



**Town/County of St. Paul,
Town of Elk Point,
Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay**

**Emergency Information Plan
2015**

"A Region Prepared"

Introduction

The Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and sub-plans have been developed by the Town/County of St. Paul; Town of Elk Point; and Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay with input and consultation from internal and external stakeholders. The plans were initiated in 2014, developed and endorsed in 2015.

These all hazard emergency response and recovery plans are a 'living' document. Given that, there will be a need for revisions and updating on a continuing and regular basis. This document is a sub-plan that is intended to support the REMP from which to build an effective; economic and coordinated response and recovery.

The integrated, region-wide program maximizes available resources, limits duplication and streamlines communication to provide the best solution for residents throughout the Region of St. Paul.

These plans meet the requirements for local authorities as set out in the Alberta *Emergency Management Act* and the Alberta *Government Emergency Management Regulation*.

For this plan to be effective, it is important that all users of the Regional Emergency Management Plan and sub-plans will interpret it reasonably and responsibly and in the best interest of safety.

For information or to request copies of the Regional Emergency Management Plan or sub-plans contact:

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Amendments/Revisions

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Distribution List

[illegible]

Revision Request Form

Request Date: _____

Section Number(s): _____

Page Number(s): _____

Description of Revision: _____

Change requested by: _____

Reason for request: _____

Request reviewed by Director of Emergency Management:

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Approved: ☐

Approved with the following changes: ☐

Not Approved: ☐

Revision #: _____

Revision Date: _____

Distributed: _____

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1 - Emergency Information Plan

1.1. Activation Authority

Objective

This plan will ensure that in the event of an emergency, the County/Town of St. Paul, Town of Elk Point, and Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay will give prompt, effective, and coordinated information to the public and media. It will also ensure that staff and resources are in place quickly to carry out the responsibilities outlined. This plan is designed to work in conjunction with the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP). During an emergency the ECC needs to have an accurate picture of the situation at the site. All available means of communication will be pressed into action at this time to get the desired information. These may include radio, telephone, cell phones, and computers.

Use

This plan will be used when the County/Town of St. Paul, Town of Elk Point, and/or Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay experience(s) an emergency situation that requires accurate and timely information to be coordinated and released to the public. At all times, the County/Town of St. Paul, Town of Elk Point, and Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay will take a proactive role with the public and media. One of the major priorities is to get critical information to the public through the media. The plan's information principles are designed to strategically guide the way in which we communicate with staff, the community and media during a disaster or emergency.

- What information will be collected and updated
 - The need for appropriate messaging
- How information will be collected and updated
 - The need for speed, getting information out as soon as possible
- How information will be controlled and distributed
 - Need for coordination of municipal and other government services
- How information will be stored

Authority

At the request of the Regional Director of the Emergency Management Agency (RDEM) or designate, the Public Information Officer (PIO) has the authority to call in the communications resources required to meet the needs of the public and media effectively during and after an emergency. All public information staff will report to the lead PIO, who will act as the primary communications link between the public information and emergency operations staff. The lead PIO will be in charge of their staff. It will be identified by the lead PIO who will be the information channel to the onsite spokesperson.

Once information is received at the ECC, it is vital that the information is handled efficiently, therefore only one person will be the overall lead PIO.

Set-up

The setup of the emergency information system will depend on the scale of the emergency and the anticipated level of public and media interest. If the situation warrants, the public and media inquiry function may be combined for telephone calls only. If these two telephone inquiry functions are combined, a Media Centre will have to be set up to accommodate media interviews and news conferences. All components of the plan will need to be implemented when a Level 3 emergency (as defined in the REMP) has been declared. See Appendix C for Checklists.

Be Prepared

You should be prepared for visits by ministers and senior elected officials. The public information officer should be delegated to meet such visitors, ensure they are thoroughly briefed and, if they are to meet the media, be properly introduced.

1.2. RESPONSIBILITIES

During an emergency, the public information function will attend to the following key duties:

- Assist with activation of the REMP
- Coordination of public information
- Public notification
- Media relations (schedule first news conference as soon after an event as possible)
- Public inquiry response and referral
- Maintenance of information line
- Make arrangements for local authority to visit the ECC
- Maintenance of accurate logs
- Prepare self-help information for rapid distribution
- Media information monitoring/coordinating
- Coordination with Ham Radio Operator Club, if required
- Coordination of messenger services, as necessary
- Provide public relations support at the site as required.
- Information gathering

ECC

When the RDEM or designate has assembled a team in the ECC, the lead PIO will be asked to report to the ECC immediately. After being briefed on the emergency, the PIO will call in the necessary staff required to manage the needs of the public and media. Other staff may be put on standby.

The lead PIO will work closely with the ECC Section Chiefs in the ECC. Communicators in the ECC will be equipped with a telephone, two-way radio, a computer, a fax machine, and a photocopier.

Communications between the ECC and emergency site generally will use the common municipal radio network. Additional radio communications may be accessed through:

- a. Local industrial, commercial and general service band (CB) resources.
- b. Alberta Amateur Radio Emergency Services (AARES) – Ham Radio where required
- c. Alberta Municipal Affairs

All messages received at the ECC are entered by each member on the Communications Log. If a message is considered significant, it must be passed to the Information Officer who will then place the information on an events display board so that all members in the ECC are aware of the particular item. Significant events are this items which are important for the conduct and planning of the operation and include such things as: declaration of a SOLE, road closures, locations of Reception Centers, etc.

It is also important that the public be kept informed of the emergency in a manner that is both timely and factual. Therefore, the ECC must be able to effectively communicate its message to the public.

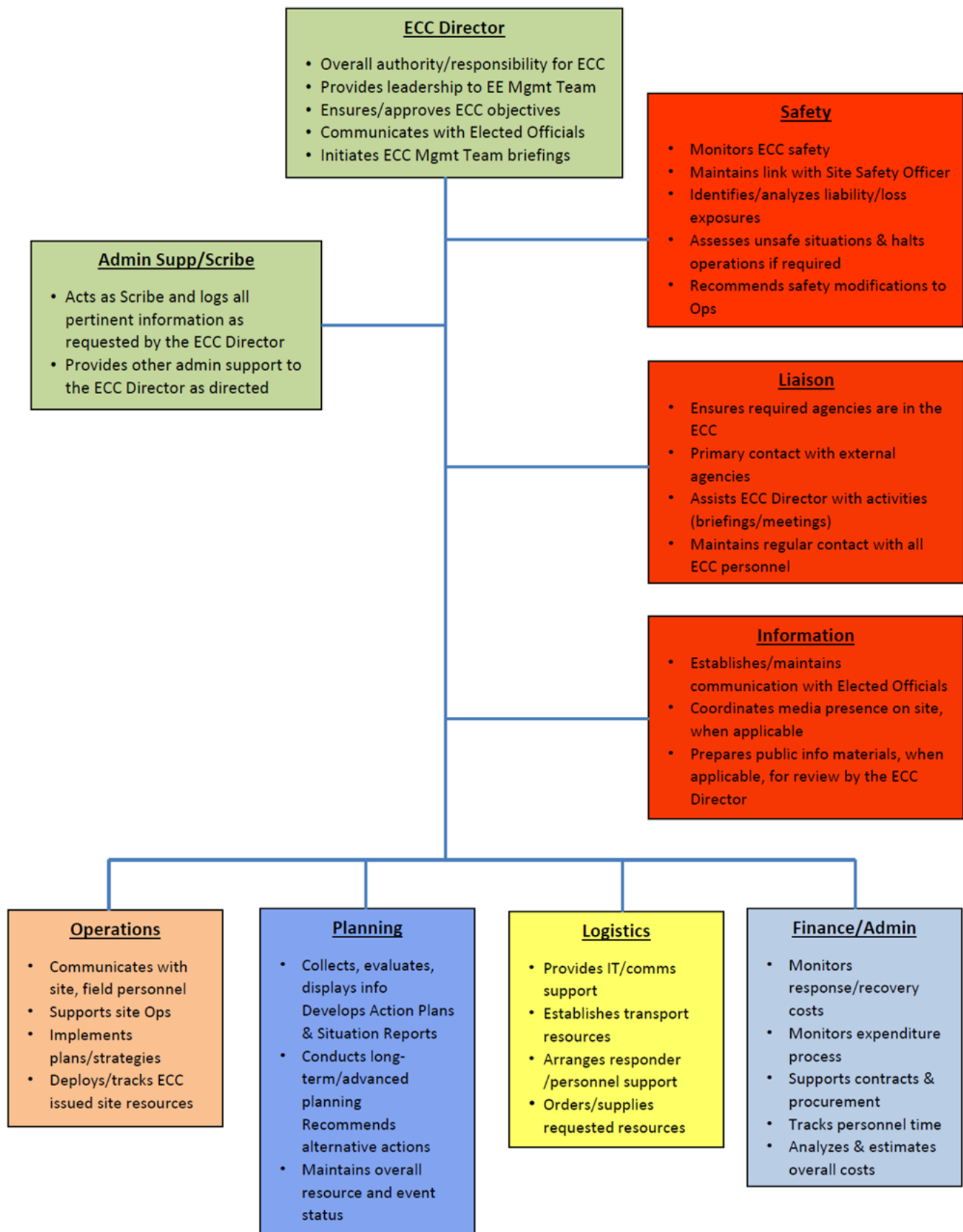
The media (both print and electronic) will be an important pipeline to the public at large in disseminating news. Therefore, it is imperative that you keep the media informed of facts on an on-going basis with news briefings and bulletins.

One of the necessary items to consider in preparing for an emergency is rumor and misinformation. Monitoring of both the news media and incoming public calls will enable you to be aware of rumors or innuendo which could have consequences for the public safety and should be corrected promptly.

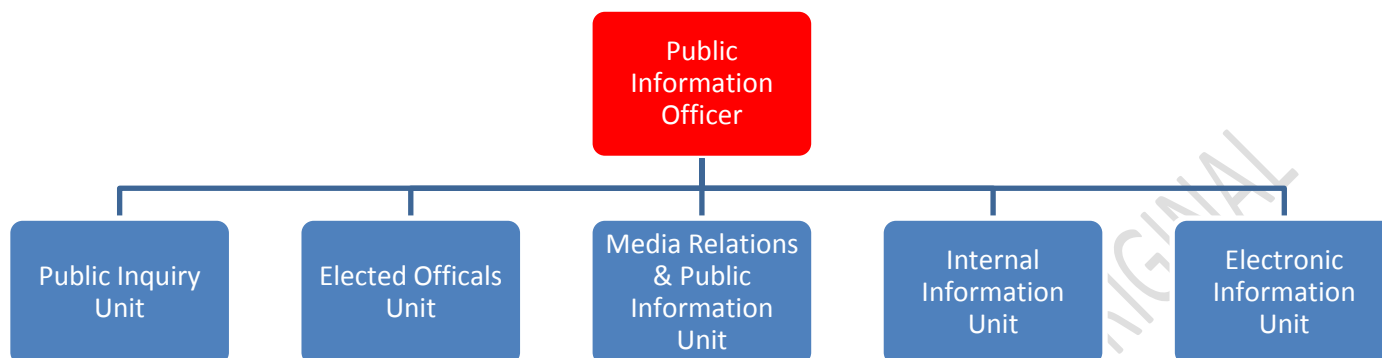
Instant Activation

Provisions must be made for immediate contact with key media by the PIO while an alert is underway, even if only to acknowledge that a situation leading to a potential emergency exists and to say that appropriate steps are being taken and additional information will be passed on as it becomes available.

This indicates that someone is in control. In conjunction with the DEM or designate, the PIO will be the spokesperson. Find out facts. Don't speculate, and above all **DON'T** lie to the media. With modern methods of communications and transportation, some crisis can attract large numbers of media representatives, often international. Some networks think nothing of dispatching a fixed wing aircraft or helicopter to an emergency or disaster site. Be prepared to be surprised. Establish media ground rules at the outset.



Emergency Information Team (EIT)



Duties of the Public Information Officer

- Reporting to the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) RDEM or designate, the Public Information Officer directly manages all public information activities during the emergency:
- Upon notification, activates the Emergency Information Team
- Direct the activation of the Emergency Information Plan
- Collect and analyze information received from various sources
- Write media releases
- Implement the Emergency Broadcast Release Process
- Consult with and obtain concurrence from the RDEM or designate on the need for news briefings and conferences, the granting of media interviews, the status of media monitoring, recommended responses to media misinformation and rumor, the content of official statements, announcements and other forms of public communication, and the release of any disaster-related information to the public
- Apprise the ECC of any significant information received by the EIT from members of the public, the media, local authority or other Municipal Emergency Agency members
- Delegate responsibilities and provide direction to the EIT with respect to production and distribution of informational material, media monitoring, media liaison, and other essential information functions
- Ensure that the required material and logistical support is available at all times, through on-going liaison with local authority and other members of the ECC
- Supervise wind-down of emergency information operations
- Maintain Public Information Officer ECC log

Duties of the Media Relations Coordinator

Reporting to the PIO the Media Relations Coordinator is the link and buffer between all media representatives sent in to cover the emergencies first hand and the emergency response team. Specific duties include:

- May act as official spokesperson with approval from the PIO
- Establish and supervise operations of the media center
- Issue passes/I.D. to all bona-fide media representatives assigned to direct coverage of the emergency by their news organizations and keep an up-to-date accreditation register
- Provide authorized information to media through news releases, briefings, updates, and by responding to specific media inquires
- Advise the PIO and other members of the EIT and ECC of any significant information or insights obtained from accredited media, public inquiry, media monitoring, site public inquiry, site or other various supervisor or other various sources
- Organize interviews with authorized officials, formal briefings or news conferences, site visits, etc.
- Provide technical and logistics support to accredited media representatives
- Set up, operate and staff auxiliary information facilities as required
- Assist as required with the preparation of major statements and announcements
- Manage a satellite media center at the site if it is decided to establish one
- Perform other duties as directed by the PIO

Duties of the Electronic Information Coordinator

With direction from the PIO, the Electronic Information Coordinator will ensure the provision of public information assistance through the establishment and coordination of all event-related Website operations. This will include the maintenance and operations of:

- www.town.stpaul.ab.ca
- www.county.stpaul.ab.ca
- www.elkpoint.ca
- www.svhorseshoebay.com
- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Alberta Emergency Alert
- Region of St. Paul Notification/Alert System

Duties of the Public Inquiry Centre (PIC) Coordinator

With direction from the PIO, the Coordinator's main responsibility is to establish and co-ordinate operations in the Public Information Center (PIC) which manages all calls from the public. Specific duties include:

- Identify and arrange for necessary staff and equipment resources in order to operate the PIC
- Prepare fact sheets/bulletins on a timely and regular basis for internal and external distribution both during and after the emergency
- Maintain contact with ECC and other members of EIT, and facilitate the exchange of information with other departmental call centers on a consistent basis
- Notify the appropriate members of EIT regarding any significant information reported by the public
- Participate in status meetings
- Ensure that a log system for recording the calls and follow-up action at the PIC is maintained
- Participate in post-crisis debriefings
- Assist with summary reports/presentations to officials
- Participate in recognizing those who assisted with the response
- Perform other duties as directed by the PIO
- Liaise with the Electronic Information Unit Coordinator for critical information to be placed on the appropriate Websites to reduce the number of calls to the PIC

Duties of the Internal Information Coordinator

Reporting to the PIO, the Internal Information Coordinator's primary responsibility, working with a team that includes human resource staff and expertise, is to establish and coordinate all communication to Town/County employees to ensure they receive up-to-date information on decisions and actions that affect them as a result of the Town/County's response during an emergency or crisis. Duties include:

- Serve as the primary internal communication support to EIT
- Provide logistical, research, advisory, and communication support to EIT, regarding human resource and employee issues and concerns
- Liaise with human resource sectors to assess employee needs and concerns and to collect pertinent information in response
- Ensure the establishment and maintenance of ongoing communication to all staff re: human resource issues, requirements, concerns, including potential use of telephone hotline, Intranet site, email, bulletin boards, and/or other communication vehicles
- Monitor employee response to communication approaches, and adjust as required
- Maintain an accurate record of activities performed by team members

ONLINE & PRINTED VERSION IS NOT THE ORIGINAL

Duties of the Elected Officials Coordinator

Reporting to the PIO, the Elected Officials Coordinator will be responsible for the sensitive coordination of all elected officials who wish to tour the emergency scene and who wish to make statements to the media. This position requires exceptional political acuity. Duties include:

- Arrange event tours, media briefings and press conferences for elected officials and their staff
- Liaise with the site Information Officer, RDEM or designate, and PIO.

1.3. Notification

Immediate notification is conducted as follows:

Internal audiences would include:

- Emergency Coordination Center personnel
- First responder groups
- Council
- Town/County staff

External audiences would include:

- Family members of Town/County staff directly involved
- Neighbouring communities
- General public
- Media
- People directly impacted by the emergency or crisis
- Emergency response and recovery groups (i.e., industry, school board, provincial agencies)

When notification that a crisis has occurred, the RDEM or designate will immediately contact the PIO to jointly establish the level of communications support that may be required to assist operations. All members of the communications team will report to the PIO, who will act as the primary communications link with the RDEM or designate, operational staff, and local authority.

At the onset of a crisis the following information will need to be communicated to all audiences:

- An incident has occurred.
- Nature, location and time of incident.
- Status of public safety.
- Actions to be taken.
- Actions being taken to manage the crisis.
- How and when further information will be available.
- Where to go for further information.

In addition to the information needs of the above, audiences will require personalized messages as follows:

Audience	Responsibility	Information Needs
Council	PIO/RDEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential issues that may arise. • Potential media and public interest. • Media and public activities. • Information strategies and key messages
Stakeholder Communicators (i.e., police, industry, government)	PIO/Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community's role/responsibility in the crisis. • Potential issues that may impact their organization/clients. • Potential media and public interest. • Key messages & communications strategies. • Potential joint information strategies. • Immediate or potential support/action required.
Staff	PIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on staff. • Actions staff must take. • Support required. • Impact on operations.
Family members of Municipal staff directly involved	PIO/Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on their family member. • Actions they should take. • Reassurances on issues with regard to the safety and wellbeing of staff members and others who have been impacted.
People directly impacted	PIO/ESS Director/AEA Users/Mass Notification Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they can get help. • How they can help themselves. • Safety precautions to take. • Where to access support from ESS
Media	PIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they can help emergency operations. • Safety precautions/actions the public needs to take. • How their information, interviews and picture needs will be met.
General public	PIO/AEA Users/Mass Notification Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety precautions to take. • How they can help emergency response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ stay away from the area impacted. ✓ stay off the phone – keep roads and phone lines available for emergency use. ✓ remain calm. ✓ stay tuned to local media for further information.

TELEPHONES

The following telephone lines have been designated for emergency management during an incident (incoming calls are blocked out):

Information was removed for the protection of confidential material; is included in the operating manual.

MEDIA CENTRE

A Media Centre will be set up; well-marked and staffed when high media interest is expected. In this case a Media Centre will be established in the effected Municipality in a location away from the incident or emergency location. The location will be determined as the incident or emergency dictates.

Ensure a method of registration or the use of passes has been identified and used for tracking purposes. The PIO will appoint a Media Centre Coordinator. As media interest dictates, the appropriate number of Operators will staff the phone lines to respond to media requests. Pin copies of the new releases in a prominent spot in the media center. Number the releases in the order they were delivered

PUBLIC INQUIRY

When the public needs to be kept informed of the emergency situation, a Public Inquiry Room will be set up and staffed in a location as the emergency or incident dictates. The size of the emergency situation will determine the appropriate number of communicators that will staff the phone lines to respond to any requests or calls the public may have.

The Public Inquiry Room may have a separate incoming telephone line to receive calls from communications staff at the ECC or Media Centre. As well, the Public Inquiry Room should have close access to a photocopier and fax. Pin copies of the new releases in a prominent spot in the public inquiry room. Number the releases in the order they were delivered

SITE

The PIO may appoint a Communicator(s) to the emergency site(s) to look after the needs of the media and report back to the PIO regarding on site activities.

1.4. Media Relations Policy

(Ensure all staff know the policy prior to an emergency)

The PIO will be the only person to speak on the community's overall crisis response and recovery efforts. Political, strategic operational decisions and policy issues will be communicated to the media through the PIO.

The PIO will indicate when media briefings will take place (ie. On the hour every hour), taking media deadlines into consideration. It is advisable to tape all media briefings. The timing and format of the information released to the media can be of paramount importance to those affected by the emergency. "Doing it right" from the beginning will save ill-affordable time and frustration.

Ensure that any public health safety notices are brought to the media's attention and are updated at each briefing. Prepare background briefings for late arriving media. Pin copies of the new releases in a prominent spot in the media center. Number the releases in the order they were delivered.

The RDEM, in conjunction with the PIO, will assign key operational personnel to support the PIO and speak about matters within their area of expertise. Staff should refrain from speaking to the media on political, strategic operational decisions or policy issues.

In their official emergency response capacity, Town/County employees with an emergency response or recovery role (i.e. Fire Chief or designate) may agree to be interviewed by the media with the approval from the PIO provided they only speak about matters within their area of responsibility. At no time will these people speak to the media on political, strategic operational decisions or policy issues.

Region of St. Paul employees, who don't have a role in emergency response or recovery efforts, should not speak to the media about the emergency unless they have received clearance through the PIO.

Response Personnel...

- May seek advice in advance from the PIO if desired or feasible.
- May respond or refer the information request to the PIO.
- Must refer questions that fall outside of their personal experience or expertise to the PIO.
- Must inform the PIO of the interview, and questions that fell outside of their area of expertise.
- Must ensure the accuracy of any information provided.
- Must ensure interviews are on the record and for attribution by name/title unless otherwise authorized.
- Must inform the PIO of the results of the interview and any speculative questions.

Initial Statement to the Media

This statement can be used to address the media to show that the Region of St. Paul is dealing with the situation until further information is available. It can also be put on websites, given to phone attendants or put on the Region of St. Paul's answering machine.

"Regarding the news reports of _____ (name of event), this is what we can confirm at the present time. At approximately _____ (time) we were alerted that there was a

_____ (Briefly describe event-fire, shooting, explosion, etc.) at _____ (Location). We have called for assistance from (Police, Fire, Ambulance, etc.) and have notified management who are en-route to assist. At this point we do not have any details regarding what happened, but we will update you as soon as we have additional verified information. Please bear with us in the meantime."

Media Relations Guidelines

When dealing with the media in an official capacity:

Never

- Respond to media inquiries that fall outside personal experience or expertise, unless otherwise approved.
- Grant an interview not sanctioned/approved by the PIO
- Undermine the safety of response personnel or the success of response and recovery operation.
- Speculate about events, incidents, issues or future policy decisions.
- Offer personal opinions.
- Discuss advice given to superiors

Always

- Seek approval of PIO prior to offering an interview
- Seek advice and support from the PIO when desired or when in doubt about how to respond.
- Agree to be interviewed only if you personally want to do it.
- Respect the principal of security, policy, the judicial process and laws governing the disclosure of information.

Communications Support

The PIO (and/or designates) will support media relations activities as follows:

- Manage and coordinate requests for media interviews.
- Deliver key messages and provide updates to the media.

- Set up media interviews and news briefings with spokesperson/area experts.
- Work with response agencies that have a need to release information to the media about the crisis; research their position, what they are saying and how joint communication efforts can be managed.
- Brief and prepare personnel for media interviews/briefings.
- Prepare and distribute key messages and communication pieces.

Preparing for Media Interviews

When possible and appropriate, the PIO and designates will prepare the Region of St. Paul personnel for media interviews/briefings as follows:

- Situation update.
- Prepare "talking paper" on primary points you want to make.
- Anticipate questions--prepare responses.
- Practice answering questions.
- Needs of reporter(s) – story angle, type of reporter, reporter's attitude, questions likely to be asked, other organizations or people the reporter will be interviewing.
- Public's attitudes (general public, stakeholder organizations, special interest groups).
- Key messages.
- Public Directives – i.e. listen to local station 97.7 FM and surrounding area stations for updates.
- Issues to avoid.
- Interview or briefing logistics (time, location, format, and time limit).
- Cover controversial areas ahead of time.
- Know who will be interviewing you, if possible.
- Determine how much time is available.

Audiences often remember impressions, not facts.

Do's and Don'ts During the Interview process

- Do build bridges.
- Do use specifics.
- Do use analogies.
- Do use contrasts, comparisons.
- Do be enthusiastic/animated.
- Do be your casual likable self.
- Do be a listener.
- Do be cool.

- Do be correct.
- Do be anecdotal.
- If you don't have the answer or can't answer, do admit it and move on to another topic.
- Don't fall for that "A or B" dilemma.
- Don't accept "what if" questions.
- Don't accept "laundry list" questions.
- Don't go off the record.
- Don't think you have to answer every question.
- Don't speak for someone else --beware of the absent-party trap.

Control

During a crisis, the dissemination of information (or failure to do so), can be matter of life and death. Official statements and published stories have also been known to end up as evidence at inquests or court cases, causing embarrassment and sometimes worse to their authors. All official statements, oral and written, will be recorded and a log kept of all conversations with either officials or the media, which involve transmissions of new information. Resources must also be earmarked for media monitoring, as a means of being able to counter rumors and inaccuracies, and of tracking public opinion on the conduct of emergency operations. It is imperative that the PIO be in full possession of the facts, and that they be up-front with the media, and if asked for which the answer is not known, volunteer to find out quickly.

Key Messaging Overview

Key messages will help the region of St. Paul effectively communicate to all audiences. Although key messages will change and evolve throughout emergency response and recovery operations, the messages should include:

1. The Regions agenda and priorities.
2. Fact about what went well.
3. Facts that refute negatives.
4. Facts that support the Regions story.
5. Public Info/ Directives.

Key Messages

1. A message of empathy for the impact the crisis has on people or the environment. (This does not mean the Region is taking responsibility for the incident – only showing compassion toward those who have been impacted).
2. The Regions first priority is for public safety.

3. We are working cooperatively with partner response agencies (name agencies) to effectively manage the crisis and minimize its impact on people, the environment and our community as a whole.
4. Include a message about what is being done to manage the situation.

Managing Pubic Information

1. Hold your first news conference as soon after the event as possible.
2. Set media guidelines regarding accessibility to information, length of question periods, conference/briefings, site tours, etc.
3. Ensure good communication with frequent “updates” on your bulletin board or white board.
4. Ensure a messenger is available to assist media whenever possible.
5. Media pooling is the practice of selecting a small number of media personnel to represent print and electronic news organizations on the emergency site. A good practice is to have the media select (from their own ranks) one print journalist, one still photographer, one video cameraman and one audio technician. Media pooling is used when access to the emergency site is limited. Otherwise the media will expect full access to the site.
6. Ensure monitoring of print electronic coverage for rumor control, and awareness - you can contract the monitoring to an outside company or install your own electronic equipment plus monitoring personnel.
7. Ensure you have “expert” spokespersons available for validity and credibility.
8. Ensure you have bilingual capabilities, as appropriate. Certain circumstances may warrant professional translation services

News Conference Guidelines

When you notify media of news conferences/availabilities, be sure to define what kind of event you are having. News conferences are held to announce something for the first time. Press availabilities are held simply to make individuals available to answer questions or demonstrate something.

1. Don't call unnecessary news conferences/availabilities. If it's not worth their time, the media will only be angered.
2. If holding a news conference, try to tell media in advance some details of what you will be announcing.
3. Gauge the size of your crowd carefully when reserving a room; better to have too much than too little space. Make sure microphones, chairs, lighting and water are in place at least 30 minutes prior to the event.
4. Decide format in advance -- who will introduce speakers, who decides when question/answer period ends, and other details.

5. Decide in advance whether handouts are needed. If speaker is giving a talk for which there is a text, you may want to wait and hand out material after the talk so media will stay and listen. However, it's advisable to tell the media you will provide a text of the speech so they are not irritated by having to take unnecessary notes.
6. Check to see what else is happening in the region or community before scheduling a press conference.
7. Consider whether you need to let other organizations and agencies know you are having a news conference. (You may wish to invite others to attend or participate in your event.)
8. Decide who will maintain control at the news conference, who will decide where cameras are set up, who sits where.
9. Try to plan the length of the news conference, but be flexible.
10. Consider the time of the news conference. If you want to make the noon, 6 p.m. or 11 p.m. TV and radio news, you need to allow time for crews to travel and edit tape.
11. If you are going to set restrictions on an event such as limited photo access, try to put the restrictions in writing and communicate to the media at least 24 hours in advance.

Media Relations Reminders

In General

1. Always return media calls. The more co-operative you appear the better.
2. Communicate with the media -- talk to them as well as listen to them. During crisis time, you may learn a great deal from the media that can be useful to you in further dealing with the crisis.
3. Avoid antagonizing the media. A short tone at a press conference, during a phone call, or elsewhere can affect your future relationship with an individual or other media who may hear the conversation.
4. Consider establishing a dedicated call-in phone line that will offer information to media or others. Information on news conferences, rumour control information, newly acquired information, can be placed on a tape that can be updated. This is particularly useful when regular phone lines are tied up with calls.
5. Consider how information you release to media may affect other agencies, businesses or individuals. If you say things that may result in media calling other agencies, call those agencies first to warn them of impending calls.
6. When talking to the media, be sure to give credit to other agencies, groups or individuals working on the crisis, including your own staff.
7. Try to be pro-active with new information. Even those things may be frantic; if you acquire new information regarding the crisis, reach out to the media.
8. Be honest. Don't make false or misleading statements.

How to Handle Yourself During A TV Talk Show Interview

1. Talk "over" lavalier microphone.
2. Audio check-- use regular voice.
3. If makeup is offered, use it.
4. Sit far back in the chair, back erect...but lean forward to appear enthusiastic and force yourself to use hands.
5. Remember... TV will frame your face--be calm, use high hand gestures, if possible.
6. Keep eyes on interviewer-- not on camera.
7. Smile, be friendly.

Tips on Appearance

1. Avoid wearing pronounced stripes, checks or small patterns.
2. Grey, brown, blue or mixed colored suits/dresses are best.
3. Grey, light-blue, off-white or pastel shirts or blouses are best.
4. Avoid having hair cut right before interview.

How to Respond During a Newspaper Interview

1. Obtain advanced knowledge of interview topics.
2. Make sure you are prepared in detail; print reporters are often more knowledgeable than broadcast reporters and may ask more detailed questions.
3. Begin the interview by making your point in statement by making your major points in statement form.
4. Try to maintain control of the interview. Don't let reporter wear you down.
5. Set a time limit in advance.
6. Don't be so relaxed that you say something you wish you hadn't.
7. Avoid jargon or professional expressions.
8. Reporter may repeat self in different ways to gain information you may not want to give.
9. Don't answer inappropriate questions; simply say it is "not an appropriate topic for you to address at this time," or "it's proprietary" for example.
10. Be prepared for interruptions with questions...it is legitimate for reporters to do that.
11. Do not speak "off the record."
12. Remember, the interview lasts as long as a reporter is there.

After The Interview

1. You can ask to check technical points, but do not ask to see advance copy of the story.
2. Never try to go over reporter's head to stop a story.
3. Do not send gifts to reporters--it is considered unethical for them to accept them.

SAMPLE

“The Region of St. Paul has an effective emergency response plan in place. We have well-trained personnel who have practiced and tested the rollout of the emergency response plan. The last drill took place on (date). Our personnel are now doing what they have been trained to do. Everything that can be done, will be done’.

- The Region of St. Paul is taking a proactive role with regard to the release of information.
- New information will be released to all interested parties when it becomes available. (Add any new information)
- Ongoing public information about the situation will be posted on our web sites at:
 - www.town.stpaul.ab.ca
 - www.county.stpaul.ab.ca
 - www.elkpoint.ca
 - www.svhorseshoebay.com
 - or listen to local station 97.7 FM and surrounding area stations for updates
 - Facebook and Twitter

Additional messages will:

- Support what is being done to manage the crisis.
- Support what was done in advance of the crisis to reduce its occurrence and impact.
- Reassure the public and help reduce their emotional reaction to the crisis.
- Contain safety information.
- Help emergency response personnel do their job.

The municipal websites can be a great tool in providing information to the public, either directly or through the media. In order for this to be effective, the information must always remain current and relevant. A prominent link must be created on the main website page (not buried several pages down) and updates must be posted daily or hourly with event/disaster-specific information.

A public meeting will allow the community to express concerns, ask questions, share comments and the local authority to provide event specific information. A clear purpose, agenda and process for the meeting should be outlined and communicated in advance to all. Depending on the public atmosphere, large meetings can intensify conflicts rather than resolve controversies if not handled properly. If this might be an issue, consider smaller group meetings to better focus and manage the process.

Meetings may also be held with selected members of the public (i.e., evacuees). Regular/daily meetings of this nature may go a long way in addressing issues early before they could become major problems. During large events, these types of information meetings could be held at an ESS Reception Centre or other location where those impacted by the event may already be gathering.

2 – Crisis Information System

2.1. Levels of Information Response

At the onset of the crisis, the RDEM or designate in conjunction with the PIO, will determine the potential level of public and media interest in the crisis. At this time, the PIO will determine what resources will be required to effectively manage communication issues. The CAO will be updated throughout the process.

The set-up of the crisis information team will depend on the scale of the crisis, and the anticipated level of public concern and media interest. Only those resources that are needed to effectively respond to the incident will be brought in. All key components of the crisis information system will need to be implemented in a Level III incident, where public concern and media interest is extremely high. Additional information resources may be necessary to properly manage a crisis (i.e. other municipalities, regions, or contracted agency or services).

Level I

An incident has occurred that does not pose a threat to public safety or the reputation of the community; its elected officials, administration or emergency response personnel.

- Information needs are on an internal basis.
- There is little or no interest from the public or media.
- The CAO can manage all internal and external information requests or notifications.

Level II

An incident has occurred that may potentially impact or pose a threat to public safety or the reputation of the community; its elected officials, administration or emergency response personnel.

- There is a threat to public safety.
- A serious injury or fatality has occurred.
- There is a threat or minor disruption to the public or a sector of the public.
- There is moderate interest or concern from the media, general public or other audiences.
- External stakeholder audiences are involved and there is some local or political involvement.
- There may be a question with regard to the community's liability.

Level III

An incident has resulted in multiple injuries or fatalities and has the potential to threaten the community or the reputation of elected officials, administration and emergency response personnel on many levels.

- There is a serious threat to public safety.
- Multiple injuries or fatalities have occurred.
- There is serious economic threat to the community.
- There is high interest from the public, media and many other audiences.
- All levels of political involvement are high.
- The Region's performance or reputation may be in question.

Telecommunications

Among all 3 levels of ECC activation, there must be a dedicated effort to ensure that telecommunications systems, planning and information flows are being accomplished in an effective manner. Standard protocols and terminology are used at all levels. Plain English for all telecommunications is used to reduce the confusion that can be created when radio codes are used. Standard terminology and formats are used to transmit information, including strategic modes of operation, situation reports, logistics, tactical operations and emergency notifications of imminent safety concerns. Agencies establish operational guidelines to support the escalation of operations from small to large or from routine to unusual without requiring major changes or transitions. Normal site communications typically involve two-way radio and cellular telephones. The following are telecommunications methods for the 3 levels of ECC activation:

- E-mail
- Fax
- Telephone (land line),
- Radio Telephone (cellular, satellite)
- Two-way radio (amateur, commercial) and
- Video conferencing

Agencies develop their information systems to provide reserve capacity for unusually complex situations where effective information could become critical. An integrated information plan is developed as part of each action plan. In drafting the information protocols, agencies give priority to the transmission of emergency messages and notification of imminent hazards over routine information.

FORMS

Refer to Appendix A for additional information regarding the Information Plan and necessary forms. The emergency communication equipment that will be used to meet information needs during an emergency can be found in Appendix B. Information Checklists can be found in Appendix C.

APPENDIX A

The Region of St. Paul Official Statement

Information was removed for the protection of confidential material; is included in the operating manual.

INFORMATION LOG	
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Event:

Date:

Radio Operator:

Page No.:

[illegible]

Signature:	
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Contact Log

A log should be established to record all telephone calls from the media or other parties inquiring about the crisis. This will help to ensure that the many call-backs required are not overlooked. It will also assist in the post-crisis analysis.

Event Name: _____

Date: _____

Call Status Action taken or required – By whom?								
Request/ Questions								
Callback Number(s)								
Reporters Name								
Media Outlet								
Time								

Media Inquiry Form

Date: _____

Time _____

☐ Television

☐ Newspaper

☐ Radio

☐ Other _____

Affiliation: _____

Reporter: _____

Telephone #: _____

Fax #: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Update Requested

Focus of Request:

☐ Interview Requested

☐ Pictures/Footage Requested

☐ Request Complete

Request Referred To: _____

Spokesperson: _____

Spokesperson Contact No: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Location of Interview: _____

Airtime/Publication Date: _____

Call Taken By: _____ (Name of Information Officer)

APPENDIX B

Equipment and Supplies for Communications (Media/Public)

Recommend equipment for consideration at media center and public information center:

- 1 laptop computer – LAN and Internet Access
- 1 Printer
- 1 Fax
- Access to photocopier
- 2 telephones (land-line)
- 2 cellular telephones (spare battery and charger)
- Two-way Radio (to communicate with the Site Info)
- Access to a satellite telephone (as required)
- 1 workstation
- Office supplies (binder, paper, pens, pencils, highlighters, stapler, staples, etc.)
- News release stationery or electronic template available on the laptop
- Maps
- TV/VCR/DVD and cable connections
- Tape Recorder with batteries
- AM/FM Radio
- Tables and Chairs
- Digital Camera
- Name Tags/Media Accreditation Tags
- Podium, Microphone, Flags
- Flip Charts
- Event Boards
- PA system or bullhorn
- Large Regional Map with plastic overlay
- Regional Emergency Management Plan
- Regional Emergency Information Plan

APPENDIX C

Critical Steps – The First Hours

Information was removed for the protection of confidential material; is included in the operating manual.

News Conference/Media Briefing Planning Checklist

ONLINE & PRINTED VERSION IS NOT THE ORIGINAL

References

The following references were used in the development of this Emergency Management Plan:

- Province of Alberta, Alberta Emergency Management Agency – Alberta Emergency Plan
- Prince Albert Crisis Communications Plan
- B.C. Emergency Response Information Plan
- Canadian Center for Emergency Preparedness – Crisis Communications Plan