

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**  
**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015**  
**11am**

***(RDN COMMITTEE ROOM)***

**A G E N D A**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**DELEGATIONS**

**MINUTES**

- 2-3 Minutes of the regular Emergency Management Select Committee meeting held on October 28, 2014.

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**REPORTS**

- 4-8 December 2014 Winter Storm – Emergency Response Summary.  
Emergency Program Update Power Point (Verbal).

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM DELEGATIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Distribution: *M. Young (Chairperson); J. Stanhope; A. McPherson; H. Houle; B. Rogers; J. Fell; B. Veenhof; C. Haime; P. Thorkelsson; G. Garbutt; T. Armet; J. Drew; B. Ritter*

For Information Only: *M. Lefebvre; T. Westbroek; B. McKay; B. Bestwick; J. Kipp; J. Hong; W. Pratt; I. Thorpe; B. Yoachim; T. Graff; J. Hill; M. O'Halloran*



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**MINUTES OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2014 AT 5:00 PM  
IN THE RDN COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Present:**

Director M. Young	Chairperson
Director H. Houle	Electoral Area B
Director G. Holme	Electoral Area E
Director J. Fell	Electoral Area F
Director J. Stanhope	Electoral Area G
Director B. Veenhof	Electoral Area H
Director J. de Jong	District of Lantzville

**Regrets:**

Director A. McPherson	Electoral Area A
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**Also in Attendance:**

G. Garbutt	General Manager Strategic & Community Development
T. Armet	Manager Building, Bylaw & Emergency Planning
J. Drew	Emergency Coordinator
J. Brand	Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:59 pm by the Chair.

**DELEGATIONS**

**MINUTES**

MOVED Director Holme, SECONDED Director de Jong, that the minutes of the Emergency Management Select Committee meeting held on Friday, January 24, 2014, be adopted.

CARRIED

**REPORTS**

**Overview of the Emergency Table Top Exercise Held April 25, 2014**

Report was introduced by T. Armet. General discussion took place around the process of including elected officials in EOC exercises and future training that will be undertaken by elected officials.

MOVED Director Houle, SECONDED Director Veenhof, that the *Overview of the Emergency Table Top Exercise Held April 25, 2014* report be received for information.

CARRIED

**Emergency Operations Center Notification and Activation System**

Report was introduced by T. Armet.

MOVED Director Houle, SECONDED Director Veenhof, that the report on the *Emergency Operations Center Notification and Activation System* be received and that staff be directed to investigate the feasibility of implementing an automated mass notification system in the RDN and report back on available options for the Board's Consideration.

CARRIED

**Emergency Program Update Power Point (Verbal)**

Verbal presentation was given by J. Drew, Emergency Coordinator.

MOVED Director Stanhope, SECONDED Director Houle, that the verbal Emergency Program Update report be received.

CARRIED

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED Director Houle, SECONDED Director Veenhof, that this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

TIME: 6:01 PM

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CHAIRPERSON



RDN REPORT		
CAO APPROVAL		
EAP		
COW		
<b>FEB 24 2015</b>		
RHD		
BOARD		

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Tom Armet, Manager  
Building, Bylaw and Emergency Planning Services

**DATE:** February 23, 2015

**FROM:** Jani M. Drew, Emergency Coordinator

**FILE:** 7130-03-01 EMSC

**SUBJECT:** December 2014 Winter Storm - Emergency Response Summary

### PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the Regional District of Nanaimo’s (RDN) response to emergency events during the December 2014 winter storm.

### BACKGROUND

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014, local governments were advised by Emergency Management BC (EMBC) of an “extreme storm pattern” that would impact coastal regions of the Province. A High Streamflow Advisory was issued for Central Vancouver Island with minor flooding in low-lying areas anticipated. Extremely heavy rain and strong winds were forecast over a four day period. EMBC cautioned that landslides and localized flooding were potential outcomes, and with that information, the RDN’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) response status went to ‘Watch and Readiness Mode’.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, EMBC activated the Provincial Response Emergency Operations Center (PREOC) to support incidents of flooding around the province. Rainfall and wind warnings were issued, as well as another High Streamflow Advisory, which triggered an EOC Level 2 team activation (7-10 dedicated RDN staff). Multiple calls were received from the public about backyard and road flooding around the region. French Creek and Little Qualicum Rivers had debris jams that later released on their own without significant impacts. Whiskey, Nash, Crocker and Thames Creeks overflowed their banks and there were downed power lines in the Coombs, Nanoose Bay, Bow Horn Bay and Dashwood areas.

During this period of heavy rainfall, river levels began to rise, exacerbated by ‘King Tides’ and rain accumulations in the upper watersheds. The EOC was activated to level 3 and more staff was seconded to support emergency response requirements in relation to the following events.

#### ***Englishman River Flood Evacuation (Area ‘G’):***

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, Martindale Road flooded, which limited access to properties in that area. The Englishman River breached its banks and an earthen berm at Parry’s RV Park failed, causing significant flooding on the property. A Declaration of State of Local Emergency and Evacuation Order were issued to conduct the evacuation of residents of Parry’s RV Park. Arrowsmith Search and Rescue personnel

successfully evacuated 12 people and several pets. Oceanside Emergency Social Services (ESS) volunteers provided 72 hour recovery services to 7 of the evacuees.

***Nanaimo River Evacuation Alert (Area 'A'):***

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, heavy rain, high tides, localized flooding and wind warnings continued. After consultation with a Provincial Hydrologist, the RDN issued an Evacuation Alert jointly with Snuneymuxw First Nation as the Nanaimo River had breached its banks causing minor flooding of the Riverside Trailer Park (Wilkinson Road) and Raines Road . Alerts were delivered to impacted residents by Nanaimo Search and Rescue personnel. Snuneymuxw First Nation staff alerted residents along Raines Road. Water levels were continually monitored and once the risk of impact to local residents had subsided, the Evacuation Alert was cancelled.

***Little Qualicum River Village Landslide (Area 'F'):***

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, during the period of continual heavy rain and strong winds, a landslide occurred at 1761 Abbey Road in the Little Qualicum River Village strata development. The home on the property, located at the base of a hillside, was destroyed by the landslide. Two individuals were in the house at the time and one occupant had to be extracted by first responders and treated in hospital for minor injuries. For the protection of the public, the RCMP conducted an immediate, tactical evacuation of 12 homes in the area. The RDN issued a Declaration of State of Local Emergency and Evacuation Order for the homes in the immediate landslide area, and for 2 homes on Taylor's Walk, where an area of unconsolidated fill had failed.

The RDN engaged the services of a Geotechnical Engineer to conduct site inspections over the next three days to assess the scope and extent of the landslide, and to also determine a timeline for the safe return of evacuees to their homes. The RDN arranged for private security to control access to the landslide area to reduce further risk to residents. Oceanside Emergency Social Services volunteers provided 72 hours of ESS service to seven evacuees until they were able to return to their homes on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

***Little Qualicum River Flood Evacuation (Area 'G'):***

Also on December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Little Qualicum River breached its banks in the area of Riverbend Road, flooding the populated Cedar Grove Campground. The flood waters caused the failure of an earthen berm in the campground. Access to the site was impeded by flood waters and since heavy rain continued to be forecast, the RDN declared a State of Local Emergency and issued an Evacuation Order to the residents of the campground. Arrowsmith Search and Rescue subsequently evacuated 17 people and numerous pets. Oceanside Emergency Social Services volunteers supplied 72 hours of services to 12 evacuees. This was later extended by the Province as the evacuees could not return home after the initial 72 hours due to a broken water line which was later repaired by the property owner.

***Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Center (City of Nanaimo):***

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, RDN Staff detected two leaks at Morningside Park in one of the buried effluent lines, which discharges treated sewage from the Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre (GNPCC) to the Georgia Strait. The leaks were caused by heavy rains and high tides, which created excessive pressure on the aging pipe. The RDN responded immediately to the physical breaks, environmental impacts, and any

public safety concerns. Contractors were retained to repair the leaks and the first one was completed within a few hours. The location of the second leak, however, posed significant challenges for access and repair. Situated 8 metres below the foundation of an adjacent house, slope stability was a key concern for the safety of workers, the public, and property, and had to be addressed before the leak could be fixed. Subsequently, the RDN requested the support of Geotechnical Engineers to safely undertake repair measures, including the installation of temporary slope buttresses, tree removal, and a 1 day evacuation of an affected house on December 11. The RDN's laboratory technician monitored the area by sampling and testing multiple locations until it was determined that the incident no longer impacted the surrounding environment. On December 16<sup>th</sup>, the leak was successfully repaired and work to refill and recover the site proceeded.

In addition to the aforementioned geotechnical safety provisions, the RDN hired on-site security, installed fencing, and posted signage to prevent persons from entering the site. Two notices were issued to nearby houses, informing residents of the incident and requesting that they use caution in the area. Website updates and media correspondence were utilized to update the general public, where the RDN provided direct contact information in case of any concerns.

Due to the extent of the excavation necessary, the RDN worked closely with affected parties including the City of Nanaimo, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and Snaw-Naw-As First Nation to address any concerns they may have. The site is now secured and remediation work is underway. The effluent line is scheduled to be replaced as part of future upgrades to the GNPCC. While the leaks and responses described here are separate from the replacement project, they demonstrate the clear need for these infrastructural improvements to prevent future breaks from occurring.

#### ***Deep Bay Area Minor Land Sloughs (Area 'H'):***

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, EMCON reported clearing several small sloughs in the Shoreline Drive area. Since the RDN had in previous years responded to 3 landslides in this area, the Geotechnical Engineer engaged to inspect the Little Qualicum River Village landslide was directed to also assess the risk of slope instability along Shoreline Drive. The geotechnical assessment confirmed the area was not at imminent risk of landslide and with the diminishing rain, no further response actions were required to be taken at this site.

#### **Recovery:**

The RDN has a Recovery Services Agreement with the Canadian Red Cross and a referral was made to that agency by the RDN on behalf of the occupants of the home destroyed by the landslide in Little Qualicum River Village. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, the Province announced that Disaster Financial Assistance would be available for those residents, farms, businesses, charitable organizations and local governments that had experienced damage as a result of the storm system that affected the coastal regions of the Province.

#### **Response Demobilization and Debrief:**

The RDN de-activated its EOC on December 14<sup>th</sup>, once the storm system had passed through and no further response actions were required. Debriefings were held on January 6 and 7, 2015 with RDN EOC staff, first responders and other stakeholders that participated in the emergency responses. Valuable

feedback, lessons learned and general observations from those debriefings are being incorporated into new and existing guidelines. EOC procedures and agency communication protocols particularly between the EOC and Fire Departments was highlighted as issue that requires improvement.

Of particular note are the physical and logistical challenges that were experienced with the response to the landslide event in the Little Qualicum River Village area. Further work has since been undertaken by RDN Staff in conjunction with the Dashwood Fire Department and Arrowsmith Search and Rescue to develop comprehensive, site specific response guidelines for this geographically challenging residential area. The residents of the Meadowood/Corcan area are being invited to a meeting at the Lighthouse Community Centre scheduled for March 19, 2015. The goal of this community meeting is to update the residents on agency responses to the landslide event, future emergency planning, available resources and community feedback on preparedness and response.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. That this report be received for information.
2. That the report be received for information and further direction be provided to staff.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) reimburses local governments 100% for approved response costs and 80% for approved recovery costs. The RDN was issued Task Numbers for the winter storm relating to response costs to floods, landslide and infrastructure failure and repair. Claims submitted by the RDN totaling approximately \$178,000 are expected to be paid by EMBC. There were no other Emergency Program budget impacts as a result of the responses. Any costs associated with the activation of the RDN Emergency Operations Centre are absorbed by existing budgets.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Local authorities are required by Provincial legislation to be operationally ready at all times to respond to and recover from emergencies or disasters. Preparation is key in being operationally ready. The RDN is continuing to enhance its readiness through operational guideline updates, community and stakeholder feedback, improvements to communication systems and ongoing public education about seasonal hazards and risk reduction. During the response to the winter storm events, the RDN Solicitor provided legal reviews of the RDNs response actions to ensure its mandated legislative requirements were being met.



## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The Emergency Program has a proactive approach to building disaster resilience through an ongoing process of improving emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery systems. This approach is reflective of the Board's vision to improving regional resilience by overcoming vulnerabilities, working with regional partners, becoming self-sufficient and by enhancing the ability to respond to and manage emergencies at the local level. (*Working Together for A Resilient Future, 2013-15 Board Strategic Plan*).

## SUMMARY

A severe weather system with heavy rain, high winds and seasonally high tides took place during the week of December 9 to 11, 2014. The RDN activated its Emergency Operations Center to respond to localized flooding requiring evacuation, a significant landslide in Area 'F' and multiple reports of flooded backyards/roadways and overflowing creeks throughout the region. Local Emergency Declarations and Evacuation Orders were issued for three areas affected by significant weather related events.

The RDN provided short term recovery support via Emergency Social Services to evacuees, who were able to return to their homes once the weather system passed over the area. Following the events, debriefings were held with RDN EOC staff, first responders and other stakeholders that participated in the emergency responses. Valuable feedback, lessons learned and general observations from these debriefings are being incorporated into new and existing guidelines and the refinement of EOC procedures and agency communication protocols.


## RECOMMENDATION

That the report on the Regional District of Nanaimo's response to emergency events during the December 2014 winter storm be received.



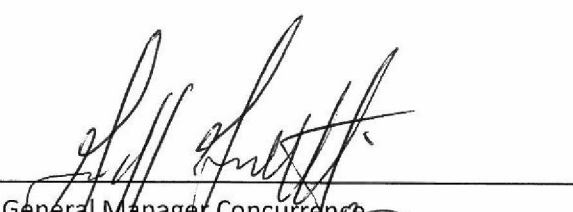
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Report Writer



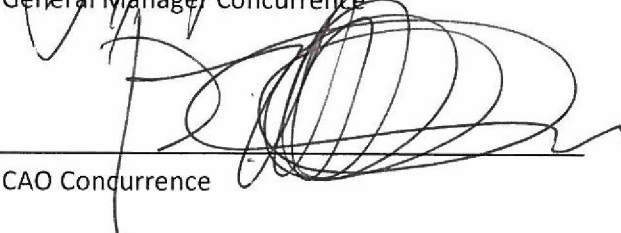
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Manager Concurrence



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General Manager Concurrence



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CAO Concurrence