

Review of Current Governance and Funding Model  
For Out of Jurisdiction Road Rescue in B.C.

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For

The Fire Chiefs Association of BC



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## 1. Purpose of Project

This paper has been prepared for Emergency Management B.C. (EMBC), the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC), and the Fire Chiefs Association of BC (FCABC).

The goal of this work is to review the current governance and funding model and provide recommendations for sustainable governance and funding for out of jurisdiction road rescue in British Columbia, considering input from:

- Emergency Management British Columbia;
- The Office of the Fire Commissioner;
- The Fire Chiefs Association of B.C; and,
- Road Rescue Service Providers.

This paper is one component of a larger project under which EMBC, the OFC and the FCABC have agreed to:

- propose a sustainable governance and funding model for road rescue;
- complete a consultation process with Service Providers to address equipment, training and service provision needs; and,
- develop a process to receive evaluate, prioritize and disburse initial and ongoing funding requests for equipment and training from service providers, based on the findings of the consultation process.

This paper deals with the governance and funding component of the larger project. Terms Reference are included as Appendix 1.

It is organized along the following lines.

Section 2 provides context for the subsequent discussion of program management models. It includes a description of:

- road rescue in British Columbia; and,
- the current approach to governance and funding for out of jurisdiction road rescue.

A description of the Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer program, including the approach used for ground search and rescue, is included in Appendix 3.

Section 3 outlines identified challenges with the current approach for out of jurisdiction road rescue.

Section 4 discusses the matters to be considered in developing governance and funding models for this service.

Section 5 sets out a range of potential options for future governance and funding models.

Section 6 summarizes the recommendations and recommends specific next steps.

## 2. Context

### 2.1 Brief Description of Out of Jurisdiction Road Rescue in British Columbia

In 2018 there were an estimated 315,000 motor vehicle crashes in British Columbia. Of these 34,466 crashes were serious enough to involve the police and of these 19,776 involved injuries (Source: Motor Vehicle Related Crashes, Injuries and Fatalities: 10 Year Statistics for B.C. -2009-2018/Ministry of Solicitor General and Public Safety).

Determining how best to respond to these motor vehicle crashes is the responsibility of the government of British Columbia (the provincial government).

The legislative framework setting out the governments approach to motor vehicle accident response is set out in the *Emergency Program Act* and the associated regulations.

Under the *Emergency Program Management Regulation*, the Attorney General and subsequently, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is given responsibility to coordinate government response to motor vehicle accidents through the jurisdiction of the relevant police force. A link to the regulatory reference is provided below.

[https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/477\\_94\\_section6](https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/477_94_section6)

Within the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, the responsibility for overall emergency management and support of Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer programs has been given to Emergency Management BC (EMBC) while organizational responsibility for managing motor vehicle accident scenes lies with the police force of jurisdiction.

Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers (PSLV) are at the heart of emergency response in British Columbia. More than 13,000 volunteers, in communities across B.C., lead air and ground searches, help victims of serious car accidents, and coordinate services for victims of disasters.

Road Rescue service providers may be requested to provide support to people involved in out-of-jurisdiction motor vehicle accidents, where specialized skills - such as vehicle extrication, rope rescue and other rescue services - and equipment are required.

Although precise legislative responsibility for the road rescue service has not been assigned to any government body, EMBC has, for over twenty years, worked with local fire departments and volunteer road rescue societies to see that this necessary service is broadly provided across B.C. While it is possible to consider an entirely different approach to the service, the scale of current

expenditures (estimated at about \$1.0 million/year) would suggest that it is unlikely such a transition would be cost effective.

The current situation can be described as follows:

- for crashes involving injuries which occur on municipal streets or provincial highways within the jurisdiction of a local government fire department the decision to respond to motor vehicle accidents is a decision of the local municipality. In these cases, the role of fire departments and other participants in accident response may be addressed as one of the responsibilities of that fire department under the local government bylaw establishing the service. Virtually all B.C municipalities provide vehicle extrication services through their local fire departments; and,
- for crashes outside of a municipal jurisdiction and/or an area not covered by any agreement or bylaw that would extend aid to that area; and, which are serious enough to require specialized services such as extrication of vehicle occupants and embankment rescue; about 163 groups choose to voluntarily respond with apparatus, equipment and personnel.

It is the governance and funding arrangements for road rescue outside of jurisdiction with which this report is concerned.

The specific roles of responders at the scene of an accident are described in the 2009 Inter-Agency Motor Vehicle Incident Response Strategic Protocol. A summary of the Protocol is contained in Appendix 5. However, the current protocol is not widely followed, does not provide an accurate picture of operational practice, and needs to be revisited and reviewed.

## 2.2 Current Approach to Funding and Program Management

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) reimburses costs associated with road rescue as per a reimbursement schedule and provides policies and guidelines to support PSLV volunteers including road rescue providers for traffic accidents that occur out-of-jurisdiction.

This may be a nearby municipal fire department or a rural fire department that serves an area in proximity to the provincial highways or rural roads. In some cases, local road rescue societies or ground search and rescue groups provide the service.

The current roster of response groups are a mix of 148 fire departments (including Career, Composite, Paid On-Call, Volunteer and Society Fire Departments), 8 fully volunteer road rescue societies, 4 ground search and rescue groups, 1 First Nation fire department and 1 Alberta fire department (Appendix 2). 140 of the 162 service providers are directly associated with the Fire Chiefs Association of B.C. (FCABC). In addition, 4 of the road rescue societies operate out of local fire departments and consequently have an indirect relationship.

The proportion of overall work represented by out of jurisdiction road rescue varies by service provider. Virtually all municipal fire departments provide motor vehicle extrication within their jurisdiction. Where this is not the case the work is done by single purpose road rescue societies. Many large urban fire departments do not provide out of jurisdiction road rescue because they are not adjacent to rural areas. Some large urban departments provide road rescue on provincial highways and roads proximate to their jurisdiction. In some cases, such as Fort St John, this may represent a very large area and include significant areas of rural roads and more remote resource roads. Many volunteer departments from smaller municipal and regional district areas do considerable road rescue. For these departments it represents an important and specialized service. In all cases road rescue should be distinguished from accident response which occurs in more urban areas as these accidents tend to occur at high speed, have a greater severity and require a longer response time.

The current model for funding and program management is set out in EMBC Policy 2.07 - Road and Medical Rescue (Appendix 5) and is made up of the following components:

- The police and B.C. Ambulance Service are the EMBC-recognized tasking agencies for road and medical rescue. The BC Coroner's Service and the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre may request extrication support under this policy;
- EMBC assigns a task number to each road rescue incident, after which expenses for the incident become subject to reimbursement;
- EMBC reimburses service providers, on the basis of an established rate schedule;
- Where costs of service exceed EMBC reimbursement these are absorbed by the service provider or recovered from other sources; and,
- There is no existing body that reviews policies or guidelines or provides overall coordination or support for road rescue providers.

## **Reimbursement**

The current all found rate for a rescue vehicle is \$346.00/hour as per the Memorandum of Agreement for Inter-Agency Operational Procedures and Reimbursement Rates.

## One Time Training and Equipment Grants

In 2020 the B.C. government is providing \$1 million in one-time emergency rescue support for rural and remote communities throughout the province.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner has partnered with the Fire Chiefs' Association of BC (FCABC) to launch the Road Rescue Grant program. This one-time grant will allow organizations in B.C. to apply for up to \$50,000 to fund equipment or train emergency responders in road rescue.

### 3. Identified Challenges with Current Model

This section provides a brief description of challenges with the current approach to out of jurisdiction road rescue in B.C. and a discussion of the questions that need to be addressed in order to effectively remedy these challenges.

Program participants identified a number of challenges arising from the current arrangements. These fall into five categories.

1. A mismatch between the realities of on the ground operations and current policies and practices for reimbursement of costs. Specific identified challenges within this category include:
  - A need for greater clarity with respect to the definition of road rescue. The current program is too narrowly focused on extrication of accident victims from vehicles rather than the mitigation of the full range of hazards related to motor vehicle accidents that require fire department engagement;
  - Clearer definition and communication of operational roles. Some of the roles defined in the 2009 inter-agency protocol (contained in Appendix 5) are inconsistent with operational practice and need either to be more clearly communicated to practitioners or revisited; and,
  - The current lump sum approach to reimbursement for damaged equipment does not always cover the costs of repairs or replacement of equipment.
2. A natural tension between local government fire departments taking on what can be long and complex out of jurisdiction calls while diminishing in-jurisdiction response capability. This leads to a risk that key departments may decide not to continue to participate in out of jurisdiction road rescue. Specific identified challenges within this category include:
  - Compensation is not seen to cover costs resulting in some fire departments recovering less than their cost to provide the service.
3. Maintaining consistent capacity for service for serious, life threatening events over large areas within service provision organizations that range from volunteer societies through small community fire departments to large city fire departments, on the basis of a financing structure that simply reimburses eligible costs. Specific identified challenges within this category include:
  - EMBC policies related to the recovery of expenses and approved tasking are applied inconsistently;
  - The one-time equipment and training grants provided in 2020 are very helpful. However, none of the local government participants in this process support the long-term use of

the funding formula being used for the 2020 distribution of the equipment and training grants, which differentiates payments on the basis of the size of the fire department;

- There is a need for a dedicated approach to ensuring that training and equipment standards are achieved and maintained by all service providers. This includes a need for dedicated revenue for these purposes;
  - Service levels across the province should be more consistent where applicable.
  - There is an interest in achieving standardized levels of training and equipment between service providers;
  - There is an interest in clearer process and structure for the road rescue program; and,
  - It would be beneficial to focus on delivering the service and build out an organization that is able to support consistent delivery across the province.
4. Ensuring that service providers are trained and equipped to provide appropriate levels of service throughout the province. This is grounded in a number of concerns regarding risk management and liability. In particular it is based on the need to reduce risk to the provincial government, service provision organizations, and individual service providers by creating a stronger network of service providers supported by standardized training, equipment provision, insurance and operational standards.
5. The need to conform with provincial government operating policies, including both the need for Treasury Board authorization of program changes and provincial core policies.

The provincial government core policy annual sets out how government supports other non-profit organizations that deliver services for public benefit:

- distinguish program oversight and management from program and service delivery, while maintaining corporate communication and direction throughout government;
- ensure that public funds are controlled, accounted for and well managed by embracing these principles;
  - funds are handled properly and honestly;
  - funds are spent responsibly and in accordance with statutory, regulatory and appropriation provisions, and not used for personal gain;
  - funds are used economically and efficiently to deliver programs that effectively meet government's goals;
  - implement government-wide policy and standards in a prompt, effective and consistent manner;
  - support the focus on outputs, outcomes, service plans and performance reporting, rather than on input controls;
  - promote openness, fairness and transparency in the conduct of government business activities;
  - promote and encourage consistent and best practices in management and administrative processes in government; and,



- ensure that public funds are used in the amounts and for the purposes authorized by the Treasury Board.

Where parties other than government undertake public duties, such as the allocation of public funds, it is expected that oversight arrangements be clearly defined and potential conflicts avoided. This includes avoiding situations where decision makers may have potential conflicts. Recent court decisions have ruled that this includes situations where directors are from one organization represent that organization on another Board that has budgetary or funding responsibility with respect to the other.

In this specific case the provincial government through EMBC has been supporting the provision of road rescue services to out-of-jurisdiction traffic accidents. In these instances, it is necessary to have a policy and funding framework in place that results in the appropriate service providers being willing to provide the service outside of their jurisdiction, without placing cost and risk on their own ratepayers. At the same time EMBC must act within the constraints placed on it by provincial government budgetary and administrative policies.

While these are complex challenges there is broad agreement between the parties that the best way to address these issues is not through a series of ad hoc actions but through a governance arrangement that enhances collaboration.

As part of the broader project of which this report is one part, the FCABC conducted a survey of service providers. A brief review of the survey results is provided in Appendix 6.

#### 4. Things to be Considered in Developing a Future governance and Funding Model for Out of Jurisdiction Road Rescue in BC.

This section sets out the considerations that should underlay a governance and funding model for road rescue in B.C.

It places the discussion within the context of the:

- B.C. Emergency Management System;
- principles of effective public sector program management including, a results-based framework for service delivery.

##### 4.1 B.C. Emergency Management System

British Columbia has developed the British Columbia Emergency Management System which views emergency management as a continuous process consisting of the four interconnected phases of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

In the British Columbia System these elements are defined as follows:

- **Mitigation** - steps are taken to identify, prevent, eliminate, or reduce the risk and impact of any identified hazards. In the context of out of jurisdiction road rescue, this speaks to the importance of working to reduce the number of accidents through strategies such as public education. This work is primarily led by the police road safety unit, ICBC and local traffic safety commissions and so it does not need to be considered as part of this project.
- **Preparedness** - action is taken to prepare for emergency response and recovery. This includes emergency and continuity planning, volunteer management, training, exercises, maintenance and continuous improvement, and public/stakeholder education. In the context of out of Jurisdiction road rescue preparedness speaks to equipping local service providers to respond through appropriate levels of training and provisioning (equipment, vehicles, buildings, etc.). A funding model for this must work across the range of groups providing response – fire departments (career, combined (career and volunteer), paid on call and volunteer), road rescue societies and SAR Groups.
- **Response** – this is the actual deployment of resources to directly respond to an imminent or occurring emergency in order to manage any impacts or consequences. In the context of out of jurisdiction road rescue response is supported by effective training, equipping, staffing and financial support for response costs.
- **Recovery** - Steps are taken to repair those affected by a disaster and restore conditions to an acceptable level or, when feasible, improve them. This includes support for responders who

are impacted by the event. Placing this in the context of out of jurisdiction road rescue recovery supports both responders (e.g., Critical Incident Stress Management) and the subjects of the response while also supporting continual learning and application of lessons learned.

#### 4.2 Principles of Effective Public Sector Program Management- A Results Based Framework for Service Delivery

The out of jurisdiction road rescue system is made up of a number of related players. These include at a minimum:

- 162 service providers;
- EMBC;
- OFC;
- the police/RCMP;
- the ambulance service;
- the coroner's office;
- other provincial ministries and agencies; and,
- elected local governments.

In such a complex system, it is crucial to clearly define desired outcomes and to keep all players focused on these outcomes.

The response goals of the B.C. Emergency Management System are to:

- ensure the health and safety of responders;
- save lives;
- reduce suffering;
- protect public health;
- protect infrastructure;
- protect property;
- protect the environment; and,
- reduce economic and social losses.

Intermediate outcomes could include:

- road rescue units assigned to particular areas are equipped/trained to do the job;
- people in need of rescue are assisted;
- service providers do not need to absorb costs not covered by provincial government reimbursement;
- financial support is reasonably consistent between service providers;
- there is clear communication and timely resolution of issues;

- there is a defined process for continuous learning, based on reporting of operational experience; and,
- there is a defined approach to ensuring adequate post-incident support for service responders.

More detailed measures would provide information as to the degree to which these outcomes are being achieved, which would in turn inform decisions on where to make investments in things such as training and asset acquisition and where policy and program adjustments are required.

With respect to road rescue the provincial government has a strong interest in ensuring that there is comprehensive continuous coverage for road rescue on provincial highways and rural/resource roads. At the same time designing and supporting financial arrangements that are seen to fairly compensate a diverse set of service providers for the cost of service in diverse circumstances presents a challenge. However, if this is not done the risk to service provision increases as local responders and those to whom they report, become increasingly reluctant to participate in response.

In the case of out of jurisdiction road rescue, an effective solution also needs to consider:

- training requirements and delivery;
- the lack of a governance structure to support road service providers;
- differences in service delivery areas across the provide; and,
- cost recovery that is reflective of the service provided.

## 5. Options

In developing options there are two questions that must be addressed.

The first question is what governance structure provides the best leadership for out of jurisdiction road rescue. This leadership structure needs to provide the accountability structure the provincial government needs and it should support the road rescue service by providing an effective emergency management framework that includes the capacity for coherent action, responsible risk-based decision making, continuous learning and transparency.

The second question is what funding structure achieves three concurrent funding objectives – accurate compensation (reimbursement) for service, continued assurance of service provision (thereby addressing the risks associated with gaps) and sufficient accountability to the provincial government.

The following section describes the options that can address each of these questions.

### 5.1 Governance Models

All the parties involved in the preparation of this report agree that any changes to governance and funding should address the following priorities.

1. Greater clarity on reimbursement policies;
2. Enhanced staff training to ensure consistent application of these policies; appropriate reimbursement levels so that reimbursement more approximates actual costs;
3. Agreement on an appropriate range of reimbursable services;
4. Clearer service standards – particularly with respect to equipment and training;
5. An appropriate funding structure to support the training and equipment costs;
6. Improved reporting by service providers that will address lessons learned from incidents and provide accurate information on the degree to which service standards are being met; and,
7. A clear process for effective post incident support for individual service providers.

Three governance models have been developed and evaluated relative to their ability to meet the identified challenges. They are as follows:

1. **Status Quo - Continued EMBC Management with ad hoc Consultation with Service Providers**— EMBC compensates service providers for costs according to EMBC established formula that is created following consultation with service provision organizations. Engagement between EMBC and service providers continues on an ad hoc basis.
2. **Shared Decision Making** - This changes Option 1 by creating a permanent service provision advisory committee to share decision making. This could be a single advisory committee appointed by EMBC or it could be a 2-level committee structure with a higher-level policy committee establishing standards and policy and a middle management program committee addressing program management and distribution of funds.
3. **Full or Partial Devolution to a Service Provider Led Organization.** - This has many of the same features as 2 but under this option a service provider organization manages distribution of either training and equipment funding or both training and equipment funding and reimbursement, through a contribution agreement with EMBC. This is similar to the approach being taken with respect to ground search and rescue.

The advantages and disadvantages of the three governance models are as follows:

#### **Option 1 (continued EMBC management with ad hoc consultation with service providers)**

This option would address these challenges through a continuing series of internal EMBC decisions and ad hoc consultation with service providers.

Of the listed challenges it should be able to achieve those that are largely internal to EMBC/OFC:

- greater clarity on reimbursement policies; and,
- enhanced staff training to ensure consistent application of these policies.

It is less likely to be able to achieve on-going resolution of those challenges that require continuing consultation with service providers, as the consultation model is periodic and ad hoc. Of the listed challenges these include:

- appropriate reimbursement levels so that reimbursement more closely approximates actual costs;
- agreement on an appropriate range of reimbursable services;
- clearer service standards – particularly with respect to equipment and training;
- an appropriate funding structure to support the training and equipment costs;
- improved reporting by service providers that will address lessons learned from incidents and, provide accurate information on the degree to which service standards are being met; and,
- a clear process for effective post incident support for individual service providers.

Overall, the principal advantage of this option is that it is the most direct – there is no need to build additional structure – EMBC can perform targeted consultation with service providers and move to make any required internal changes and obtain whatever approvals it needs from provincial decision makers.

The disadvantage is that there is no indication that this approach has been able to address most of the listed challenges. As a result, there is likely to be substantial work to achieve even a short-term consensus and no clear mechanism to maintain that over time. It is also unlikely to be able to provide provincial decision makers with the sufficient confidence that any changes reflect a reasonable degree of consensus within the service provider community.

## **Option 2 (Shared Decision-Making)**

Under this option service providers become more directly engaged in decision making through some form of standing advisory committee.

The engagement of service providers can be done in one of two ways.

In the first approach EMBC can create and appoint a standing advisory committee to share decision making with respect to the service.

In the second approach the EMBC/OFC and the service provider organizations each appoint members to two joint committees. The first is a higher-level policy committee . The second is a mid-manager program and funding committee.

The selected committee structure would replace any ad hoc approaches to consultation envisioned under option 1. Program governance – particularly standard setting decisions would remain with the province through EMBC. The precise structure of the program management committees are best determined through discussion between EMBC/OFC and representatives of the service providers.

In this option all program management functions would remain within EMBC/OFC.

This option has the ability to address all the listed challenges, provide a structured basis for building continuing consensus on the outstanding matters and create a continuing space for dialogue to deal with new challenges as they emerge. Importantly the two-level structure provides both the administrative capacity to both make hard decisions and the on the ground know how to properly inform advice. It does this with the least possible institutional change and without the need to build outside administrative capacity. However, there should be enough service provider influence to build and maintain broad support for agreed to changes.

### **Option 3 (Devolution)**

Option 3 moves components of program management to a service provider led organization and makes this organization responsible for the distribution of funding between individual service providers.

The advantage of this option is that it creates the separation between program oversight and program delivery that is envisioned in the provincial government core policy. In doing so it also creates a potential means for strong buy-in on the part of service providers.

The disadvantage is that for this to work there needs to be a sufficient organizational capacity in the service provider organization to provide a high degree of confidence that it will be successful in managing a devolved program structure in a way that will effectively address the listed challenges over a long period of time. The third-party organization will also need a sufficiently robust governance and organizational structure to withstand differing perspectives between service providers, who will come to hold it accountable for allocative decisions. This creates a whole series of new risks.

In this case it is apparent that in order to mitigate the risks identified in the previous paragraph, considerable capacity building will be required to create and build such an organization and it is difficult to see how, given the size of the program, how such capacity building and risk taking could be justified.

To sum up. Option 1 is both inefficient and is only capable of addressing a small number of the listed challenges. If the identified challenges are to be solved it will take a collaborative approach and the structure created under Option 2 should provide a more efficient way of doing this than a series of ad hoc committees. Option 3 entails greater transaction costs, including the risks and capacity building associated with devolution, than are needed to resolve the identified challenges. At some point in the future such a transfer of responsibilities may be helpful but there is a significant amount of work to be done before that is the case.

#### RECOMMENDATION: Option 2 Shared Decision Making

This strongest shared decision-making structure would provide for a high-level oversight committee to set standards for service provision, including training, equipment and reporting. A mid-level program committee would advise on program details, including distribution of any financial support for training and equipment as well as advising on appropriate levels for reimbursement payments and policies for their distribution.

If a two-level structure is not acceptable to the parties, an advisory committee made up of a cross section of service providers is the next best option.

#### 5.2 Funding Models

There are three things to consider in building a funding model for this service. These are:

- the amount of funding;
- the design of the funding arrangement; and,
- the delivery arrangements for the funding.

#### Amount of Funding

There are an infinite number of potential options for determining the amount of funding for this service. However, to keep things simple we can identify 3 basic options, which we will call low, medium and high. In this discussion it is important to understand that in British Columbia fire department capacity tends to fit the needs of local communities. Volunteer departments are appropriate in rural and smaller urban centers, composite (volunteer and career) departments tend to fit medium sized urban centers and fully career departments are the norm in larger urban centers. However, road rescue does not fit this structure as many important, high use provincial highways are in lightly populated rural areas. In some regions this is also be true for rural and resource roads. Maintaining capacity for those sections of highways and rural roads is essential to provincial involvement in road rescue.



## Low

In the low option the province calibrates funding at the level of lower cost producers. In this case that is fully volunteer societies and fully volunteer fire departments.

The implications of this approach are that:

- more urban career and composite departments will be compensated at well below their costs;
- the province will bear more risk that these more urban career and composite departments will choose not to participate in out of jurisdiction road rescue;
- the province will accept it may become more reliant on smaller volunteer departments who are more challenged with respect to training and equipment standards; and,
- it is less likely provincial costs will increase from current levels.

## Medium

In the medium option the province calibrates funding at the at medium cost providers. In this case that is most likely a medium sized combined department.

The implications of this approach are that:

- most participating career and composite departments will be compensated at a level close to their costs;
- compensation will be somewhat above the costs of a fully volunteer department or society;
- there will be a reasonable financial business case for career and combined departments to continue in the program and for fully volunteer department and volunteer societies to upgrade training and equipment levels;
- risks of increased non-participation by a significant number of departments will be reduced; and,
- it is more likely provincial costs will increase from current levels.

## High

In the high option the provincial government calibrates funding towards higher-cost providers. In this case that is most likely a fully career department.

The implications of this approach are that:

- virtually all service providers will be compensated at or above their actual costs;
- there will be a strong financial business case for service providers to continue to provide the service and to upgrade training and equipment levels;
- there should be little to no risk of non-participation by existing service providers; and,

- it is more likely that provincial costs will increase from current levels and the magnitude of the increase will be greater than option 2.

### Recommendation: Option 2 (Medium)

Reimbursement of costs for out of jurisdiction road rescue be based on an hourly rate that is determined from the actual costs of benchmark fire departments that reflect the medium range cost of service provision. Selection of benchmark fire departments and the review of costs should be done by the program or advisory committee created under governance model that is ultimately selected from this process.

To make the compensation formula more consistent with operational practice the scope of work and subsequent reimbursement for service providers should be expanded to cover the full range of fire department capabilities that need to be engaged in the course of responding to a motor vehicle accident.

To ensure that post-incident recovery is given the priority it is assigned under the BC Emergency Management System there should a protocol that clearly sets out procedures for addressing post incident recovery strategies for individual service providers.

The primary principle governing calibration of costs should be cost neutrality. On the whole, service providers, including local fire departments should neither subsidize or profit from the service. Since the vast majority of service providers are local fire departments the cost to them for their out of service road rescue work should guide the formula. This does not mean that compensation should always be at the highest level but it should at least reflect median fire department costs of providing the service. To simplify things a small sample of median fire departments can be selected and their cost structure (related to out of jurisdiction road rescue) can inform the compensation policy.

### Design of Funding Model

At any level of funding there is second question as to how the funding model should be designed.

The road rescue service has both fixed and variable costs and these are associated with different components of the emergency management model . Training and equipment are the primary fixed costs sand they are associated with the preparation components of the emergency management model. Response time is the variable cost and it is associated with the response stage. The costs associated with post-incident recovery are variable costs that align closely with response.

There are two design options for a service with these components.

1. Current Funding Model - Reimburse incident costs and include the amortized cost of training, equipment and recovery in reimbursement. This is what is done under the current funding model, to the extent that it covers actual costs.

The advantages of this approach are that:

- it creates only one stream of funding for the provincial government to administer;
- it aligns with many other provincial funding program where service provider provides a service and the provincial government processes and pays claims for actual costs; and,
- it provides the provincial government with a great deal of control over what costs it pays.

The disadvantages of this approach are that:

- it provides no means to ensure that service providers are ready for potential incidents, thus leaving a significant amount of risk with the province;
- it can only fully fund training and equipment where there are a sufficient number of incidents to cover these costs. This is because incidents vary over time and the job of service providers is to be ready all the time. Where service providers need to be prepared for road rescue as part of their in-jurisdiction responsibilities, this should not be a significant challenge. However, since out of jurisdiction road rescue often requires different training and equipment than in jurisdiction work because: road rescue from accidents that occur at highway speeds are often quite different than the response to those that occur in urban settings at lower speeds and because major highways are often located in areas where smaller rural departments are the service provider. Accidents in remote settings present further unique challenges.

2. Create two funding streams. The first would provide service providers with up-front payments for training and equipment to ensure that all potential service providers are prepared for response. The second would be reimbursement for the actual costs associated with response and recovery.

The advantages of this approach are that:

- it distinguishes between fixed and variable costs;
- builds sufficient response capacity across service providers; and,
- provides a means of reporting to EMBC/OFC on capacity levels so that EMBC/OFC can appropriately manage risks.

### Recommendation - Option 2

Reimbursement payments should be supplemented by annual payments for training and equipment. These payments should be based on a negotiated percentage of the annualized

costs for equipment, training and post incident stress management required to cover the assigned area.

The annual payments would cover an agreed portion of the costs for the equipment, training and recovery required to provide the service to assigned out of jurisdiction areas. They could vary depending on the size and complexity of the area covered, taking into account such challenges as significant stretches of highway or a large number of relatively remote resource roads.

The incident payments would be focused on individual incident response and would be based primarily on a funding formula that captures all related costs.

Further work on developing this framework into a complete funding model and subsequently maintaining it would best be done through the governance model that is ultimately selected from this process.

### Delivery Options

There are two elements to the discussion of delivery options. The first is how to organize delivery to ensure that payments meet the needs of both the provincial government and service providers. The second is whether payments are best delivered through an EMBC run program or through an outside of provincial government third party.

Here there are decision-making principles, rather than options.

Reimbursement payments almost certainly need to run by EMBC/OFC. Provincial policies with respect to reimbursement are such that this is likely done far more efficiently in house.

However, the way EMBC/OFC organizes payment delivery is key. This needs sufficient clarity, training and review of all those associated with processing payments to ensure that all service providers are being treated in the same way. It is generally acknowledged that this is not the case today. All of the above outcomes could better be achieved if there were a single program manager made both responsible and accountable for the program, including monitoring, reviewing and assessing the performance of those involved in processing payments.

The question of what organization could best deliver a potential training and equipment grant program is harder to answer. This is something that could be done by EMBC/OFC or by an external group. A decision on which model to employ should be left to engagement under the recommended governance model. The key criteria that need to be met are:

- ensuring that service providers have the training and equipment they need; and,

- ensuring that EMBC has a clear picture of the readiness of service providers with respect to training and equipment.

Under any delivery option, a clear information reporting structure should be developed to provide annual information on training levels, equipment status, operational response, lessons learned from operations and actions taken to support the post-operational recovery of service providers. This will provide clarity as to how government funding is addressing gaps between current and required levels of training, health and safety management and asset inventories and how the overall out of jurisdiction road rescue system is achieving desired outcomes.

## 6. Recommendations and Next Steps

1. The parties agree that any changes to governance and funding should address the following priorities.
  - greater clarity on reimbursement policies;
  - enhanced staff training to ensure consistent application of these policies; appropriate reimbursement levels so that reimbursement more approximates actual costs;
  - agreement on an appropriate range of reimbursable services;
  - clearer service standards – particularly with respect to equipment and training;
  - an appropriate funding structure to support the training and equipment costs;
  - improved reporting by service providers that will address lessons learned from incidents and provide accurate information on the degree to which service standards are being met;
  - a clear process for effective post incident support for individual service providers.

Reaching agreement on an appropriate range of reimbursable services would be a good place to start.

2. Governance – The 2-level committee structure described in option 2 be used for the governance of out of jurisdiction road rescue in B.C. This structure would provide for a high-level oversight committee to set standards for service provision, including training, equipment and reporting. A mid-level program committee would advise on program details, including distribution of any financial support for training and equipment as well as advising on appropriate levels for reimbursement payments and policies for their distribution. If this is not acceptable to the parties the advisory committee made up of a cross section of service providers – also described in option 2 is the next best option.
3. Funding - Reimbursement of costs for out of jurisdiction road rescue be based on an hourly rate that is determined from the actual costs of benchmark fire departments that reflect the medium range cost of service provision. Selection of benchmark fire departments and the

review of costs should be done by the program committee created under recommendation 1.

4. Funding - Reimbursement payments should be supplemented by annual payments for training and equipment. These payments should be based on a negotiated percentage of the annualized costs for equipment, training and post incident stress management required to cover the assigned area.
5. The scope of work and subsequent reimbursement for service providers should be expanded to cover the full range of fire department capabilities that need to be engaged in the course of responding to a motor vehicle accident.
6. There should a protocol that clearly sets out procedures for addressing post incident recovery strategies for individual service providers.
7. A clear information reporting structure be developed to provide annual information on training levels, equipment status, operational response, lessons learned from operations and actions taken to support the post-operational recovery of service providers. This will provide clarity as to how government funding is addressing gaps between current and required levels of training, health and safety management and asset inventories and how the overall out of jurisdiction road rescue system is achieving desired outcomes.

### **Next Steps**

1. EMBC/OFC should review proposal.
2. EMBC/OFC should establish an implementation committee with FCABC to agree on committee structure and membership.
3. Once a committee structure is established it should determine priorities – including a Training Plan, Equipment Plan, administrative processes to improve consistency in reimbursement, the basis for review of reimbursement rates and a formula for training, equipment and recovery grants.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1- Terms of Reference

Appendix 2- List of Service Providers

Appendix 3 – Approach to Ground Search and Rescue

Appendix 4 – EMBC Policy

Appendix 5 - Inter-Agency Motor Vehicle Incident Response Strategic Protocol

Appendix 6 – Preliminary Review of Survey Results

## Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

May 1, 2020

### **Project: Develop a Model for Funding and Governance for Road Rescue**

#### **Background:**

The Road Rescue Program (“Road Rescue”) is an organized service with members who may be requested to provide support to people involved in out of jurisdiction motor vehicle accidents where specialized skills such as vehicle extrication, rope rescue and other specialized rescue services and equipment are required. Responders attend over 2000 motor vehicle accidents in British Columbia each year.

The FCABC is party to an agreement with EMBC to review and produce a report regarding a model for funding and governance of Road Rescue within BC.

#### **Deliverables**

The Consultant (Dale Wall) will review existing Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers and ground search and rescue models of the Province and produce a report outlining options for funding and governance of Road Rescue in BC.

A process of consultation and research will be utilized to develop the report. The FCABC will support Mr. Wall in his work by arranging venues and opportunities with groups or individuals to discuss and provide input and feedback to the challenges and concerns of those providing this service in the Province as background for the report.

In addition to the report Mr. Wall may be asked to present and review the information with the FCABC committee responsible for the project and or with staff from EMBC.

## Appendix 2 – List of Service Providers

### **CENTRAL REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Ashcroft Volunteer Fire Department
Barriere Fire Rescue
Chase Fire Rescue
Clearwater & Blackpool Highway Rescue
Clinton Volunteer Fire Department
Eagle Valley Rescue Society
Joe Rich Fire Rescue
Kaleden Volunteer Fire Department
Kamloops Fire Rescue
Kelowna Fire Department
Keremeos Fire Department
Lake Country Fire Department
Lillooet District Rescue Society
Logan Lake Fire Department
Lumby & District Volunteer Fire Department
Lower Nicola Fire Department
Lytton Volunteer Fire Department
Merritt Fire Department
Naramata Volunteer Fire Department
Okanagan Falls Volunteer Fire Department
Osoyoos Fire Department
Peachland Fire and Rescue Services
Penticton Fire Department
Princeton and District Highway Extrication Society
Salmon Arm Rescue
Savona Volunteer Fire Department
Summerland Fire Department
Sun Peaks Volunteer Fire Department
Vernon Fire Rescue Services
West Kelowna Fire Rescue

### **NORTHEAST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

100 Mile House Fire Rescue
Chetwynd Fire Department
Chilako/Nechako Rescue
Central Cariboo Search & Rescue
Dawson Creek Fire Rescue
Ft. St. John Fire Rescue
Hudson's Hope Fire Department
Jasper Fire Rescue



### **NORTHEAST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Mackenzie (District of) Fire Rescue
McBride Fire Department
North Cariboo Highway Rescue
Northern Rockies Fire Rescue
Pineview Volunteer Fire Department
Prince George Regional Hwy Rescue Society
Taylor Fire Department
Tumbler Ridge Fire Department
Valemount Fire Department

### **NORTHWEST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Atlin Volunteer Fire Department
Burns Lake Fire & Rescue Department
Fort St. James Fire Department
Fraser Lake Volunteer Fire Department
Gitwinksihlkw Volunteer Fire Department
Houston Volunteer Fire Department
Kitimat Fire & Rescue Services
New Hazelton Volunteer Fire Department
Port Clements Volunteer Fire Department
Prince Rupert Fire Rescue Department
Queen Charlotte Volunteer Fire Department
Sandspit Fire Department
Smithers Fire Rescue
Stewart Fire & Emergency Services
Telkwa and District Volunteer Fire/Rescue Department
Terrace Fire Department
Topley Volunteer Fire Department
Vanderhoof Fire Department

### **SOUTHEAST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Balfour Volunteer Fire Department
Big White Village Volunteer Fire Department
Canal Flats Fire Rescue
Castlegar Fire Department
Christina Lake Fire Department
Columbia Valley Fire Rescue
Cranbrook and District Search and Rescue Society
Creston Fire & Rescue
Elkford Fire Rescue & Emergency Services
Fernie Fire Department
Golden Fire Rescue

### **SOUTHEAST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Grand Forks City Fire Department
Invermere Volunteer Fire Department
Jaffray Volunteer Fire Department
Kaslo Search and Rescue
Kimberley Fire Department
Kootenay Boundary Regional Fire Service
Midway Volunteer Fire Department
Nakusp Road Rescue
Nelson Fire & Rescue Services
New Denver and Area Volunteer Fire Department
North Shore Fire Department
Revelstoke Fire Rescue Services
Riondel Volunteer Fire Department
Salmo Volunteer Fire Department
Sparwood Fire Department
Tarry's Volunteer Fire Department
Winlaw Fire Department
Yahk Kingsgate Volunteer Fire Department

### **SOUTHWEST REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Agassiz Fire
Chilliwack Valley Volunteer Fire Department
Columbia Valley Volunteer Fire Department
Gibsons & District Volunteer Fire Department
Halfmoon Bay Volunteer Fire Department
Hope Volunteer Search & Rescue
Lions Bay Fire Rescue
Mission Fire Rescue
North Fraser Volunteer Fire Department
Pemberton Volunteer Fire Department
Pender Harbour Fire Protection District
Popkum Volunteer Fire Department
Roberts Creek Volunteer Fire Department
Sechelt Volunteer Fire Department
Squamish Fire Rescue
Sunshine Valley Volunteer Fire Department
Whistler Fire Rescue

### **VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Department
Bow Horn Bay Fire Department
Campbell River Fire Department

## VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Caycuse Volunteer Fire Department
Coal Harbour Volunteer Fire Department
Comox Fire Department
Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department
Courtenay Fire Department
Cowichan Bay Volunteer Fire Rescue
Cranberry Volunteer Fire Department
Cumberland Fire Department
Deep Bay Fire Rescue
Extension Volunteer Fire Department
Gillies Bay Volunteer Fire Department
Gold River Volunteer Fire Department
Honeymoon Bay Volunteer Fire Rescue
Hornby Island Fire Rescue
Ladysmith Fire Rescue
Lake Cowichan Fire Department
Malahat Volunteer Fire Department
Malaspina Fire Department
Mesachie Lake Volunteer Fire Rescue
Mill Bay Fire Department
Nanaimo Fire Department
Nanoose Volunteer Fire Department
North Oyster Volunteer Fire Rescue
Northside Volunteer Fire Department
Oyster River Fire Rescue
Parksville Fire Department
Port Alberni Fire Department
Port Alice Volunteer Fire Department
Port Hardy Volunteer Fire Department
Port McNeill Volunteer Fire Department
Port Renfrew Volunteer Fire Department
Powell River Fire Department
Quadra Island Volunteer Fire Department
Qualicum Beach Fire Rescue
Sahtlam Volunteer Fire Rescue
Sayward Fire Department
Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Department
Shirley Volunteer Fire Department
Ship's Point Volunteer Fire Department
Sooke
Tahsis Volunteer Fire Department
Thetis Island Volunteer Fire Department

## VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION ROAD RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDERS

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Tofino Volunteer Fire Department

Ucluelet Volunteer Fire Department

Union Bay Fire Department

Van Anda Fire/Rescue

Woss Volunteer Fire Department

Youbou Volunteer Fire Department

Zeballos Volunteer Fire Department

## Appendix 3 – Approach to Ground Search and Rescue

### Approach to Ground Search and Rescue

The terms of reference for this project provide for a review of public safety lifeline volunteers and ground search and rescue models. A brief summary of these programs is provided in the next section.

To some extent this comparison gets at one of the key issues regarding road rescue – that being the question of whether road rescue work should be treated in the same way as public safety lifeline volunteers or whether it more resembles an arrangement with local fire departments for service.

### **Public Safety Lifeline**

Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers are at the heart of emergency response in British Columbia.

They do everything from leading air and ground searches, road rescue to setting up networks of volunteer teams and coordinating services for victims of natural disasters. There are more than 13,000 volunteers in communities across B.C.

The Public Safety Lifeline program is overseen by Emergency Management B.C.

### Ground Search and Rescue

Ground search and rescue is a major component of the public safety lifeline.

There are approximately 2,500 registered search and rescue volunteers throughout the province who are organized into groups. They may be called upon to assist police in searching for lost recreationalists or to help in accessing and transporting injured people if specialized skills or equipment are needed. They also provide support to local communities during emergencies by helping distribute information during evacuations and other critical response activities.

Over the past few years financial support for ground search and rescue groups has evolved to include direct government support for a broader range of training and equipment requirements. This was done to reduce the need for search and rescue groups to fund raise for to support training and equipment needs.

The ground search and rescue model was developed after substantial work by the BC Search and Rescue Association and EMBC. It is built on the basis of the alternative support model developed by the BC Search and Rescue Association (BCSRA) but supplemented by a contribution agreement between EMBC and BCSARA that creates two committees (the Partnership and Management Committees) that manage government contributions beyond reimbursement for

operational services. This additional funding addresses matters such as specialized training and equipment. The following topic box describes the proposal created by the ground search and rescue groups.

The B.C. Search and Rescue Association has spent substantial time and effort working with the 80 Ground Search and Rescue Groups in British Columbia to develop the Alternative Support Model for Ground Search and Rescue Funding.

The basic structure of the Alternative Support Model are as follows:

The creation of an SAR Fund - (Note: exactly who holds the SAR Fund - BCSARA, a new organization - separate, foundation, non-profit society or new organization created by statute – is not specified)

Money would be paid into the SAR Fund; this could come from prescribed revenue sources or a payment from government. At this point there is no agreement on what if any revenue sources would be accessed. Since that is a separate discussion, the default is a payment by government

Money from the SAR Fund would be paid out to SAR Groups for some shared functions (such as response reviews and prevention/education services) according to a formula that is based on the EMBC approved capability of the group and upon receipt of a training plan from the SAR Group

In the basic model, the SAR group would use these funds for vehicle insurance, licensing fees, and specialized training. In extended versions of the model (see below) it could support the purchase of equipment, vehicles and fixed assets.

In the basic variation of the model EMBC would continue to reimburse SAR members for their out-of-pocket costs and EMBC would continue to pay operational costs such as helicopter fees.

The following table compares the 3 versions of the alternative support model:

Alternative Support Model - Versions		
Version 1	Version 2	Version 3
<p>Disbursement of funding to SAR Groups for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• insurance licensing for group vehicles and radios;</li> <li>• specialized training;</li> <li>• core training through Justice Institute;</li> <li>• BCSARA Admin and Board costs;</li> <li>• Critical Stress Incident Training;</li> <li>• travel costs from training;</li> </ul> <p>Delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevention programs (AdventureSmart);</li> <li>• staff coordination training;</li> <li>• SAR staff Safety Program;</li> <li>• SAR Response Reviews (note keeping, report writing); and</li> <li>• data collection.</li> </ul>	<p>Option 1, plus managing and disbursing funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintenance and replacement of personal protective equipment; and,</li> <li>• capital purchases by SAR Groups (vehicles, major equipment) through a formula based on approved capability or grant by application.</li> </ul>	<p>Option 2, plus managing and disbursing funding for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repair and/or replacement of equipment damaged or lost during response</li> <li>• reimbursement of SAR volunteer expenses during response</li> </ul>

## Appendix 4 - Emergency Management BC – Policy 2.07 – Road and Medical Rescue

### 2.07 ROAD AND MEDICAL RESCUE

#### 2.07.1 GENERAL

The Policy describes the support provided by Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to all service providers that are recognized pursuant to this policy. Reimbursement under this policy will only be considered for the delivery of services that fall within the definition of Out of Jurisdiction Response, and applies to all Road Rescue Service Providers.

Related Policies:

- 1.01 Task Report
- 1.04 Hepatitis B Prevention/Post Exposure Follow-Up
- 2.02 Task Authorization
- 2.05 Red Flashing Lights and Siren Permits
- 5.01 Task Registration
- 5.02 Expense Reimbursement
- 5.04 Public Safety Lifeline Equipment Repair/Replacement
- 5.07 Workers' Compensation Coverage
- 5.08 Liability Coverage

#### 2.07.2 DEFINITIONS

See Terms and Definitions

**Fire Suppression Services:** The equipment and staff required to protect response personnel and/or subjects where there is an actual or imminent threat to life due to fire. This definition includes response to structures and hazardous materials (hazmat) incidents for the purposes of rescuing entrapped subjects. This definition does not include response efforts beyond the rescue.

**Medical Rescue:** A Road Rescue Service Provider or Fire Department response to assist BC Emergency Health Services (operating the BC Ambulance Service, or BCAS) where there is an actual or imminent threat to life and BCAS requires assistance in accessing and moving injured subject(s) to a safe location. Such action can include treating the subject at site. This applies only where no EMBC recognized Search and Rescue (SAR) group is available to respond within a reasonable time frame and/or does not have the specific training and equipment required. The Road Rescue Service Provider or Fire Department must have the specialized rescue skills and equipment required for the response. This definition does not apply to Emergency Medical Assistant (EMA) First Responder assistance to BCAS.



Out of Jurisdiction Response: The service provided is outside the established municipal and/or fire protection area and is not covered under a contract, mutual aid agreement, automatic aid agreement, or extended service by-law. This definition applies to organizations that operate without a defined jurisdictional boundary (e.g. road rescue societies not affiliated with a fire department and search and rescue societies).

Police: The police service responsible for the jurisdiction where the incident occurs. In most situations, it is anticipated that this will be the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Road Rescue: Rescue skills that may be called upon in response to a motor vehicle accident including extrication of vehicle occupants and embankment rescue. Water rescue that is required as a direct result of a motor vehicle accident is considered part of the road rescue response, if the Road Rescue Service Provider has the necessary water rescue skills and equipment required. The term Road Rescue is also interpreted to include the use of auto extrication tools and techniques for the release of subjects trapped by other means, such as farm or industrial accidents, train wrecks, or aircraft crashes.

Road Rescue Service Provider (hereafter service provider): An organized fire rescue service or volunteer rescue society whose members maintain an on-going competence through participation in a training and exercise program that meets the intent of the current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards on operations and training for technical rescue incidents. For references within the standard to hazmat training, EMBC will recognize the hazmat awareness level as adequate for the purposes of this policy. EMBC may at any time require the service provider to produce evidence that this requirement has been satisfied.

All Found Rate: All found rates include all costs associated with a rescue response, with the exception of those items specifically identified in Annex A of this policy. Rates are applicable from the time of response vehicle departure from quarters and continue until return to quarters. For responses where extrication, embankment, or medical rescue services are rendered, an additional quarter-hour will be added to account for clean up after task.

### 2.07.3 POLICY STATEMENT

1. Service providers must maintain an on-going competence through participation in a training and exercise program that meets the intent of the current NFPA standards on operations and training for technical rescue incidents and hazmat awareness.
2. The police and BCAS are the EMBC-recognized tasking agencies for road and medical rescue. The BC Coroner's Service and the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre may request extrication support under this policy.
3. An EMBC Regional Duty Manager (RDM) may authorize, on the request of the tasking agency, helicopter deployment of a service provider to a remote area. An Air Services Emergency (ASE) number is required.

4. The following support is available to service providers for the provision of road and medical rescue services when authorized by a task number assigned by the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), subject to the conditions set forth in this policy:
  1. Workers' compensation coverage.
  2. Liability coverage. Note: EMBC does not provide liability coverage for the organization and/or the local government.
  3. Reimbursement for eligible expenses defined in this policy.
5. Service providers and fire departments will only be approved for tasking in medical rescues where no EMBC recognized SAR group is available to respond and/or does not have the specific training and equipment required.
6. The following activities are not covered under this policy:
  1. Traffic control is only authorized for ensuring the safety of the emergency services personnel involved in the removal of the subject(s). Once the subject(s) are safely extricated, traffic control is no longer covered by EMBC. (Note: In a situation where ongoing traffic control is required for the protection of other personnel at site, coverage will only be provided for workers' compensation and liability.)
  2. Transportation of patients to a medical facility is the responsibility of BCAS and is not covered under the EMBC task number.
  3. Responders accompanying BCAS in an ambulance. (Note: Task coverage for this situation may be considered by the RDM on a case-by-case basis.)
  4. EMA First Responder calls.
  5. Response to fire and hazmat incidents, beyond rescue of entrapped subjects.
  6. Time waiting at scene for coroner to arrive and/or release deceased subject(s) for extrication.
7. Reimbursement rates will conform to:
  - a. The current "Interagency Working Group Report: Reimbursement Rates" between the Office of the Fire Commissioner and the Fire Chiefs Association of British Columbia. The rate used shall be the "All Found Rate" for Rescue Vehicles. This rate applies to all attending vehicles that are deemed eligible under this policy.
  - b. Road and Medical Rescue Reimbursement Schedule, for all other equipment.
8. Reimbursement under this policy covers one rescue vehicle unless otherwise authorized within this policy. This does not prevent the attendance of additional resources, at the expense of the service provider.
9. Costs associated with provision of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) may be supported by EMBC for tasked incidents, as approved by the RDM. Incident response time does not include CISM activities.

#### 2.07.4 CONDITIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Fire suppression resources that respond to an incident will only be reimbursed when the response falls under the definition set out in "Fire Suppression Services" in this policy. (Note:

this does not prevent the service provider from deploying additional resources, at the expense of the service provider.)

2. A local authority fire department must be formally established through bylaw, and have appropriate approval to respond outside their jurisdiction as a service provider. Fire departments must maintain liability/insurance coverage.
3. Service providers who are not local authority fire departments must have comprehensive third party liability insurance. Such coverage must be in place within six months of the enactment of this policy.
4. Service providers are responsible to ensure adequate insurance coverage is in place for all apparatus and equipment.
5. Prior to responding under this policy, service providers must be registered with their EMBC regional office.

#### 2.07.5 AUTHORITIES

Emergency Program Act

Original Signed by

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Chris Duffy

A/Assistant Deputy Minister Emergency Management BC

August 4, 2016

#### 2.07.6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- • 2.07 Road and Medical Rescue Procedures
- • 2.07 Road and Medical Rescue Reimbursement Schedule
- • 2.07 Road Rescue Service Provider Registration Form
- • 2.07 Road Rescue Service Provider Registration Form Instructions
- • 2.07 Road and Medical Rescue FAQs
- • Inter-Agency Working Group Report Reimbursement Rates

The full set of EMBC policies can be found at

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-management-bc/policies>

## Appendix 5 – Summary of Inter-Agency Protocol

Operational response to motor vehicle accidents is carried out by a number of parties. Under a 2009 MOU, agreed to by all parties involved in motor vehicle accident response, the responsibility was divided as follows.

- Police (RCMP and Municipal)
  - Secure crash site;
  - Collect evidence and witness statements;
  - Investigate cause.
- Fire Services
  - Assess scene
  - Identify Hazards
  - Implement action plan as required based on incident, including auto extrication, first aid, fire suppression, and hazmat response.
- Volunteer Road Rescue Group
  - Assist formal agencies present based on training;
  - Assess scene;
  - Identify hazards;
  - Implement action plan as required based on incident, including auto extrication and first aid.
- BC Ambulance Service
  - Assess scene, ensuring scene safety;
  - Provide patient care – triage, treatment and transportation of victims;
  - Ensure ground resources/air evacuation;
  - Liaise with health agencies;
  - Provide standby paramedic crews to support rescue response in a prolonged event;
  - Confirm fatality.
- Coroner
  - Collection of evidence;
  - Complete investigation;
  - Authorize, and or arrange for removal of deceased
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
  - Assume overall site co-ordination;
  - Prevent or mitigate secondary incidents;
  - Advise road users of closure/wait times/alternate routes;
  - Evaluate damage-restore road to safe operating condition;
  - Re-open road
- Emergency management BC
  - Issue task number
  - Provide site support;
  - Co-ordinate and expedite requests for additional resources

## Appendix 6

### Analysis of FCABC Road Rescue Survey

In August of 2020 the Fire Chiefs Association of BC surveyed road rescue responders with respect to their experience in the current road rescue program management structure.

70 service providers responded to the survey. They ranged from very small organizations with annual budgets of under \$100,000 to large urban fire departments with budgets of greater than \$5 million. Over 80 per cent did not have a distinct budget for out of jurisdiction road rescue.

For the service providers surveyed the cost of their road rescue ranged from no budget to \$200,000/year and activity ranged from to 1 rescue every 1 or 2 years to greater than 50 calls/year.

In general, provincial reimbursement for road rescue cost was less than actual costs. This was particularly true for large departments with paid staff. In these cases, departments estimated that reimbursements covered about 1/3 of their costs. In smaller volunteer departments where staff reimbursement was not considered a cost, reimbursements were seen to cover costs call out costs, although it was rarely clear how these departments were costing training costs and equipment depreciation.

24 service providers reported that they attended more than 20 calls in at least one of the years surveyed. Eight service responders (Deep Bay, Fort St John, Hope Search and Rescue, Merritt, Prince George, Revelstoke, Terrace, Vernon), reported more than 50 calls, in one of the 3 years surveyed. Extractions were typically required in less than half of the calls.

78 per cent of the service provider surveyed reported having a defined area for out of jurisdiction response.

Just over 80 per cent of surveyed service providers reported having a defined training standard. 73 per cent reported having a defined time frame in which to replace equipment but only 40 per cent reported having a capital replacement fund to actually replace the equipment.

Reported Challenges to maintaining levels of service and/or equipment related to out of jurisdiction response for vehicle extrication are reported on the following page.

<b>Q.21 Do you have challenges maintaining levels of service and/or equipment related to out of jurisdiction response for vehicle extrication? Please elaborate.</b>
No challenges. The department can realistically handle multiple MVI's with two complete extrication apparatus in hall.
Out of area response often taxes levels of available staff in the service area to critical levels. Equipment damage is covered by EMBC for the most part, but often on a pro-rated basis. Much of our out of area calls are on forest service roads which are extremely hard on the rescue vehicle. Often unseen damage is occurring and not found till much later and well beyond the time to claim.
We have an area the covers 185 kms of highway We have two units based in the south and north ends of the zones to meet the travel time response Challenges come when we have equipment damaged on tasks and try to claim thru EMBC. EMBC is very slow to pay out tasks and often try to decline payment. The other issue is in no man's land where risk of fire and life safety is present getting the task and then having the responding invoice paid for the task deployment. We have had many battles over this that have stretched out for months of back and forth.
Cost of replacement equipment. Cutter blades broken on call \$3000, EMBC reimburses \$1000
Limited responders at times due to volunteer department. Rescue truck needs replacing and no room in the budget
No, when crew responds out of jurisdiction, we do a call back-to-back fill the fire station to maintain coverage for the City
Yes, due to the fact that when we leave for out of jurisdiction call, we must have a crew on stand by for in area calls and our in-area truck has less equipment on board, due to the fact we go 2.5 hours out of jurisdiction
Yes, sometimes we have to stand down because of lack of members. Also, when our equipment breaks down, repairs are time consuming and very costly.
Limited funding and time
The income received does not cover the capital out lay of the equipment, vehicle/equipment maintenance. We want to be fair in what we are billing, but we have incurred all the costs up front and income does not reflect our costs
No, we have not at this point we budget and purchase a tool every year to keep up. Tools but toll budget takes from other things needed
Cost of equipment upkeep and repair
Our challenges are based on the geographic response area size, travel times, back filling the station with OT to maintain staffing within the city. Currently equipment budget is not an issue.
Equipment is a challenge. We do not respond to many MVIs. Outgoing tools were well beyond life expectancy. New tools are due to arrive Q4, however many pieces of additional equipment require replacement.
Yes... the age of our firefighters makes it difficult to train and or handle these heavy jaws.
At this time, we have been able to maintain a good level of service and equipment through fundraising. I feel that moving forward that this will not be the case.

Our biggest challenge is, that besides the EMBC response re-imburement, our taxable "Fire Protection Service Area" covers all the costs for this program. Equipment maintenance and replacement, fuel costs, staff time.
We have always been able to respond to these calls within our defined road rescue area.
Staffing
Yes. The costs to get instruction in the central interior is costly
Communication challenges - no coverage area's Technically loss of communication means responders need to disengage. Coms needs immediate attention in rural areas of B.C.
Staffing Issues, staffed by career members during day, weekdays. Staffed by POC firefighter's after-hours and weekends.
Just money to keep training and equipment in service
No to level of service. Budget restrictions limit purchasing desired additional equipment
Funding
Yes, we have a very large area to cover and a very old rescue truck
Most of our extrications are for people that live out of our service area, and the people that pay the taxes have to fund the extrications for the out of towners who drive through our service area.
The biggest challenge is the availability of on-call staff. Constant training and maintenance compete with multiple other disciplines and competing family and work responsibilities.
In the past it had been a challenge, however, we have made cuts in other areas to ensure proper funding to keep the rescue equipment maintained. Wear and tear on the apparatus is an issue with responding to out of area calls.
Cost of equipment and the recovery of the road rescue does not equal the amount required to have on hand for this response type.
Yes. Call backs to fill vacancies can be unpredictable. We are a small Dept, so sending 4 members is almost 25% of staffing and one apparatus is 25% of total.
Yes, the rescue truck is mainly manned by volunteer members. It can be challenging to get enough responders to make up the minimum staffing requirement. Sometimes the rescue truck will not respond because of it, especially in the summer months. Therefore, the public does not have expected level of service.
Cutters are old and have encountered issues when trying to cut newer vehicles.
No, we have 2 vehicles equipped with full sets of rescue equipment and a dedicated rescue truck and a tender. we normally would have 8 to 10 of our 16 members at the hall within 4 to 5 minutes of a page, all 4 vehicles have suppression capabilities and can be operated with minimal manpower. a second page would see a full turnout of available members 85% of our members are in the valley full time.
Our only issue is manning at times during the day, during the week. We may have a crew our of jurisdiction and rely on mutual aid to cover our area. We are a small department in manning but we always get the job done. Something we are proud of when helping people on our highways.

<p>Volunteer department that until recently was undergoing reductions in staff and had lost expertise in extrication. Department growing again so looking to maintain interest and increase training and skills of members. We are only extrication within defined fire response area of Village and surrounding limited Regional District. We have limited personnel trained in extrication as it has not been a priority in prior years as Smithers Fire is Highway Rescue in area and we have called them for mutual aid. Due to increases in vehicle traffic on highways and other main roads in area, and train traffic with level crossing, we have re-evaluated and are working towards increasing our extrication equipment and training over next 3 years. Still not likely to provide service outside of area of response unless Smithers requires help.</p>
<p>Up to this year our department was well paid by the Regional District to provide road rescue outside of our jurisdiction. very little calls funded by EMBC. that contract expired at the end of 2020 and will not be renewed. will have to rely on EMBC funding for the new year</p>
<p>Yes, insufficient funding to provide this service</p>
<p>No. We are sufficient with equipment. The only challenge can be getting call back firefighters to man the hall when out of area.</p>
<p>Biggest challenge is funding for equipment</p>
<p>Yes, when equipment is being repaired or broken, Peachland will cover (and vice versa). Sometimes experience trouble backfilling crews who have left town with off duty staff to maintain community coverage</p>
<p>The yearly service for equipment is cost prohibitive. Our tools are heavy and out of date but we don't have the budget to replace</p>