BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR

INTEGRATED RESPONSE PLAN FOR CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

December 2021

Acknowledgements and Key Contributors

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Send questions and comments to AEST's Business Continuity Advisor via this link.

This guide and related templates are available for download on the provincial government web site. The online version of this publication is the official version.

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Preface

British Columbia's public post-secondary education sector is comprised of 25 post-secondary institutions (PSIs) in more than 100 communities throughout the province. This sector is a major contributor to the current and future provincial economy. Large campuses are diverse communities with student housing, daycare, shops, recreation centres and other infrastructure and services comparable to many cities. With over 450,000 students enrolled each year and many campuses having substantial daytime populations as students, faculty and staff commute to or live on campus, it's important that the sector have robust emergency management programs.

The *BC Public Post-secondary Education Sector: Integrated Response Plan for Catastrophic Events* (PS-IRP) is intended to assist PSIs in the continuous improvement of their emergency programs and define roles that will support sector resilience and build stronger communities. The PS-IRP is focused specifically on the response and recovery phases of emergency management and describes the challenges, priorities and actions that the sector, individual PSIs and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training will face during a catastrophic emergency and how jurisdictions will coordinate.

The PS-IRP is organized into sections.

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3
INTRODUCTION provides background and recent examples of how the sector is integrated into emergency management within the province.	**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE** within British Columbia introduces legislation and the structure of B.C.'s Emergency Management Program.	**SECTOR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS FOCUSES** on key considerations and the expected response and recovery actions in a catastrophic event. This information is not restricted to larger disasters and is applicable to smaller non-catastrophic incidents.

In general, PSIs have varying levels of emergency program preparedness as measured by the extent of established emergency management plans, approved and resourced by senior management and operationalized by staff. However, the ability of campuses to implement best practices is often dependent on several factors, including institution size, location, emergency management expertise, equipment, facilities, and relationship with local authorities.

This PS-IRP lays the foundation for how PSIs and AEST will work collaboratively in preparation for, during, and after emergency events and enhances emergency management and resilience by recommending a consistent approach across the sector.

SECTION 1

Introduction

The Government of British Columbia is continuously working to manage and mitigate the consequences of disasters. This work, led by Emergency Management BC (EMBC) brings together the planning and response efforts of provincial ministries, government agencies, regional and municipal governments, and other stakeholders.

Central to this planning is the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS) guide (2016) and the B.C. Earthquake Immediate Response Plan (2015). BCEMS provides the overall foundation of how emergency management is implemented in the province and is described in more detail later in Section 2. The B.C. Earthquake Immediate Response Plan details B.C.'s large-scale emergency management framework showing how local, provincial and other bodies would work together in the event of a catastrophic earthquake centered on the Lower Mainland or Vancouver Island.

Successful emergency management is a collaborative effort designed to ensure that partners work together effectively. For PSIs, the safety of students, faculty and staff is paramount, and while each PSI manages its own emergency program, integrating with local authority emergency planning will enhance community response and recovery efforts. For example, if a catastrophic earthquake occurs in the Lower Mainland or Greater Victoria, there will likely be:

- **LARGE NUMBERS** of injuries and casualties;
- **EXTENSIVE** building damage;
- **WIDE DISRUPTION** of utilities and communications, i.e., electricity, gas, telephone, cell phone services and internet;
- **DAMAGE** to, or significant destruction of, transportation systems and infrastructure, such as roads, highways, bridges, tunnels, railways, airports and seaports; and
- **WIDESPREAD** fire due to damaged gas and electrical lines.

During the initial response to any disaster, the **FOCUS OF RESPONDERS** will be on:

- **SAVING** lives;
- **REDUCING** immediate threats to life;
- **ENSURING** public health and safety;
- **PROVIDING** emergency support services and mass care;
- **UNDERSTANDING** the situation and helping the public to understand how best to respond; and
- **RESTORING** critical facilities, communication, utilities and transportation infrastructure.

A catastrophic event may overwhelm the available local, regional, and provincial supports, and will require additional resources for response and recovery efforts. PSIs will be expected to support efforts as a community resource providing supports, as needed, such as reception centres, group lodging, food and medical services, cold storage/freezer facilities, shuttle services, vehicle parking and/or staging areas. In the 2017 wildfires, some PSIs also provided interface fire education training to increase the resource pool of responders. In the 2020-2021 COVID-19 response, many PSIs donated personal protective equipment for front-line healthcare workers and some PSIs provided design and manufacturing of personal protective equipment, facilitated rapid testing clinics, and provided student nurses to help with the COVID response.

SECTION 2

Emergency Management Governance within British Columbia

In British Columbia, the authority for emergency management planning, response and recovery is established by the following legislation and regulations.

- *Emergency Program Act (1996)*
- *Emergency Program Management Regulation (1994)*
- *Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation (1995)*
- *Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (1995)*

The *Emergency Program Act* grants authorities the power to occupy or use resources required to respond following the declaration of a Provincial State of Emergency.

In addition to these statutes, the British Columbia Emergency Management System is the Province's recognized guide for emergency preparation and management.

The British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS)

BCEMS is B.C.'s adaptation of the internationally recognised Incident Command System (ICS) to command and control and is the standard for the Province.

FOR SIMPLIFICATION, BCEMS WILL BE CONSIDERED SYNONYMOUS WITH ICS THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT.

BCEMS has been adopted by municipalities and agencies across British Columbia, helping to ensure a coordinated and organized approach to emergencies. It provides standardization, response goals, guiding principles and processes; emphasizing integration and partnerships at all levels.

This guide also references the BCEMS structure and primary management functions that promote collaboration among different agencies who may have little or no previous experience working together during a catastrophic event.

In order to effectively plan for emergencies, BCEMS lists eight response goals to guide decision makers in prioritizing response activities during the response and recovery phases of an emergency. The size and characteristics of an emergency event determine the proportional response and resources necessary.

BCEMS: Key Concepts

BCEMS Response Goals	Guiding Principles	Response Levels	Response and Recovery Phases
APPENDIX A	APPENDIX B	APPENDIX C	SECTION 3
1. Ensure the Health and Safety of Responders 2. Save Lives 3. Reduce Suffering 4. Protect Public Health 5. Protect Infrastructure 6. Protect Property 7. Project the Environment 8. Reduce Economic and Social Losses	▶ Health and Safety ▶ Shared Responsibility ▶ All-Hazards Approach ▶ Collaboration and Engagement ▶ Common Approach ▶ Clear Communication ▶ Continuous Improvement	1. Site 2. Site Support 3. Provincial Regional 4. Provincial Central	1. Immediate Response 2. Sustained Response 3. Recovery

PSIs ARE ENCOURAGED TO ADOPT BCEMS IN THEIR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND COLLABORATE WITH THEIR LOCAL GOVERNMENT(S) AND OTHER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS IN B.C.

The Four Pillars of Emergency Management

Emergency management in British Columbia is guided by four pillars: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparation, Response and Recovery. BCEMS is often considered for response only; however, it is important to note that BCEMS can, and should, be applied to all four pillars in emergency programs.

[**Source:** image from https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/local-government/hrva/guides/companion_guide_to_the_hrva.pdf]

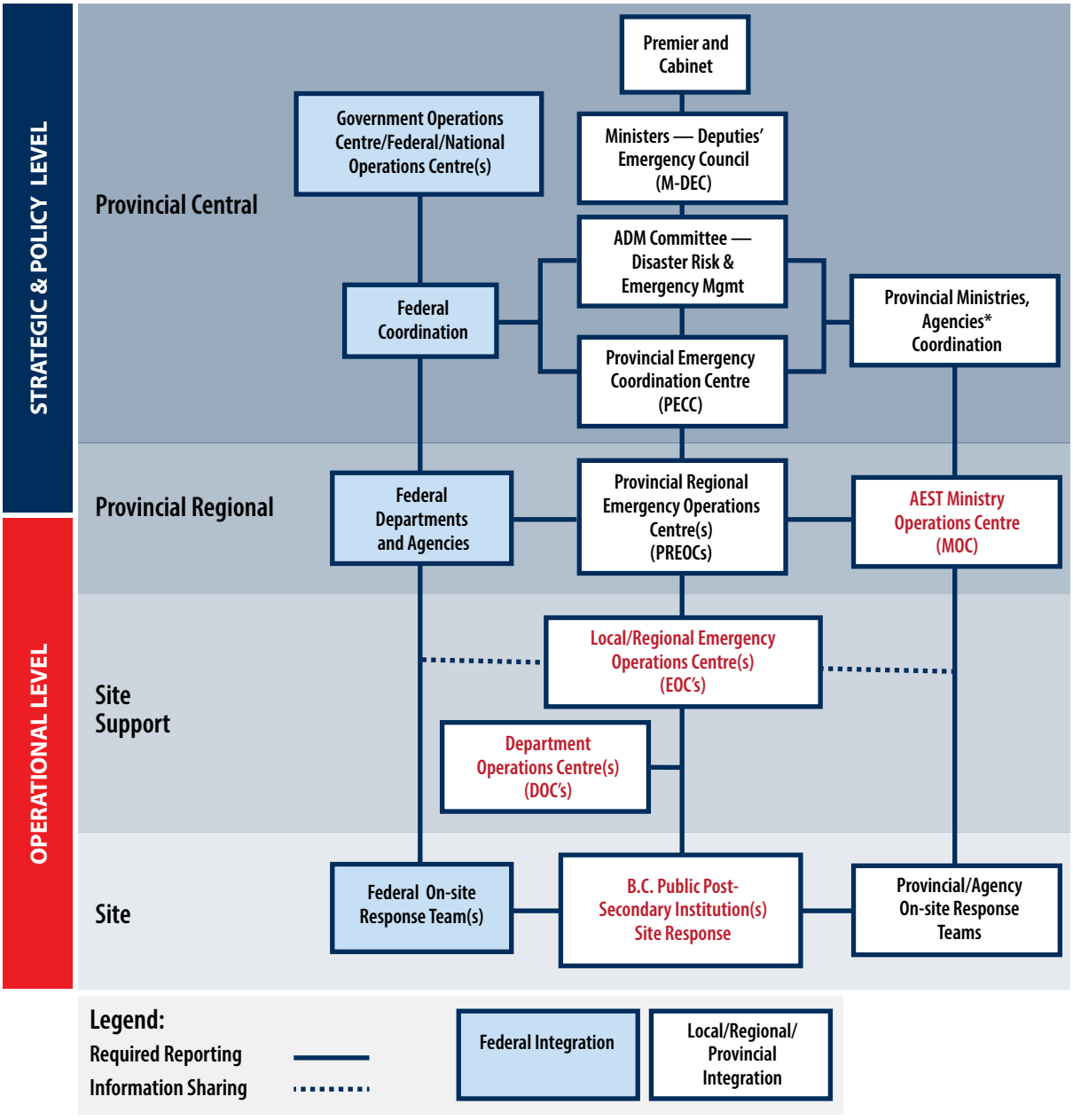
The four pillars are defined as [1]:

- **PREVENTION AND MITIGATION**: Prevention and mitigation refers to actions taken to identify and reduce the impacts and risks of hazards before an emergency or disaster occurs.
- **PREPAREDNESS**: Preparedness increases the ability to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies and to recover more quickly from their long-term effects, and involves actions taken prior to an event to ensure the capability and capacity to respond.
- **RESPONSE**: Response refers to actions taken during or immediately after an emergency or disaster for the purpose of managing the consequences.
- **RECOVERY**: Recovery refers to actions taken after an emergency or disaster to re-establish or rebuild conditions and services.

1 [**Source:** Public Safety Canada]

BC Government Emergency Management Structure

The following diagram has been adapted and illustrates the integration of all four BCEMS response levels (site, site support, provincial regional and provincial central) and the multi-directional communication flow highlighting PSIs, Local Authorities, and AEST (shown in the graphic below in red text). Some coordinating entities, such as the Provincial/Agency On-Site Response Teams, are optional and would only exist if a support team was dispatched to the site level (e.g., by AEST's MOC at the Provincial Regional level).



* Agencies = Stakeholders

[**Source:** adapted from https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bcems/bcems_guide.pdf]

Organization of the Sector During a Catastrophic Event

Legislative Framework

The public post-secondary sector is governed by two key pieces of legislation: the *University Act* and the *College and Institute Act*. Additional legislation exists for specific programs and certification bodies such as the *Professional Governance Act* and *Chartered Professional Accountants Act*.

Under the *Workers Compensation Act Part 2 Occupational Health and Safety* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, each PSI is required to have emergency program procedures that are specific to the unique characteristics, risks, and hazards of the institution. Provincial Government ministries are required to follow the policies and procedures in Chapter 16 of the *Core Policy and Procedures Manual* that outline emergency and business continuity program requirements ministries must comply with.

Coordination of a Sector-wide Response

B.C. Public PSIs and AEST will work together during the immediate, sustained and recovery phases following a catastrophic event.

While this plan focuses on catastrophic events, many of the response protocols are applicable to other emergencies. As EMBC continuously develops and enhances planning for catastrophic situations, PSIs and sector partners will continue to coordinate and align with those plans. During a catastrophic event, the normal governance structures of the post-secondary education system remain. Good planning will help identify emergency requirements and procedures in advance to support the safety of students, faculty and staff.

PSIs, local governments, EMBC and AEST will activate applicable emergency plans, establish Incident Command System organizational structures as per BCEMS guidelines and establish information sharing among agencies.

ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE THINGS PSIs CAN DO TO MAKE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF SAFER IN A CATASTROPHIC EMERGENCY IS TO HAVE ESTABLISHED POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EMERGENCY MANAGER FOR THEIR LOCAL MUNICIPAL OR REGIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND REQUEST TO BE INCLUDED IN THE AUTHORITY'S EMERGENCY PLANS.

Advanced Education is listed in the 2015 B.C. Earthquake Immediate Response Plan, with the following response actions[2]:

- **PROVIDE A POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION (PSI) LIAISON** to the PECC/PERRC (Provincial Earthquake Response and Recovery Centre) to support the Emergency Social Services Branch.
- **PROVIDE EXPERTISE AND/OR POLICY DIRECTION** regarding PSI requirements and accountabilities.
- **PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PSIs** in order to meet the immediate needs of students during the emergency.
- **PROVIDE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS** of PSI facilities, where possible, in the impact areas.
- **SUPPORT THE COORDINATION AND ACCESS** to PSI facilities and resources during an emergency.

2 These response actions have since been updated. This 2015 B.C. Earthquake Immediate Response Plan example is for illustrative purposes.

SECTION 3

Sector Priorities and Actions

Following a **catastrophic event**, the Province will lead the coordination of response and recovery activities with local, provincial, First Nations, national and international emergency partners. Response to an event consists of two phases: immediate and sustained response. It is important to note that while there is no overlap in the immediate and sustained response, there can be overlap in the response and recovery phases. Recovery can start during the response phase and can continue for years beyond the conclusion of response.

Immediate Response Phase

The immediate response priority in the first hours or days following an emergency event is to save lives, provide emergency support services and mass care, obtain and share situational awareness, restore critical infrastructure and set the conditions for a sustained, co-ordinated response and recovery effort.

Following are key considerations and expected immediate response actions in a catastrophic event:

AEST	PSIs
IMPACTS	
▶ **Limited staff, staff injuries, casualties, fatalities, or challenges in reporting to work** ▶ **Building and infrastructure damage** ▶ **Damage to communication networks, impacting AEST's ability to connect with PSIs, authorities, partners, and stakeholders** ▶ **Technological and financial challenges** ▶ **Limited equipment and supplies**	▶ **Safety of students, faculty, staff and broader community** ▶ **Building and infrastructure failures at PSI campuses** ▶ **Damage to communication networks, impacting communication channels to students, faculty, staff, local government, partners, and stakeholders** ▶ **Student, faculty and staff injuries, casualties, fatalities, or challenges reporting to work** ▶ **Managing local authority demands for resources**
PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	
▶ **Activation of AEST's Operations Centre (MOC) at Level 3** • The MOC Director or Liaison Officer will be available to Ministry staff or PSIs • The MOC location will be communicated as soon as possible ▶ **Support the provincial emergency response** • Provide information on the status and requirements of the Sector • Support PSIs providing local authorities/emergency responders with resources ▶ **Provide point of contact for the Sector** • Understand the status of PSIs including affected students, faculty and staff • Support the efforts of the PSIs and provincial emergency management system to ensure the safety of students, faculty and staff ▶ **Maintain the critical functions of AEST supporting the PSI education sector** • Ensure funding and resources for PSIs continue, so that faculty and staff can be paid, and operations are maintained • Ensure essential services continue such as Information Management/Information Technology, student financial assistance, financial services to PSIs, and that records are secure	▶ **Activate emergency management plans** • Re-establish or maintain PSI security ▶ **Account for visitors, students, faculty, and staff** • Where there are on-site childcare centres, account for the location and status of each child until family reunification occurs or children have been taken into care ▶ **Activate crisis communication protocols** • Manage media inquiries • Monitor social media • Distribute timely communiqués ▶ **Call 9-1-1 to report casualties/injuries to local first responders, i.e., ambulance, fire, police, etc.** ▶ **Establish contact with Local Authority Emergency Operations Centre and AEST's MOC if possible** • Provide regular situation status updates

Communications and Notification Process

When a PSI experiences a major disruption requiring support, the local authority should be contacted as soon as possible.

- **CIVICINFOBC**: List of municipalities and regional districts, including links to websites: https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/regionaldistricts?pn=2

If the disruption requires ministry or provincial level assistance, contact AEST as follows:

- **GENERAL INQUIRIES**: 1- 250-356-5170 https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/advanced-education-skills-training/ministry-contacts

- **THE AEST EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MAILBOX**: AEST.EM@gov.bc.ca for:
  - Business Continuity
  - Ministry Operations Centre
  - Communications

Upon notification of a PSI disruption, AEST will assess the situation, communicate the level of support to be provided, consult with EMBC, activate AEST's Ministry Operations Centre, or provision PSI support via regular operations.

Ongoing Communications

The Sector will be notified of AEST's hours of operation and where to email questions, requests, and information.

Scheduling Conference Calls

When an event involves multiple jurisdictions and agencies, AEST will host coordination calls to update all PSIs on the status of the event and to gather information from the meeting participants. The coordination call will provide current/relevant event information.

REFER TO APPENDIX E: PSI COORDINATION CALL AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE CALL DETAILS.

Preliminary Impact Assessments and Situation Reports

During a wide-area or catastrophic event, PSIs requiring AEST support are required to provide a preliminary impact assessment and daily situation reports. The preliminary impact assessment is the first documentation of a disruption or a potentially escalating situation that may require provincial support. If provincial support is required, or if PSI support is needed by the Province, the situation report is the method of monitoring and reporting status to executives and EMBC.

REFER TO FORM 1: PRELIMINARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AND

FORM 2: SITUATION REPORT

Sustained Response Phase

Once the immediate response phase ends, a PSI may be closed or used to support other response efforts, e.g., provide space for a reception centre, group lodging and/or resource staging areas. Requests for PSI resources could come from the Province; however, it is expected that most would come from local authorities.

Once a resource has been requested, the PSI will support the request and may consult with AEST for additional support. AEST will work with impacted PSIs if required, to monitor compensation for eligible claims (for more information, see Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance section below).

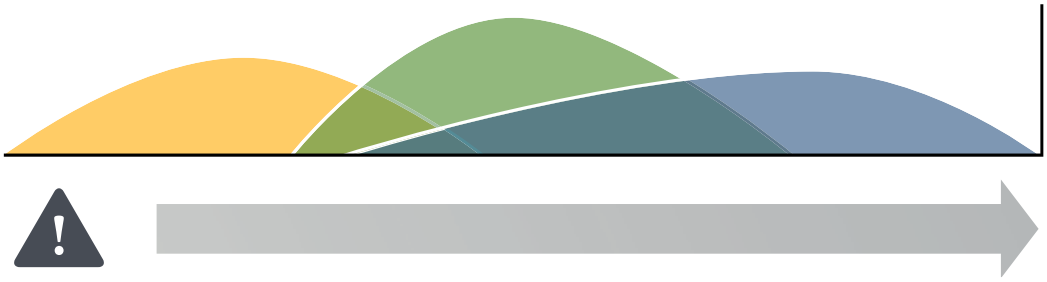
Following are key considerations and expected sustained response actions in a catastrophic event:

AEST	PSIs
IMPACTS	
▶ **Reduced staff levels and limited equipment and supplies** ▶ **Building and infrastructure damage** ▶ **Damage to communication networks, impacting the ability to connect with PSIs, authorities, partners, and stakeholders** ▶ **Technological and financial challenges**	▶ **Reduced student, faculty and staff levels** ▶ **Campus building and infrastructure damage** ▶ **Damage to communication channels and increasing demands for information from stakeholders** ▶ **Limited security monitoring/enforcement capability for students, faculty, staff** ▶ **Increased local authority resource demands**
PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	
▶ **Ongoing MOC/Catastrophic Response Actions and Business Continuity Management** ▶ **PSI critical business function support, e.g., IM/IT, student financial assistance and financial services to PSIs, if required** ▶ **Regular situation monitoring and status changes with affected PSIs**	▶ **Manage critical business functions** • Assess any structural and non-structural safety issues • Ensure campus property/resources are suitable ▶ **Maintain or establish communications with local and/or regional emergency operations centres, AEST and/or other supporting PSIs** ▶ **Support emergency responders using PSI resources and property, including campus facilities. Safeguard PSI property.** ▶ **Manage stakeholder communications** • Resume classes when and where appropriate, including alternate or temporary locations

Recovery Phase

Recovery consists of three stages: short, medium and long-term, working towards minimizing future damage. There is no clear dividing line between response and recovery. It can be more effective to initiate recovery efforts during response if it is possible to do so with available resources. Recovery can take months or even years, particularly if additional events produce cumulative long-term impacts.[3]

The Three Stages of Recovery:



Short-Term (DAYS - WEEKS)	**Medium-Term** (WEEKS - MONTHS)	**Long-Term** (MONTHS - YEARS)
Recovery Unit, Emergency Operations Centre(s)	Recovery Operations Centre(s)	Recovery Steering Committee
Reception Centre(s)	Resilience Centre(s)	Long-Term Recovery Structure
Emergency Shelter	Temporary Lodging	Permanent Housing
Rapid Damage Assessment	Inspection/Damage Assessments	Engineering Assessment/Land Use Planning
Public Information/Information posts	Demolition/Disaster Debris Management	Media and Community Services
Initial Debris Clearance	Critical Infrastructure Repair	Final Debris Disposal/Recycling
Critical Infrastructure Restoration	Business Resumption	Critical Infrastructure Rebuild
Business Continuity	Emotional/Psycho-social Support	Business Recovery
Disaster Psycho-social Support	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment	Counseling and Support Programs
Initial Post-Disaster Needs Assessment		Demobilization

Business continuity plans detail the process for the resumption of critical operations. In instances where AEST is directly impacted by a significant disruption, the Ministry will prioritize recovery of its own critical internal operations in advance of working to support PSIs in resuming their operations and educational training programs.

THE RECOVERY PROCESS REQUIRES ONGOING CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN PSIs, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, PARTNERS, AGENCIES, AEST AND EMBC.

3 Adapted from Modernizing BC's Emergency Management Legislations (2019) https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/121/2019/10/modernizing_bcs_emergencymanagement_legislation.pdf

Following are key considerations and expected recovery actions after a catastrophic event:

AEST	PSIs
IMPACTS	
▶ Reduced staff levels ▶ Limited ability to locate and track staff ▶ Limited or competing construction repair resources, often at increased rates ▶ Limited security monitoring/enforcement capability of government buildings ▶ Limited supplies and equipment procurement options ▶ Deferred business operation activities are now becoming more critical ▶ Reduced stakeholder confidence	▶ Reduced student, staff and faculty levels ▶ Limited ability to locate and track students, staff, and faculty ▶ Limited finances and limited income generating opportunities ▶ Limited or competing construction repair resources, often at increased rates ▶ Limited security monitoring/enforcement capability for students, faculty and staff ▶ Limited supplies and equipment procurement options ▶ Interrupted education/research activities ▶ Increased demands for status updates and information from all stakeholders ▶ Ongoing local authority resource demands
PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	
▶ Ongoing MOC/Catastrophic Response Actions and BCP management and the hiring of replacement or temporary staff ▶ Providing PSI critical business function support, e.g., IM/IT, student financial assistance and financial services to PSIs, if required ▶ Continued situation monitoring of impacted PSIs ▶ Ongoing prioritization and use of temporary buildings and facilities ▶ Managing the transfer of AEST services to government buildings and other facilities ▶ Recovering personnel data and other electronic information ▶ Replacing information systems, including hardware and software ▶ Recovering financial operations ▶ Initiating and maintaining education and support services ▶ Managing emotional stress and post-crisis reactions	▶ Hiring replacement or temporary staff and faculty ▶ Ongoing prioritization and use of temporary buildings and facilities ▶ Managing the transfer of buildings and other facilities ▶ Recovering student, faculty and staff personnel data and other electronic information ▶ Replacing information systems, including hardware and software ▶ Recovering financial and revenue-generating operations ▶ Recovering education program and support services ▶ Managing emotional stress and post-crisis reactions of students, faculty, and staff ▶ Ongoing business continuity and recovery/restoration activities ▶ Re-establish communication channels and issue regular releases/updates

Additional PSI Recovery Considerations

Achieving an effective recovery requires that business continuity and long-term recovery plans be in place prior to a catastrophic event. These plans must consider how to return to a new state of normalcy and should consider five areas of recovery:

1. **EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL**
2. **PHYSICAL AND STRUCTURAL**
3. **CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS**
4. **RESTORATION OF ACADEMIC LEARNING**
5. **STUDENT, FACULTY AND STAFF DEBRIEF OF THE EVENT**

Depending on the nature, scale and complexity of the catastrophic event, families and communities should not expect the immediate resumption of academic programs. Some PSIs may be undamaged, or have sustained minor damage, and be capable of continuing to provide education services to students. Having a coordinated PSI recovery effort, including impact assessments will help PSIs and AEST to have full situational awareness to base decisions and coordinate effort.

In restarting classes following a catastrophic event, PSIs should consider:

- The **AVAILABILITY** of faculty and staff
- The **NUMBERS** of students able to attend
- The **NEED** for PSI facilities during the recovery phase, e.g., reception centre, group lodging, staging, etc.
- The **STRUCTURAL SAFETY** assessments
- The **CONDITION** of water, transportation, sewer, or electrical lines and other infrastructure serving the PSI
- The **AVAILABILITY** of basic resources and many other potential concerns

Regular communications will be important for PSIs to keep AEST, students, faculty and staff informed. Effective communication strategies can help explain how and why decisions are being made in the unpredictable process of rebuilding and restarting services including classes.

IT SHOULD BE IMPRESSED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFTER-ACTION PLANS AND SUBSEQUENT IMPROVEMENT PLANS ARE NECESSARY TO LONG-TERM RESILIENCE.

Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance

Following a disaster, the provincial government may declare the event eligible for Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA). Once declared, the DFA program may compensate individuals for essential uninsurable losses and/or reimburse local governments for damaged infrastructure. A local government includes educational bodies as defined under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. A summary of the Province's DFA program can be found at:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-response-and-recovery/disaster-financial-assistance.

PSIs should be aware that property that is lost or damaged as a result of being acquired or used under section 10 (1) (d) or 13 (1) (b) or (c) of the *Emergency Program Act* is entitled to compensation under the *Compensation and Disaster Financial Assistance Regulation*. All financial compensation applications must start through the local authority that acquired or used the property.

AEST will work with impacted PSIs, if required, to monitor compensation for eligible claims.

Further information regarding DFA may be obtained from:

Emergency Management BC
PO Box 9201 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria B.C. V8W 9J1
Phone: 1-888-257-4777 Toll Free
Fax: 250 952-5542
Email: dfa@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.gov.bc.ca/disasterfinancialassistance

Conclusion:

The *BC Public Post-secondary Education Sector: Integrated Response Plan for Catastrophic Events* is a collaborative collection of content to help the reader understand the sector's role in a large-scale provincial emergency.

This document provides foundational concepts, including emergency management governance and examples of sector involvement and integration during the 2017 wildfires and 2020-21 COVID-19 response. It emphasises the importance for institutional emergency planners to align their emergency programs with local authority emergency programs and the multi-directional communication flow of vital information. PSIs are encouraged to provide annual updates to their local authorities of available PSI resources to assist in response and recovery efforts. The last section discusses sector priorities and actions in the response and recovery phases.

This document provides a consistent approach that helps build institutional and community resilience across the B.C. Public Post-secondary Education Sector.

If you have a question or concern

Readers can submit questions or comments to AEST's Ministry Business Continuity Advisor at AEST.EM@gov.bc.ca.

Appendix A: BCEMS Response Goals

There are eight BCEMS response goals, which guide decision makers in prioritizing response activities. Although the goals are listed in order of priority, personnel take all available information into account when determining incident-specific priorities.[4]

1	**ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF RESPONDERS:** The well-being of responders must be effectively addressed, or they may be unable to respond to the needs of those at risk.
2	**SAVE LIVES:** The importance of human life is paramount over all other considerations. When lives are at risk, all reasonable efforts must be made to eliminate the risk.
3	**REDUCE SUFFERING:** Physical and psychological injury can cause significant short- and long-term impact on individuals, families, and communities. Response measures should take into consideration all reasonable measures to reduce or eliminate human suffering.
4	**PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH:** Public health measures essential to the well-being of communities should be maintained or implemented. Enhancing surveillance and detection, eliminating health hazards, minimizing exposure, and implementing programs such as widespread immunization may need to be considered.
5	**PROTECT INFRASTRUCTURE:** When necessary to sustain response efforts, maintain basic human needs, and support effective recovery. Infrastructure that is critical to the livelihood of the community should be protected ahead of other property.
6	**PROTECT PROPERTY:** Property can be essential to the livelihood of communities. When determining priorities, response personnel should evaluate the importance of protecting private and community property.
7	**PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT:** The environment is essential to communities. When determining priorities, response personnel should evaluate the importance of protecting the environment and implement protective strategies that are in the best interest of the broader community.
8	**REDUCE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LOSSES:** The loss of economic generators can have short- and long-term impacts on communities, including social losses related to the loss of community support networks and reduced employment, investment, and development. Response measures may be necessary to reduce these losses, and psychosocial interventions may be required for those impacted by the disaster.

4 BRITISH COLUMBIA Emergency Management System 2016 https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bcems/bcems_guide_2016_final_fillable.pdf

Appendix B: BCEMS Guiding Principles

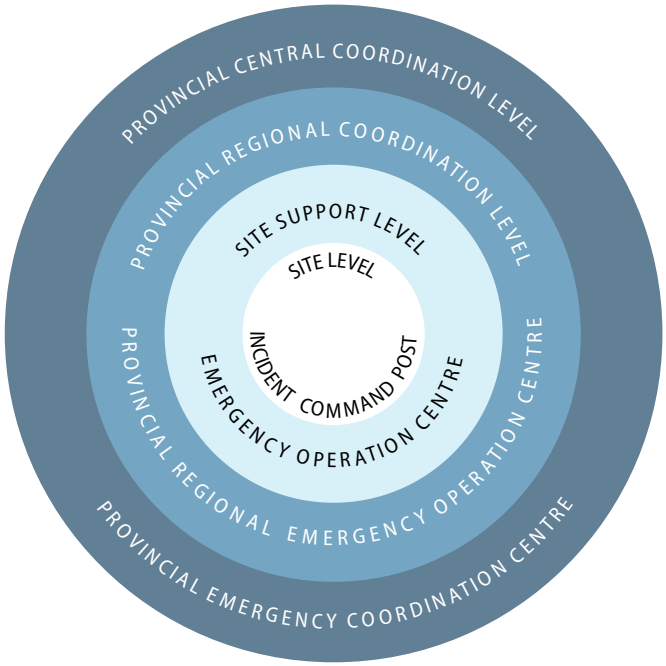
These guiding principles reflect the fundamental values that influence the practice of emergency management in BC[5].

Health and Safety	**HEALTH AND SAFETY** are of primary importance in emergency management. The equal dignity of all people must be respected, along with their customs and culture, and their fundamental right to the necessities of life.
Shared Responsibility	**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT** is a responsibility shared by all – government, business and industry, not-for-profit organizations, and the public. Stakeholders comply with applicable legal and regulatory obligations by developing and implementing plans to manage disasters within their jurisdiction, organization, or area of responsibility.
All-hazards Approach	**POTENTIAL HAZARDS** that may cause an emergency/disaster are identified, prioritized, and addressed in order to mitigate risk and consequences.
Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement	**STAKEHOLDERS COLLABORATE** in pursuing an integrated and unified approach to emergency management, thus enhancing capabilities and capacity, and reducing costs. Open lines of communication, mutual respect, and effective coordination of multi-agency efforts lay the foundation for this approach.
Common Approach	**BCEMS** is the required practice for provincial ministries and Crown corporations. Other stakeholders are strongly encouraged to use this framework. BCEMS is based on ICS principles, such as flexibility, scalability, and adaptability.
Clear Communication	**VALID, ACCURATE INFORMATION** is communicated to stakeholders clearly and in a timely manner. This includes coordination of proactive public messaging on known and impending hazards before, during, and after an emergency/ disaster.
Continuous Improvement	**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT** is supported by a sharing of research, plans, education, training, exercise, and experience. Learning about what works and what does not work can help stakeholders better prepare for future emergencies/disasters. Hence, operational reviews, documentation, and feedback from those involved in the emergency management process are critical.

5 BRITISH COLUMBIA Emergency Management System 2016 https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bcems/bcems_guide_2016_final_fillable.pdf

Appendix C: BCEMS Response Levels[6]

During emergency response BCEMS uses a comprehensive response management system based on Incident Command System (ICS) that ensures a coordinated and organized response to emergencies and disasters. This framework comprises four levels:



SITE LEVEL – An incident command post is established to direct all site response activities by single or unified command, i.e., police, fire, ambulance.

SITE SUPPORT LEVEL – When the site level requires additional support, an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) may be activated to source additional resources, provide policy guidance, coordination, etc.

PROVINCIAL REGIONAL COORDINATION LEVEL – When response requirements exceed the site support level, the Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Centre (PREOC) is activated to provide access to and coordination of provincial assets, specialists and information.

PROVINCIAL CENTRAL COORDINATION LEVEL – The Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC) leads the overall provincial government response and provides policy guidance and coordination support for the regional levels, manages the acquisition and deployment of provincial, federal and inter-provincial resources, and provides support to other provincial ministries.

6 Extracted from bcems_brochure https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bcems/bcems_brochure.pdf

Appendix D: Emergency Categories and Associated Response

Four Escalating Categories of Emergency[7]

The size and characteristics of an emergency event determine the proportional response and resources necessary. The following categories describe the associated jurisdictional level response.

Emergency Category	BCEMS Response Level(s)	Description
Local Emergency	**Site Level Site Support**	• A single community or local government is impacted. • The local government can handle the emergency with limited outside assistance. • A local declaration of a state of emergency may be required.
Regional Emergency	**Site Level Site Support Provincial Regional**	• One or more local governments or communities is impacted. • Regional coordination, resources or supports are required, as local government is unable to manage the emergency alone. • One or more local declarations of a state of emergency are required.
Provincial Emergency	**Site Level Site Support Provincial Regional**	• One or more local governments or communities are impacted. • Provincial coordination, assistance or resources are required, as local or regional authorities are unable to manage the emergency alone. • Support may be required from the Federal Government or from other provinces or territories. • One or more local declarations of a state of emergency may be required and may even require a provincial declaration.
National Emergency	**Site Level Site Support Provincial Regional**	• Multiple local governments or regions are affected. • A large-scale, integrated response is needed from all levels of government, from local to federal. • Outside assistance and resources are required. • A provincial and possibly a federal declaration of a state of emergency is required. • Large-scale and potentially long-term recovery efforts are needed.

7 Adapted from BRITISH COLUMBIA Education Sector Integrated Response Plan for Catastrophic Earthquake https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/bc_education_sector_intergrated_response_plan.pdf

Appendix E: PSI Coordination Call Agenda

When an event involves multiple jurisdictions and agencies, the AEST PSI Liaison will host a coordination call to update all Post-Secondary Institutions on the status of the event provincially and to gather information from the meeting participants. The coordination call is to provide current/relevant event information.

Who Attends:

AN EMAIL INVITATION WILL BE SENT TO PSIS

EXAMPLE:

You are invited to attend the PSI Coordination Call:

DATE:	YYYY-MM-DD
TIME:	HHMM hrs (24hr clock)
VIA:	Conference Call – 1-877-353-9184, #

Please Note

- A roll call of speakers will be conducted prior to giving situation updates.
- Co-locate with other members of your organization and call in from a phone you can mute while listening. Place the call on mute to keep the line clear. Phone mute/un-mute is *6.
  - If you must take another call - hang up and dial back in. Do not place the call on hold.
- These calls are for situational awareness purposes only – information gathered on the call is not meant for public information. If you wish to use information you have heard for a media release, you must clear it with the organization providing the information.
- Do not provide the conference call information to others.
- Ensure discussions are relevant to all participants; sideline discussions should be taken offline.
- State your name and organization clearly when you provide updates or ask questions.
- Minutes of this call will not be taken. Make note of information relevant to your organization.

AGENDA ON NEXT PAGE

(continued from the previous page)

PSI Coordination Call Agenda

Depending on the event:

1. Earthquake, Wildfire, Freshet: Current and Forecasted Conditions/Areas of Concern
2. Critical Infrastructure: Outages - Hydro, Telecommunications
3. Health: Air & Water Quality, Psycho-social Assistance
4. Transportation: Update on Routes
5. AEST MOC: Updates
6. Situation Updates: PSIs

For the initial coordination call, report out on the biggest issues that your organization is currently facing, and indicate if you need or anticipate the need for assistance/resources. Identify potential dependencies (i.e., if one critical service is down, it may impact another service or organization)

For subsequent calls, report out on outstanding issues, summarizing major issues/concerns and immediate unmet needs including status (Improving, Unchanged, Deteriorating).

NO MORE THAN 3-5 MINUTES FOR UPDATES — DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED IN SITUATION REPORTS AND RESOURCE REQUESTS THAT YOU WILL BE PROVIDING TO AEST MOC.

- BC Institute of Technology
- Camosun College
- Capilano University
- Coast Mountain College
- College of New Caledonia
- College of the Rockies
- Douglas College
- Emily Carr University of Art & Design
- Justice Institute of BC
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Langara College
- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
- North Island College
- Northern Lights College
- Okanagan College
- Royal Roads University
- Selkirk College
- Simon Fraser University
- Thompson Rivers University
- University of British Columbia
- University of the Fraser Valley
- University of Northern British Columbia
- University of Victoria
- Vancouver Community College
- Vancouver Island University

Appendix F: Emergency Planning Resources

Organization	Contact
B.C. Post-Secondary Emergency Planners (BCPSEP)	• **General email:** BCPSEP_SSEM@bcit.ca https://www.bcit.ca/safetyandsecurity/bcpsep/
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training	• **General Inquiries: 1 250 356-5170**: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/advanced-education-skills-training/ministry-contacts • AEST.EM@gov.bc.ca
Municipalities and Regional District Lists	• **CivicInfoBC: List of municipalities and regional districts, including links to websites:** https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/regionaldistricts?pn=2
Emergency Management BC Resources	• **Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) operation 24/7: To report a provincial emergency, contact the ECC at 1-800-663-3456** • **Regional Offices:** https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/contact-us?keyword=Regional&keyword=Offices • **EmergencyInfo BC Resources (e.g., Tsunami Alerts/Notifications, River Forecast Centre, Wildfire Services):** https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/resources/ • **PreparedBC**: http://gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC • **Provincial Emergency Plans:** https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-management-bc/provincial-emergency-planning/provincial-emergency-planning-cemp
Post-Secondary Institution Emergency Management Training Programs	• **Justice Institute of British Columbia:** https://www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/schools-departments/school-public-safety/emergency-management-division • **Royal Roads University:** https://www.royalroads.ca/prospective-students/master-arts-disaster-and-emergency-management

Appendix G: Key Acronyms[8]

ADM-EC: Assistant Deputy Ministers' Emergency Committee

AEST: Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

B.C.: British Columbia

BCEMS: British Columbia Emergency Management System

DFA: Disaster Financial Assistance

EMBC: Emergency Management British Columbia

EOC: Emergency Operations Centre

EPA: Emergency Program Act

ESS: Emergency Support Services (formerly Emergency Social Services)

ICS: Incident Command System

IGO: Inter Governmental Organization

M-DEC: Ministers – Deputies' Emergency Council

MOC: Ministry Operations Centre

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PECC: Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre

PREOC: Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre

PS-IRP: British Columbia Public Post-Secondary Sector: Integrated Response Plan for Catastrophic Events (this document)

PSI: Post-Secondary Institution

8 [**Source:** Adapted from https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/provincial-emergency-planning/irp.pdf]

Appendix H: Glossary[9]

ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTERS' EMERGENCY COMMITTEE: The Provincial senior officials committee representing affected ministries and program operations devoted to public safety, as well as federal representatives and stakeholders. Its role is to ensure cross-government and multi-agency coordination and strategic and policy direction to the Director of the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre

BRITISH COLUMBIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: An emergency management system founded on the principles of the Incident Command System. BCEMS is required to be used by all ministries and crown corporations and cross-jurisdictionally in B.C.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY: An ongoing process supported by senior management and funded to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to identify the impact of potential losses and maintain viable recovery strategies, recovery plans and continuity of services.

EARTHQUAKE: Ground shaking and radiated seismic energy caused most commonly by a sudden slip on a fault, volcanic or magmatic activity, or other sudden stress changes in the earth.

EMERGENCY LODGING: Either an emergency shelter or medium term lodging.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE: The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support domestic incident management activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES: Short-term assistance to British Columbians who are forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance includes food, lodging, clothing, emotional support and family reunification. In British Columbia, local authorities are responsible for planning and operating emergency responses within their jurisdictional areas, including Emergency Support Services (ESS).

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: The Immediate Response Phase comprises activities occurring from the onset of the earthquake and focuses on lifesaving, integration of leadership and coordination, logistics, and setting the conditions for a sustained, co-ordinated response and recovery effort.

9 [**Source**: Adapted from https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/provincial-emergency-planning/irp.pdf]

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Under Section 1(1) of the Emergency Program Act, a local authority means:

(a) for a municipality, the municipal council, or

(b) for an electoral area in a regional district, the board of the regional district, or

(c) for a national park, the park superintendent or the park superintendent's delegate if an agreement has been entered with the Government of Canada under section 4 (2) (e) in which it is agreed that the park superintendent is a local authority for the purposes of this Act.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY: Phase of recovery that may continue for months or years and addresses complete redevelopment and revitalization of the impacted area, rebuilding and relocating damaged or destroyed social, economic, natural and built environments and a move to self-sufficiency, sustainability and resilience.

MASS CARE: An emergency response function co-ordinating congregate sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, reunification of children and dependant adults with their parents/ guardians, first aid, psychosocial considerations, recovery transition needs, information services, and household pet/service animal coordination. These services are offered to survivors of disasters by governments, IGO/NGOs and community organizations. Following a catastrophic incident, mass care can be provided to people by neighbours, private businesses, families or individuals. Services can thus be formally co-ordinated and administered by authorities, or informally provided and co-ordinated within communities by community members by the 'whole of community" approach.

MINISTERS – DEPUTIES' EMERGENCY COUNCIL: The Ministers–Deputies Emergency Committee (M-DEC) comprises the key ministers and deputies involved in the management of the provincial response to a damaging earthquake. The M-DEC will provide high-level policy decisions. It will also ensure the full complement of B.C. government human and material resources, from all ministries, crown corporations and agencies, are committed in support of the overall government response.

PREPAREDNESS: Activities undertaken prior to an emergency to ensure an effective response to, and recovery from, the consequences of an emergency event.

PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTRE: The central emergency operations centre activated to provide overall coordination of the integrated provincial response to an emergency or disaster. The Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre manages the overall provincial government response, which includes the provision of support for the regional levels. This may include consultation with senior elected officials, management of emergency information for the public, resource coordination and policy guidance. Communications and collaboration with external agencies such as crown corporations, federal emergency response agencies, IGO/NGOs and other provinces are managed at the Provincial Central Coordination level.

PROVINCIAL REGIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE: The Provincial Regional Centre responsible for co-ordinating regional response activities, supporting local authority Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs), assigning regional (provincial and federal assigned) critical resources, providing regional messaging, and providing situational understanding to the PECC/PERRC.

RECEPTION CENTRE: Sites where evacuees may be received and registered during a disaster. They may be a facility such as a recreation centre, church hall, school, hotel lobby or even a tent. It depends on what is available in the community, or what is needed.

RECOVERY: Refers to those measures taken to recover from an emergency or disaster and return communities to pre-emergency conditions. Recovery activities include site-restoration; the reconstitution of government operations and services; and measures for social, political, environmental and economic restoration.

RESPONSE: Actions that must be carried out when an emergency exists or is imminent. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs. Response measures address immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster. The aim of these measures is to ensure that a controlled, co-ordinated and effective response is quickly undertaken to minimize its impact on public safety, environment and infrastructure. Response activities include the execution of emergency operations plans and prevention activities designed to limit the loss of life, personal injury, property damage and other unfavourable outcomes.

SITUATIONAL UNDERSTANDING: The continual process of collecting, analysing and disseminating intelligence, information and knowledge to identify, comprehend and process high priority information about the incident and its effects in impact areas in order to develop a common operating picture. This process allows organizations and individuals to anticipate requirements and respond effectively.

SITUATION REPORT: Periodic operational summaries of the disaster situation, including the status of operations, threat and geographical information, identification of operational priorities and requirements, reports on their major response and recovery activities, unmet needs, and recommended actions, as well as data on emergency support services, infrastructure and other critical information requirements.

SUSTAINED RESPONSE: Characterized by defined operational periods and resources necessary to support response operations, sustained response continues until life/health issues and other critical response objectives are addressed.

Form 1: Preliminary Impact Assessment

DATE:

YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM (24hr clock)

Event:	Institution/Organization:
Prepared by:	Position/Title:

Emergency Response Status	
Building evacuation status	
First responders	
Local authority response	
Incident Description	
Incident type	
Location and time of occurrence	
Suspected cause(s)	
Potential for extended disruption	
Potential for re-occurrence	
Injuries	
Number of injuries	
Nature of injuries	
Areas Impacted	
Extent of building damage	Is visible damage major, medium, or minor? Is there visible damage to utilities: water, sewer or power? Is there visible damage to road systems, sidewalks, curbs?
Extent of contents damage	Describe the damage to your institution's assets such as equipment & supplies.
Connectivity	Is the voice, data, wireless, satellite, radio and/or television network impacted?
Is engineer/city inspection required?	
Adjacent buildings	
Service Impacts	
Education/research	Can services be provided at the impacted site?
Housing/food	
Security Issues	
Suspected security breaches	
Current security requirements	
Building access requirements	
Current building access status	
Potential near-term issues	
Immediate news media reaction	

Form 2: Situation Report

DATE:

YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM (24hr clock)

Event:	Institution/Organization:
Prepared by:	Position/Title:

Emergency Response Status	
Incident type	
Location and time of occurrence	
Suspected cause(s)	
Forecasted Length of Impact	
Injuries	
Number of injuries	
Nature of injuries	
Number of students on campus impacted by the event	
Number of faculty and staff on campus impacted by the event	
Potential for re-occurrence	

Infrastructure/Assets Impacted: Extent of building/contents damage and connectivity

Event Support: Description of the support your institution is providing (e.g., office space, accommodations, medical facilities) Impacts to current and future space utilization.

Current Challenges