

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
BRITISH COLUMBIA

A STRATEGY TO ADVANCE SUPPORT FOR
LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

OCTOBER 14, 2015



MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER

I am pleased to introduce this three-year strategy for our services to local governments. Emergency management is a shared responsibility. That said, Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) has a unique leadership role in providing support and guidance to local authority emergency programs. Over the course of the last year, we have reviewed past consultations, sought guidance from emergency program coordinators, held internal discussions and studied other jurisdictions in order to seek ways that we can improve our service delivery to local authority emergency programs.

There is an increasing acknowledgement that strong local emergency management programs have a direct influence on a community's degree of resilience when faced with a disaster. This strategy is designed to improve the support offered by EMBC to local authority emergency programs as they work to build and improve their programs. The goals of the strategy are:

1. To apply a flexible approach to tool development that recognizes the differences between local authority emergency programs;
2. To provide EMBC staff the tools, resources and training to ensure effective program delivery to local authorities;
3. To create more opportunities for meaningful dialogue and communications between EMBC and local authorities; and
4. To promote leadership and provide governance through partnership, collaboration and shared learning.

This strategy is an important step towards EMBC's commitment to the strategic goal: "EMBC is effective in supporting other responsible authorities in their mandate to mitigate and manage emergencies and disasters." Emergency Program Coordinators supported by EMBC staff are the backbone of emergency management for BC communities. The diverse list of deliverables in this strategy reaffirms the long-term commitment to enable the success of emergency programs.

Pat Quealey
Assistant Deputy Minister
Emergency Management BC

Expected Outcome
Local authority emergency programs are well supported through consistent communications and improved, modernized tools provided by EMBC.

Strategic Goals

To apply a flexible approach to tool development that recognizes the differences between local authority emergency programs.	To provide EMBC staff the tools, resources and training to ensure effective program delivery to local authorities.	To create more opportunities for meaningful dialogue and communications between EMBC and local authorities.	To lead and provide governance through partnership, collaboration and shared learning.
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Themes for Success/Priority Actions

<p>Leadership through knowledge sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine appropriate ways to promote knowledge sharing within the field of practice between Emergency Program Coordinators. • Cultivate knowledge sharing through existent and new networks. • Continue Annual Seasonal Readiness Workshops. • Host facilitated provincial discussions. 	<p>Relationship building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly participate in events such as the Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity Conference etc. • Re-invigorate the community profile process and review the current template to include mitigation considerations. • Ensure linkages between local government strategies, regional emergency management partnership strategies and provincial strategies to enhance information sharing, eliminate duplication of effort and foster greater collaboration. • Appoint an EMBC liaison to work more closely with those organizations serving local authorities and emergency programs. 	<p>Improved external communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update local authority-specific website content for clarity and ease of use. • Conduct ongoing reviews of local authority-specific website content to ensure it is up-to-date. • Establish a communication protocol for the organization to ensure that regional staff and EPCs are well informed of all projects and policy changes. • With input from Government Communications and Public Engagement, develop a workshop that outlines the different methods and tools that are available for engagement within the BC Public Service for EMBC staff. 	<p>Enhanced tools and policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop materials that outline the legislated requirements of a local authority emergency programs. • Update the document "Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery, A Guide for BC Local Authorities and First Nations". • Update Emergency Operation Centre Forms. The priority for the first year of this strategy will be the Situation Report. • Create a toolkit for local authority emergency management planning. • Update the Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Tool. • Update the recovery toolkit. • Consider the development of mobile applications to augment tools. • Analyze current EMBC policy and related procedures to determine areas for change. Work with the EMBC policy team to create or update policy as determined by analysis. 	<p>Supported regional staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and supporting materials to regional staff for each resource developed. • Support training in areas that will directly impact and enhance the capacity of staff to service local authorities.
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Contributing to the achievement of the EMBC Strategic Goal: EMBC is effective in supporting other responsible authorities in their mandate to mitigate and manage emergencies and disasters.

Limitations/Constraints

Resources/Finances	Training	Time
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Considerations

<p>Local Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of local government programs in capacity, experience, hazards and governance model • Degree of support from local government bodies is varied • Desire for more learning opportunities • Desire for consistent communications from EMBC • Desire for updated tools and policy • Desire for an easy-to-use website • Desire to be consulted from the beginning on projects or policy that will affect them • Desire for more collaboration 	<p>Emergency Management BC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach, interpretation and application of tools and policy across the province is required • Desire for an intuitive website • Need for increased support in the implementation phase of policy and tools in order to ensure their long-term success • Desire for more opportunities for relationship building through face-to-face meetings, participation in exercises and planning • Increase support to local government preparedness activities
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INTRODUCTION

This strategy is directly related to the Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) Strategic Plan (2014-2017). Part of EMBC's mission is to support other authorities within their areas of jurisdiction. The third goal of EMBC's Strategic Plan states: "EMBC is effective in supporting other responsible authorities in their mandate to mitigate and manage emergencies and disasters."

As specified under the *Partnerships* line of effort, "Over the course of the next three years, EMBC intends to better engage local authorities through a variety of communication methods, to modernize the tools that are available, and to promote a better understanding of EMBC policies, roles and responsibilities."

This document specifically meets the 2014/15 deliverable of the EMBC Strategic Plan: "Based on research and a gap analysis develop a strategy to engage, inform and support local authority emergency management programs." As such, this strategy outlines actions to advance EMBC service delivery to local authority emergency programs. The primary scope of this strategy is to support the EMBC Regional Offices in their work with local authorities. Thus, several of the actions described in this strategy are either general emergency management deliverables or are related to the policies, procedures and provincial toolkits that are available and promoted by regional staff.

EMBC has six regional offices working closely with all emergency management stakeholders including local governments, First Nations, federal departments, industry, non-government organizations and volunteers. The six EMBC regional offices have a total combined staff of less than 20 personnel who, in some cases, do their work across vast distances in areas ranging from urban to rural.

There are other areas of EMBC that provide ongoing, direct support to local authorities including the Flood Protection Program, Disaster Financial Assistance, Public Education, the Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer program, and the Training and Exercise Program. Although this strategy was developed with their support, it does not outline the deliverables of those programs over the next three years. This strategy is an evolving document and it will be reviewed and adjusted at the end of each fiscal year.

In order to establish a broad understanding of the relationships between EMBC staff and local authorities, a questionnaire was distributed to local authorities asking about the tools that are used on the EMBC website and recommendations for enhanced engagement and communications. One-on-one interviews and focus groups were also held with EMBC staff across the organization. Furthermore, Canadian and international emergency management organization websites were reviewed to look at current support and tools offered by other jurisdictions. By reviewing these websites a general understanding of potential improvements to EMBC tools and websites was observed. The tools that are referenced in this document include the guidelines and forms that are available on the EMBC website (for example, the Evacuation Guidelines and EOC forms). Previous EMBC studies and consultations were also reviewed.

All of the above inputs led to the development of the themes for success outlined here. Priorities were determined by focusing on changes and initiatives where there is the **largest impact** as well as **a realistic reflection of current resources**. A reflection of this is that many of the actions outlined in this strategy are **province-wide**. The actions in this strategy should be considered as steps in the evolution of EMBC activities.

VISION AND END STATE

Vision: EMBC is engaging and communicating with local authority emergency management programs through high quality service delivery.

The intended long-term outcome for this framework is that local authority emergency programs are well-supported through consistent communications and improved, modernized tools provided by EMBC. By enhancing a model of engagement that encourages partnership, dialogue and ongoing problem solving, it is anticipated that EMBC will better understand relevant issues and will be better able to seek cooperative solutions and support local authorities as a result. Through increased understanding and interactions, EMBC and local authorities will work to achieve the shared goal of a safer British Columbia.

GOALS FOR SUCCESS

This strategy is designed to enhance and augment EMBC's communication, support and engagement with local authority emergency programs, specifically focusing on general emergency management programming. There are four goals related to this strategy:

1. To apply a flexible approach to tool development that recognizes the differences between local authority emergency programs;
2. To provide EMBC staff the tools, resources and training to ensure effective program delivery to local authorities;
3. To create more opportunities for meaningful dialogue and communications between EMBC and local authorities; and
4. To promote leadership and provide governance through partnership, collaboration and shared learning.

Five themes for success have been identified based on the interviews and research that were conducted while forming this strategy. These themes will guide the actions of EMBC for the next three years. The themes for success are:

1. Leadership through knowledge sharing;
2. Relationship building;
3. Improved external communications;
4. Enhanced tools and policy; and
5. Supported regional staff.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EMBC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

EMBC AS A SUPPORTIVE BODY

As an organization, EMBC aims to provide guidance and expertise while recognizing that local Emergency Program Coordinators (EPCs) are the experts and leaders within their communities.

COMMUNICATION IS A TWO-WAY PROCESS

In order for communication to be effective, it must be an active dialogue between local authorities and the Province through EMBC. Communications will aim to build a relationship that is empowering, collaborative and cooperative, and rooted in meaningful dialogue.

FOCUSED ON IMPROVEMENT

The aim of work done to support and engage local authorities will seek to bring advancements to both local authorities and EMBC through increasing efficiencies, collaborative problem solving and the attainment of shared goals.

CLEAR AND CONCISE CONTENT

Publications and communications will be written in clear and concise language in order to ensure understanding as well as encourage uptake and effective use.

FLEXIBLE PRODUCTS

Products will be released in different formats in order to recognize the diversity in size, resources and requirements of different emergency programs. Wherever possible, products will be scalable in order to meet the needs and requirements of different emergency programs.

RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND COMPLEXITY

Emergency managers are better positioned to support the community when they have an understanding of the unique characteristics and interdependencies within the local context. Through regular interactions with local authorities and their emergency programs, EMBC staff will better understand each local authority's unique qualities and complexities leading to a more comprehensive support for the community.

TRENDS

Overall, governments are facing increased severity and frequency of emergencies due to factors such as environmental change, increased urbanization and development in high-risk areas. The economic impacts of more recent emergencies are staggering, and costs will continue to rise. An example of this is the 2013 floods in Southern Alberta which resulted in an estimated six billion dollars of loss.¹ These long-term effects are not limited to large events. Many small or medium emergency events present long-standing impacts and legacies for communities.

Over the course of several years, the field of emergency management has changed and evolved. Historically, the primary focus of emergency managers was to lead the response to an emergency event. Now the field is extremely diverse and is specializing. Reflective of this professionalization of the field is the increased number of emergency management academic programs that are further shifting the field towards a social science. In addition to applying further skills and resources to the phases of preparedness, mitigation and recovery, the influence of emergency management in community planning and social stability is becoming increasingly recognized.

This shift in the field is also creating the need for emergency managers to diversify their skill sets. There is an increased demand for emergency managers to be adaptive, innovative and effective communicators. According to the Conference Board of Canada, skills in political awareness, stakeholder management and systems thinking are necessary to effectively address the dynamic and complex issues that are faced within the field of emergency management both now and in the future.

There is also an increased recognition by government bodies that the community level is often the best place to begin to address some of the complex problems or risks. The entry of this train of thought to the emergency management field is nicely summarized in the Australian Government's [Community Engagement Framework](#):

“A ‘community safety approach’ to building disaster resilience recognizes active engagement with and empowerment of the community as central to achieving resilience over the long term. This approach does not reduce government or agency responsibility in emergency management, but strengthens community participation and influence. It recognizes that resilience is enhanced when communities play a key role in their own safety...Disaster resilience is based upon existing strengths and relationships. Individuals and communities are the starting point to build disaster resilience and the way to work with communities is to connect with what is already there. At a practical level this means working in partnership with the community, building on existing networks, resources and strengths, identifying and supporting the development of community leaders and empowering the community to exercise choice and take responsibility. It means adopting flexible approaches in the way we communicate with and within communities.”

Internationally there are several examples of shifting national approaches toward building local capabilities and resilience, as well as capitalizing on the expertise held at the local level. Approaches built to strengthen a community's level of resilience often aim to identify the interdependencies and relationships that do and can exist within a community. There are many elements that contribute to the degree of community resilience, including local leadership, capacities, degrees of personal preparedness, and the social fabric of a community.

¹ Canadian Disaster Database, www.publicsafety.gc.ca

In reflecting on these trends, it is clear that the professional and geographic context is changing for emergency managers. Emergency managers at all levels of government are facing similar challenges and exploring parallel questions across the province and the world.

OPPORTUNITIES

Within British Columbia we are fortunate to have a body of passionate, skilled and experienced Emergency Program Coordinators and a strong network of relationships between practitioners. Across the province, EPCs are stepping forward as leaders in their communities, working tirelessly to improve public safety within their communities. Strengthening and supporting the efforts of these leaders is a great opportunity.

In addition there is a growing body of knowledge from both practitioners and academia regarding emergency events, preparedness and recovery. There are many resources at the local, provincial/state and national level that reflect current best practices and lessons learned.

New technology, such as social media, online meeting tools, blogs and wikis, makes collaboration and communication in diverse ways less expensive and achievable. These technologies provide opportunities to diversify the way that organizations communicate with their stakeholders and meet the varied needs of the audience.

EMBC is already part of an extensive network of organizations that includes private sector, ministry representatives, and federal, provincial and territorial governments. EMBC staff are leaders in facilitating multi-level, cross-sector collaboration. There is an opportunity to capitalize on these already established relationships with the intent of addressing some of the concerns of local authority emergency programs.

This strategy represents a number of excellent opportunities to strengthen the degree of public safety across the province, through enhanced support to local authority programs. Increased relationship building and face-to-face interactions will increase EMBC's capability to address the unique and complex environment at the local level. Flexible tools will increase the degree of use by local emergency programs, particularly if they are developed in collaboration with those in the field. This strategy also aims to increase organizational efficiencies, leading to an increase in the amount of time available to staff and emergency programs. Overall, through improved communications, encouraging support amongst EPCs and enhancing tools, this strategy is expected to positively influence public safety within communities across the province.

CHALLENGES AND RISKS

There are a variety of challenges and risks that will influence the outcomes of this strategy. The approaches in this strategy reflect a change to the way that EMBC engages and communicates with local authorities. Organizational changes take time, and there will need to be appropriate support, training, communication and discussion amongst EMBC staff to encourage and solidify that shift.

In order for the strategy to be successful, it must be appropriately resourced to ensure that momentum is maintained with both staff and local authorities. The capacity and time of EMBC staff and local authorities to participate in the initiatives outlined in this strategy are limited and, as a result, projects must be well-managed to ensure success and buy-in.

The willingness of local authorities to be engaged in some of the initiatives is expected to vary. Those who are willing to be engaged will have input to the changes to tools, policy and processes.

The complexity of some of the policy areas within the field of emergency management also poses a challenge. Several of the challenges that emergency managers face in all levels of government are multi-faceted and require many diverse solutions. Often, several pieces of legislation overlap and diverse groups with varied interests are impacted. Because of this complex context, in order to make progress all parties must commit to a collaborative approach that promotes compromise, understanding, partnerships and ongoing improvement.

THEME FOR SUCCESS 1: LEADERSHIP THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SHARING

During the interviews, there was strong consensus among the EPCs for EMBC to exert additional leadership in promoting information sharing regarding current best practices in the field. This includes sharing best practices and lessons learned from other jurisdictions, providing access to current research, and exposing challenges for discussion. Part of the basis for this was that EMBC is in the unique position of being regularly exposed to emergencies and experts in the field provincially, nationally and internationally.

EMBC learns a great deal from the EPCs who, as a group, have expressed the desire to learn from EMBC. There is also an opportunity for EPCs to learn from each other. It was clear in the local authority questionnaire results that there are universal challenges across emergency programs, such as time constraints, limited funding, and gaining or maintaining the status of emergency programs within the local government structure. Resource levels and the amount of personal experience also influence the degrees of success that are experienced by local authority programs. In addition, the future challenges of increased severity and frequency of emergencies, and the need to increase community resilience are also equally faced by EPCs and the Province.

There are a number of groups across the province and the country that offer a forum for knowledge sharing, such as the BC Association for Emergency Managers, the Canadian Risks and Hazards Network, and regional emergency management councils. Cultivating knowledge sharing through pre-existing networks, as well as finding new ways to promote knowledge will create opportunities for meaningful discussions and learning.

By working to build knowledge within the province, EMBC aims to exemplify leadership in the field and to expose EPCs to new ideas. Through a dedicated effort, EMBC would like to encourage a strong information sharing network amongst EPCs so they are able to build off each other's successes and lessons learned.

ACTIONS TO BUILD KNOWLEDGE

- Determine appropriate ways to promote knowledge sharing within the field of practice between EPCs. Cultivate knowledge sharing through existent and new networks;
- Continue annual seasonal readiness workshops;² and
- Host facilitated provincial discussions regarding topics such as:
 - Lessons learned in recent emergencies;
 - Informed practices to address universal challenges felt by emergency programs, such as public apathy or preparedness campaigning; and,
 - New tools and research.

THEME FOR SUCCESS 2: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

In emergency management, partnerships and strong relationships contribute to the effectiveness of response and recovery. Relationships work to break down barriers, reduce preconceived judgments and provide a better understanding of stakeholder roles, responsibilities and resources.

² Seasonal readiness workshops are hosted by regional staff and are held once or twice a year depending on the region. Participation is both face-to-face and via conference call.

Overall, the results of the EMBC regional staff and local authority questionnaires were similar. It is clear that regional EMBC staff have an understanding of the needs, interests and concerns of EPCs. This understanding is built on the strength of the personal relationships that have developed between regional staff and the local authorities. EMBC regional staff stressed how important face-to-face interactions are for relationship building. Opportunities for face-to-face interactions include the Seasonal Readiness Workshops, one-on-one meetings, planning committee meetings, training and exercises, and conference or event participation. The level of involvement in local authority exercises and planning varies across the regions. In addition, regional staff feel that regularly completing community risk profiles is an excellent way to gain an understanding of the intricacies and capabilities of each emergency program.

Frequent staff turnover within emergency programs also illustrates the importance of investing in relationship-building. EMBC must be able to consistently invest time to do this in order to stay apprised of local strengths and challenges, as well as provide appropriate guidance to EPCs when it is requested.

In addition to continuing to build relationships between EMBC and local authorities, there is a potential for EMBC to capitalize on its current partnerships and relationships with other agencies with the intent of increasing support for local authority emergency programs.

ACTIONS TO ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS

- Regularly participate in events such as the Emergency Preparedness and the Business Continuity Conference;
- Re-invigorate the community risk profile process and review the current template to include mitigation considerations;
- Ensure linkages between local government strategies, regional emergency management partnership strategies and provincial strategies to enhance information sharing, eliminate duplication of effort and foster greater collaboration; and
- Appoint an EMBC liaison to work more closely with those organizations serving local authorities and emergency programs, such as the BC Association of Emergency Managers, the Local Government Management Association, and the Union of BC Municipalities. Look for opportunities to present at meetings and AGMs.

THEME FOR SUCCESS 3: IMPROVED EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Currently EMBC communicates with local authorities through a variety of means including face-to-face meetings, conferences, training events and seasonal readiness workshops. Overall EMBC would like to improve external communications by creating more opportunities for interaction with local authorities and promoting dialogue around information and improvements. A general desire for consistent and regular communications from the organization was highlighted by local authorities.

A major tool in communicating with stakeholders is the [EMBC website](#). It is host to an extensive suite of tools that touch on many of the key elements of emergency planning, response and recovery. For many years, the EMBC website has been a key source of information for local authorities. Regardless of the extensive depth of information on the website, feedback received through the consultations indicate that use of the EMBC website has dropped. By re-organizing and rewriting the section of the website dedicated to local authority emergency programs, efficiencies will be felt by EPCs and EMBC staff alike.

In addition to the website, there are other communication and engagement methods that could be employed to augment EMBC's current external communications with local authorities. Generally, communications are most effective when they are consistent, regular and through a variety of means. In stakeholder engagement, it is also ideal that stakeholders are informed as early as possible and that information is shared openly. Feedback from the local authority survey, previous consultations and observations in the field clearly indicate that local authorities would like to be engaged and informed at the beginning of projects and initiatives. The type of engagement or communication method that is used during a project is also ideally informed by the desired outcome. For example, an information campaign for the public would be wide-reaching and apply different engagement methods than a negotiation amongst a small group regarding responsibilities for an emergency management plan. By working to communicate consistently through diverse methods and to employ appropriate methods of engagement, there is an opportunity to better serve local authority emergency programs.

ACTIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS

- Update local authority-specific website content for clarity and ease of use;
- Conduct ongoing reviews of local authority-specific website content to ensure it is up-to-date;
- Establish a communication protocol for the organization to ensure that regional staff and EPCs are well-informed of all projects and policy changes; and
- With input from Government Communications and Public Engagement, develop a workshop that outlines the different methods and tools that are available for engagement within the BC Public Service for EMBC staff.

THEME FOR SUCCESS 4: ENHANCED TOOLS AND POLICY

There are several tools and publications on the EMBC website designed for local authority emergency programs. The needs and experience level of the emergency management programs within local authorities vary, and tools must continue to reflect the diverse needs of emergency programs in B.C. It is important that tools on the EMBC website are diversified, scalable and current, and ones that reflect the changes in the field of emergency management. Furthermore, the intended audience and uses of the tools or publication must be clearly outlined. Additionally, new delivery methods such as video, infographics and self-directed learning could be used to augment the understanding of the tools and of emergency management at the local authority level.

EPCs in the province represent a wealth of information and experience. There is a great opportunity to build on this by properly engaging local authorities in product development. In addition, by involving EPCs, the tools will better reflect the local context and diversity of programs. Their involvement will be crucial in ensuring that the tools are scalable whenever possible. In order to capitalize on the wealth of experience held at the local level, EMBC will work to engage local authorities through the entire cycle of the creation of tools and guidelines so that tools reflect their needs and capacities.

EPCs would appreciate a better understanding of requirements under legislation and general recommendations for their emergency programs. Moving forward, tools shall continue to reflect what is required by legislation and what is optional (i.e. driven by community needs or requirements).

EMBC would like to improve its policy program and better outline the process of analysis, development, consultation and ongoing review. In addition, EMBC would like to simplify procedures wherever possible with the hopes of freeing up time for staff and EPCs to focus on other important work. These updates to the policy program would aim to ensure that:

- EMBC policy is kept up-to-date and is reflective of current practices;
- EMBC policies related to local authorities continue to be applied consistently across the province;
- There is a common understanding regarding policy among staff and local authorities;
- Local authorities continue to be engaged in the policy development process; and
- Processes related to policy are straightforward and simple to execute.

ACTIONS TO IMPROVE TOOLS AND POLICY

- Develop materials that outline the legislated requirements of local authority emergency programs;
- Update the document *Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery, A Guide for BC Local Authorities and First Nations*;
- Update EOC forms with the priority for the first year of this strategy being the Situation Report;
- Create a toolkit for local authority emergency management planning;
- Update the Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Tool;
- Update the recovery toolkit;
- Consider the development of mobile applications to augment existing tools; and
- Analyze current EMBC policies and related procedures to determine areas for change and work with the EMBC policy team to create and update policy as necessary.

THEME FOR SUCCESS 5: SUPPORTED REGIONAL STAFF

In order for the educational materials and guides to be successful EMBC staff need to be supported and trained so that they can communicate and facilitate the use of the tools with ease. For each resource that is developed, it is crucial that accompanying training is available for EMBC staff. Modules for training delivery to local authorities will also ensure that resources are implemented consistently. By employing various training platforms regional staff can better support local authorities through a variety of methods such as face-to-face, self-study and facilitator-led options. This will guarantee that EMBC staff are well-equipped to assist local authorities with using EMBC tools.

In addition, staff require ongoing relevant training to maintain their level of expertise and to continue to be valuable leaders in support of local authorities. It is important that EMBC staff are continuously learning in order to appropriately fill leadership roles and support local authority emergency programs.

ACTIONS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL STAFF:

- Provide training and supporting materials to regional staff for each resource developed; and
- Support training in areas that will directly impact and enhance the capacity of staff to service local authorities such as:
 - Advanced interpersonal communications;
 - Facilitation and conflict resolution;
 - Crisis leadership;
 - First Nations cultural awareness;
 - Project and strategic planning;
 - Training related to local government structure and governance; and
 - Exercise development and design.

SUMMARY THREE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

Theme for Success	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Leadership Through Knowledge Sharing	Determine appropriate ways to promote knowledge sharing within the field of practice between Emergency Program Coordinators (EPCs). Cultivate knowledge sharing through existent or new networks.		
	Continue annual seasonal readiness workshops.		
	Host facilitated provincial discussions.		
Relationship Building	Regularly participate in events such as the Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity Conference.		
		Re-invigorate the community risk profile process and review the current template to include mitigation considerations.	
	Ensure linkages between local government strategies, regional emergency management partnership strategies and provincial strategies to enhance information sharing, eliminate duplication of effort and foster greater collaboration.		
	Appoint an EMBC liaison to work more closely with those organizations serving local authorities and emergency programs, such as the BC Association of Emergency Managers, the Local Government Management Association, and the Union of BC Municipalities. Look for opportunities to present at meetings and AGMs.		
Improved External Communications	Update local authority-specific website content for clarity and ease-of-use.		
		Conduct ongoing reviews of local authority-specific website content to ensure it is up-to-date.	
		Establish a communication protocol for the organization to ensure that regional staff and EPCs are well-informed of all projects and policy changes.	
		With input from Government Communications and Public Engagement, develop a workshop that outlines the different methods and tools that are available for engagement within the BC Public Service for EMBC staff.	

Enhanced Tools and Policy		Develop materials that outline the legislated requirements of local authority emergency programs.
	Update the document: <i>Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery, A Guide for BC Local Authorities and First Nations.</i>	
	Update EOC forms with the priority for the first year of this strategy being the Situation Report.	
	Create a toolkit for local authority emergency management planning.	
		Update the Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis Tool.
		Update the recovery toolkit.
		Consider the development of mobile applications to augment existing tools.
	Analyze current EMBC policies and related procedures to determine areas for change and work with the EMBC policy team to create and update policy as necessary.	
Supported Regional Staff	Provide training and supporting materials to regional staff for each resource developed.	
	Support training in areas that will directly impact and enhance the capacity of staff to service local authorities , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advanced interpersonal communications; ○ Facilitation and conflict resolution; ○ Crisis leadership; ○ Project and strategic planning; ○ First Nations cultural awareness; ○ Training related to local government structure and governance; and ○ Exercise development and design. 	