

Critical Infrastructure Assessment Process

Summary Report – Example Community Name

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Summary

The community has recently completed a critical infrastructure assessment process. This process began in July 2017 with a Kick-Off Meeting. During this meeting, representatives from various departments at the Example Community learned about basic concepts in critical infrastructure; reviewed a method to identify locally owned assets that are critical to providing services to the public; and were trained in the use of a Tool to capture this data.

Following the meeting, representatives performed department-specific assessments. These assessment materials were then consolidated and the results were reviewed at a Follow-Up Meeting. Based on the results, a series of non-binding recommendations were made. These recommendations will be provided to senior management for review and confirmation, after which they will be enacted by various departments.

Process

The critical infrastructure assessment process that was used was developed by Defence Research and Development Canada in cooperation with Emergency Management BC and the JIBC. The process examines the assets used by the community to offer services during an emergency situation. In particular, the process identifies which assets are critical (*meaning the community must have this asset to offer services*) and which are important (*meaning the community relies on the asset but has alternatives*) to offer services. The relationship between the asset and the service is known as a *dependency*.

During the assessment process, representatives from each department discuss which assets are needed in order to provide services during an emergency. These dependencies are captured in a spreadsheet, which tabulates the number of services that rely on a particular asset. This tool will also identify how many external services each asset relies on in order to function and be available. Recommendations can then be made around mitigating the impacts of the hazard on assets; ways to protect or strengthen the asset; prioritizing the response to secure and protect the asset during an emergency; and recovery priorities if the asset is lost.

For External Communities assessment, representatives discussed services that would be needed during an interface fire (a forest fire that impacts a community).

Meetings

The critical infrastructure assessment process involved two formal meetings.

Kick-Off Meeting

This was the first meeting in the critical infrastructure assessment process. The purpose of the meeting was to provide representatives with an overview of the basic concepts of critical infrastructure; to review a method to identify locally owned assets that are critical to providing services to the public; and to train representatives in how to use a Tool to capture data.

The meeting was attended by manager and director-level representatives from: Fire & Rescue Service; Police Service; Civic Affairs; Finance; Human Resources; Facilities; Engineering; Public Works; Information Technology Services; Library Services; and Utilities.

The meeting occurred on July 17, 2017 and took place in the corporate board room. During this meeting, Jennifer Waugh was identified as being the process “champion” (a project management term that refers to an individual who sees a project from beginning to end). Ms. Waugh facilitated the meeting, reviewing the materials with representatives and playing instructional videos. The representatives then examined a few services and used the data capturing tool to record their assessments. The meeting concluded with each representative being assigned a portion of the assessment to complete back at their own departments. The meeting lasted 3.5 hours.

Follow-Up Meeting

This was the second meeting in the critical infrastructure assessment process. The purpose of the meeting was to review the assessments performed by each representative and to identify specific recommendations for protective actions.

The meeting was once again attended by manager and director-level representatives from: Fire & Rescue Service; Police Service; Civic Affairs; Finance; Human Resources; Facilities; Engineering; Public Works; Information Technology Services; Library Services; and Utilities.

The meeting occurred on September 29, 2017 and took place in the corporate board room. During this meeting, Ms. Waugh reviewed the findings with the representatives. Some representatives were asked to clarify their findings, particularly in areas where there appeared to be more critical dependencies than would be expected. The representatives then identified recommendations to mitigate the impact of the hazard, to protect the assets, to prioritize response, and to determine recovery priorities.

Results

The assessment process identified three areas that require action to be taken. These are:

1. Local government staff rely heavily on computers and software, which were critical to the community being able to offer eight unique services.
2. Regular department staff are critical to 17 unique services.
3. The as-needed maintenance of vehicles and equipment was critical to 10 services.

Recommendations

The following recommendations reflect specific, tangible actions that can be taken to address the assessment findings. These recommendations are non-binding and require the approval of senior management before being implemented.

Recommendation 1: Addressing the dependency of locally provided goods and services on computers and software

We recommend the IT department create a briefing document identifying which software programs can be accessed offsite and a step-by-step “cheat-sheet” that walk staff through the specific steps. This document should also include a review and interpretation of policies governing the access of city information through non-city computers. The document will be emailed by IT to all staff during an emergency requiring the activation of the emergency operations centre. These materials should be developed within the next 3-4 weeks, following approval by senior management.

Recommendation 2: Addressing the dependency of locally provided goods & services of regular staff

We recommend that each department educate their staff members on the importance of personal preparedness for both the worker and their family. This effort will be supported by the Emergency Manager who will develop and distribute a PowerPoint presentation and personal checklist. The HR representative will also schedule a lunch-and-learn session on this topic for staff members. These materials should be developed within the next 3-4 weeks, following approval by senior management.

Recommendation 3: Addressing the dependency of internal services on internally-provided fuel and equipment maintenance

We recommend Public Works develop a plan to dedicate a “support vehicle” to be pre-equipped with both fuel transfer tanks (regular and diesel) as well as commonly used mechanics tools. This plan should formally identify which vehicle will be dedicated to this task; detail the costing and steps that are required to acquisition of two fuel transfer tanks; list the tools necessary for equipping the vehicle; and detailing the steps required to activate the vehicle during an emergency. This plan should be developed within the next 6-8 weeks following approval by senior management.

Recommendation 4: Addressing the dependency of locally provided goods & services of regular staff

We recommend that each department identify one cross-departmental cross-training opportunity for at least one staff member. For example, library staff have identified value in cross-training as reception centre staff as they have already been security-screened and are trained to work with the public. This recommendation seeks to formalize an existing handshake agreement between departments to share staff.

This recommendation will require sign-off by both union representatives and senior management and would ideally be implemented in the next fiscal year.

Next Steps

The recommendations identified above will require review and approval from senior management and possibly Mayor and Council. Once approved, it would be the responsibility of each identified department to complete the recommendation in the identified timeframe.

At this stage, the critical infrastructure assessment process is concluded. The process may be completed in the next fiscal, making use of a different hazard scenario. At that time, a champion will be identified and department representatives will be invited to attend.