, and cooperate to the best of their abilities in its execution.

Mayor Karel Roessingh  
District of Highlands  
May 2004

## Preface

The *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* outlines Highlands' authority and responsibility to act in emergencies, and communicates the policies and procedures to be followed. The plan also takes into account the coordination with outside agencies, both government and private, that may assist the local government during an emergency.

The plan reflects a snapshot of the dynamic planning process and will always be subject to change. This plan is not a final goal for Highlands; it simply reflects a record of policies, procedures and key information currently under development or already in place.

The key to preparedness and response action is based primarily on continuing training and exercising of all aspects of this plan.

The conventions used in this plan are "shall" and "will." When "shall" is used, it is a required procedure. When "will" is used, it is describing likely events beyond our control, primarily used for other agencies response to a given event.

The assumptions on which the planning process was undertaken include the following:

1. Municipal and regional services, such as the Highlands Fire Department, RCMP, and BC Ambulance Service will provide first responder emergency assistance. The Plan also assumes these agencies will coordinate and command, in conjunction with Highlands officials, the overall specific operation within their respective jurisdictions.
2. The Incident Commander will have authority to coordinate on-scene response activities during a crisis situation, with support from Highlands' Emergency Operations Centre.
3. Emergency response and recovery procedures will be documented and employees will receive basic training to provide assistance in response for specific incidents.

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## Record of Amendments

The Emergency Response and Recovery Plan will undergo revision whenever:

- Provincial requirements change
- Community hazards or vulnerabilities change
- The local government structure changes
- Exercises, drills, or emergencies reveal shortfalls in policies or procedures

The Emergency Program Coordinator ensures that necessary changes and revisions to the Plan are prepared, coordinated, published and distributed.

### Record of Amendments

Nature of Change	Date of Change	Page(s) Affected	Changes Made by (Signature)



# 1.0 Introduction

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## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this emergency plan is to help Highlands officials save lives, reduce suffering, protect property, mitigate damage to the environment, and control the economic consequences of emergencies and disasters. This plan provides the operational guidelines for coordinating response to incidents arising from hazards and risks faced by the citizens, employees, and clients of the District of Highlands.

This *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* describes the basic strategies the municipal government will use to coordinate the protection of Highlands citizens, property, environment, and economic well-being in a major emergency or disaster.

The Plan serves many purposes. In one respect or another, the Plan:

- Documents the results on an ongoing planning process among community stakeholders.
- Outlines Highlands' authority and responsibilities to act in emergencies and disasters.
- Sets out the policies and procedures for coordinating response and recovery for examination and consultation.
- Provides core training materials for potential EOC members.
- Guides members of the EOC during and after actual emergencies.
- Fulfils the legal requirements for emergency planning set out for local authorities in the BC Emergency Program Act.

The Highlands Emergency Response and Recovery Plan is one of several documents developed under the Emergency Program, including:

Strategic Plan	Guides the Highlands emergency management program from year to year, including means to evaluate the program.
Risk Assessment	Identifies the hazards of concern and the vulnerabilities of people, property, and services to emergency events.
Mitigation Plan	Establishes interim and long-term actions to eliminate or reduce the risk from hazards.
Emergency Response and Recovery Plan	Assigns responsibilities for carrying out specific actions at projected times and places in an emergency or disaster.

Department Emergency Response and Recovery Plans	Summarizes emergency response and recovery policies and guidelines for key departments.
Training Plan	Identifies the training requirements to support response and recovery plans
Equipment Plan	Tracks an inventory of emergency response equipment on-hand and needed.
Exercise Plan	Presents an exercise schedule to support response and recovery capabilities.

**1.2 Authorities**

Section 6 (2) of the Emergency Program Act of 1993 requires local authorities to prepare or cause to be prepared local emergency plans respecting preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters.

Local authorities also must establish and maintain an emergency management organization to develop and implement emergency plans and other preparedness, response and recovery measures.

The Emergency Program Act and the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation are located in Annex A. The Highlands Bylaw 56 that adopts the *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* may be found in Annex B.

The Highlands Council is at all times responsible for the coordination of Highlands 's emergency response within its boundaries except:

- If Highlands' emergency plans conflict with provincial emergency plans,
- When the Attorney General orders Highlands to stop using any or all of its powers in a state of local emergency, or
- When a provincial state of emergency is declared for the same area covered by a Highlands state of local emergency.

The Highlands *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* may be implemented if an emergency exists or appears imminent, or a disaster has occurred or threatens. A state of local emergency is not necessary to put the plan into effect.

**1.3 Plan Description**

This *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* provides information and guidance for use by members of the Highlands Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in coordinating response to and recovery from a major emergency or disaster.

The *Emergency Response and Recovery Plan* (referred to in this document as "The Plan" or the "ERRP") follows the guidelines of the British Columbia Emergency Response Management System (BCERMS) Site Support Coordination Level standard for response and recovery.

The Plan begins with eight descriptive sections as follows:

1. Introduction	Information about the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan, and how it fits with the overall emergency program.
2. Concept of Operations	Information on how the EOC works, including decision-making and operations.
3. EOC Organization	Details on the organization and activities of the EOC, including detailed checklists for EOC functions.
4. EOC Facilities	A brief description of buildings, facilities, layout, and equipment available for use as an Emergency Operation Centre.
5. Response Guidelines	A series of overview summaries for selected EOC response functions.
6. Recovery Plan	Overview of selected (Local Authority) recovery functions.
7. EOC Notification	This section specifies the call-out procedures for emergencies affecting the (Local Authority).
8. (Blank)	(For future use)

The Plan also contains eight sets of **EOC checklists** for staff who must carry out response and recovery functions in the Emergency Operations Centre.

Behind specific tabs the Plan includes a number of **hazard-specific plans**, such as wildfire, containing response and recovery actions.

At the back of the Plan, the user will find a series of **annexes** of background and reference information, including forms to assist EOC personnel with planning, decision-making, and implementation.

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## 1.4 Scope

The Plan anticipates situations where resources are required to deal with an emergency exceed the resources available by the first responder departments and their mutual aid agreements.

As such, The Plan is designed to support response and recovery actions at the site of an emergency, as controlled by the Incident Commander. The EOC guided by this Plan provides site support only, and does not directly control

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response activities where there is an Incident Commander.

If there is no single site and no Incident Commander, the Plan serves in coordinating response and recovery activities throughout the municipality.

This Plan does not address emergencies that are normally handled at the scene by first responder departments. Key Highlands departments are expected to maintain emergency response and recovery plans that cooperate with each other and with the provisions of the municipal plan. These departments include:

- Building and Planning
- Fire Department
- RCMP
- BC Ambulance

In addition, Highlands relies upon the response and recovery services of several external organizations, and they are expected to maintain their own plans of action. These organizations include:

- Canadian Red Cross
- Emergency Social Services
- Salvation Army
- Search and Rescue

The plan is implemented for Highlands' jurisdictional area only (within boundaries). Highlands may implement the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan to meet requests from other local authorities.

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## **1.5 Responsibility for the Plan**

Responsibility for this Emergency Response and Recovery Plan is shared among several departments for three reasons. First, expertise in the plan should not entirely reside with one department or one person. All key members of the EOC Group should know the contents of the plan that pertains to their roles, and keep the contents up-to-date.

Second, those who will coordinate response together should plan together. An individual or one department does not have all of the knowledge needed to adequately prepare or maintain the Plan.

Third, there is too much work to do in keeping the plan current to fall on the shoulders of one person. Demands can be managed if all players do their part.

Therefore, primary EOC members are responsible for maintaining their own checklists, as follows:

BC Ambulance Service

- Ambulance Branch Checklist

RCMP Detachment

- Police Branch Section
- Aircraft Crash Guideline

Emergency Program Coordinator

- Liaison Officer Checklist
- EOC Support Unit Checklist
- Introduction
- Concept of Operations
- Response Guidelines
- EOC Notification List
- Other Sections Not Assigned

Emergency Social Services Director

- ESS Branch Checklist

Building & Planning

- Engineering Branch Checklist
- Environmental Branch Checklist
- Utilities Branch Checklist
- Supply Unit Checklist
- Transportation Unit Checklist
- Resource List
- Earthquake Guideline
- Major Power Outage Guideline
- Snow Storm Guideline

Accounts Department

- Finance / Administration Section Checklists

Amateur Radio Operator

- Information Technology Unit Checklist

Fire Department

- Operations Section Checklist
- Fire Branch Section
- Dangerous Goods Guideline

Health Authority

- Health Branch Checklist
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Municipal Administration

- EOC Director Checklist
- Risk Management Officer Checklist
- Information Officer Checklist
- Finance / Admin Section Checklist

Planning Department

- Planning Section Checklists
- Recovery Plan

Public Works

- Logistics Section Checklist

The Highlands Emergency Program Coordinator is authorized to ensure the above departments and agencies keep the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan up to date.

In addition, Emergency Program Coordinator responsibilities include:

- Assembling all comments and overseeing document revision.
  - Notifying all plan holders of any changes and providing revised pages or electronic files of the plan.
  - Keeping the Mayor and Council informed on the status of the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan.
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