

Technical Working Groups, B.C. Spill Response Regime

Project Overview

On June 15, 2015, the Province announced plans to develop and implement a world-leading spill preparedness and response regime to be built using seven design principles (Figure 1).

To date, the ministry has published and received public input on two intentions paper and recently announced an engagement period for a third intentions paper called [Spill Preparedness and Response in BC – Proposed Amendments to the Environmental Management Act and Proposed Regulations \(IP3\)](#). The IP3 summarizes proposed amendments to the *Environmental Management Act* passed in the Legislative Assembly in May 2016 and lays out the ministry’s intent for regulatory and policy changes. The new legislation provides the legal foundation to establish a new preparedness and response regime for addressing environmental emergencies in B.C.

Figure 1: B.C. Spill Response Regime Design Principles



Technical Working Groups

The Technical Working Groups are one phase of the current five-phase engagement process to discuss the proposed legislative and regulatory changes with industry, communities, First Nations, first responders and the public:

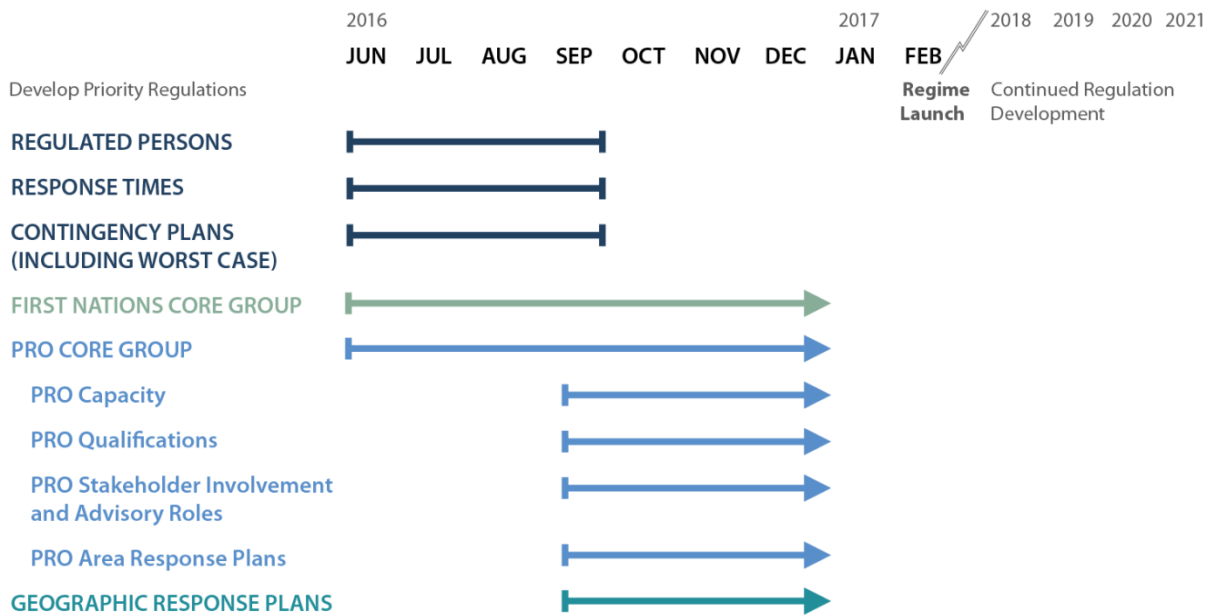
1. Receive public comments on the third spill intentions paper until June 30, 2016.
2. Hold a plenary session for industry, local governments, First Nations and other stakeholders.
3. Hold regional meetings with First Nations.
4. Facilitate Technical Working Groups
5. Publish a final summary engagement paper.

The purpose of the Technical Working Groups is to receive policy recommendations from diverse experts in the field of spill preparedness and response and from representatives of groups impacted by the spill of hazardous substances in B.C. (i.e., industry, other regulators, response organizations, First Nations, local governments and environmental non-profit organizations).

For each Technical Working Group, other than the First Nations Core Group, ministry staff will prepare meeting summary notes, interim updates as needed and a final report outlining the proposed recommendations. Technical Working Group members will be asked to review and comment on these materials, and possibly share the information with their peers to obtain further information and input. Final reports from each technical working group will be published on the spill response [engagement webpage](#) upon completion. The results of all five phases of the current engagement process will be summarized in a final report to be published in the fall of 2016.

It is the ministry’s intention that a priority set of regulations be passed at the launch of the Regime in February 2017, including those outlining standards for spill contingency plans, response times and defining regulated persons. Other regulations will be developed more gradually. Figure 2 outlines a list of priority topics and the estimated timeframe for the group discussions.

Figure 2: Technical Working Group Topics, First Nations Core Group¹ and Timelines



First Nations Core Group

It is anticipated that the First Nations Core Group will select First Nations representatives for the Technical Working Groups and that a First Nations non-government organization will be responsible for the First Nations Core Group’s administration, logistics and liaison with First Nations leadership.

¹ The name of this group is still to be confirmed.