

PRO Bottom Line

Ministry Response to the Industry PRO Proposal-December 23, 2016

Introduction

The concept of a provincial scale inland preparedness and response organization (PRO) for BC has evolved over several years, and is partly based on existing organizations for marine spill response such as Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC). The Province wishes to create an industry funded and led PRO that has a number of required preparedness and response functions, and that may through innovation, improve spill management overall. This will generate efficiencies for the Province and those industries posing spill risks, through a collective that provides contracted services across sectors, and provides the Province with a spill response safety net, needed when a responsible party is unknown, unable or unwilling to respond. PRO services would be in four categories:

- Create area response plans (ARPs) for large areas of the province (intention is to cover the province). In addition to being a resource for planners and responders, and a means for outreach to those potentially affected by spills, ARPs will be the PRO's spill contingency plan, demonstrating that it is capable of addressing any spill anywhere in the province. They are also one means by which a PRO may reach full certification.
- Capably deal with spills and their impacts, including having access to the necessary equipment, personnel and other resources in areas where there are ARPs.
- Assist in meeting regulated persons' preparedness and response requirements (requirements will be contained in future regulations).
- Increase efficiency and effectiveness of preparedness and response activities through collective efforts, and improve ways to communicate about, collaborate on, and coordinate preparedness and response activities.

Details of what roles and capabilities a PRO will have, and how and when they would develop will take a period of **several months** to emerge through multi-party technical working group (TWG) deliberations. Four key topics, including 1) qualifications 2) capability, 3) stakeholder involvement/advisory roles and 4) area response planning (ARP), will need careful consideration along with others as the PRO concept evolves. The PRO TWG will represent the range of parties that may be directly involved in, or affected by a PRO.

As the first PRO TWG meeting approaches, **7 industry associations (CAPP, CEPA, RAC, CIAC, CFA, BCTA, BCBC)** have indicated that they are interested in gaining a better understanding of exactly what the Province expects a PRO will do, and how a PRO might develop. Below is a list of the current intentions for a PRO.

Proposed roles for consideration and further refinement are:

- **Ensuring equipment and trained people are available to respond to spills anywhere in the province through establishing a system for inventorying and sharing resources** including personnel (ICS, preparedness & response), equipment, and plans.
 - In a 3 tier response system, a PRO can be thought of as a tier 2 organization, with the ability to access tier 3 resources. A PRO would rely largely on existing contractors, but could acquire internal capacity to fill gaps as the new spill regime evolves.
- Ensuring the **Province has access to response resources** in those instances where a spiller is unknown, unwilling, or unable to respond.
- **Leading development of ARPs and likely GRPs**, and potentially providing **contracted resources for operational planning** by risk bringers.
- **Developing and coordinating communications resources**, including a 1-800 number for information about spills, website for spills information, media relations, protocols for communications, and database management systems.
- Potentially **working with the Ministry to establish minimum training standards** aligned with the new regulatory regime.
- **Coordinating training opportunities** in the following areas:
 - ICS training for preparedness and response activities
 - Communications and preparedness planning,
 - public safety, responder safety
- **Testing capability of response organizations** (e.g. WCMRC, WCSS) and response contractors (may include First Nations, local governments and wildlife response organizations) that wish to be part of the PRO's response network. This could be through drills and exercises. (the province may similarly audit a PRO).
- Accessing and **coordinating specialist contracted services** including:
 - Sampling and monitoring, wildlife response, waste management
 - Coordinating equipment and personnel sharing,
 - Stakeholder involvement
- Acting as a **hub for continuous improvement**, including:
 - Coordinating drills and exercises designed to test and improve response systems,
 - Leading an annual provincial lessons learned workshop,
 - Maintaining a sophisticated database on spills, with information that is public and password protected for secure users,
 - Including First Nations and local governments in workshops and exercises,
 - Reviewing best practices in other jurisdictions, writing new guidelines and job aids
 - Annual performance management and public reporting