



Building Resiliency Together

# Indigenous Emergency Management

Presentation to the Assembly First Nations – National Housing & Infrastructure Forum  
October 31, 2017 – Montreal, QC



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## Objectives

- Provide background and context to the Assemble of First Nations (AFN) on Public Safety Canada's (PS) approach to engaging Indigenous peoples on emergency management (EM); and,
- Discuss upcoming engagement and partnership opportunities with the AFN to seek Indigenous perspective and input on key EM initiatives such as the Indigenous Inventory, EM Strategy for Canada, the Public Safety Broadband Network, and Search and Rescue.



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## FPT Approach to Indigenous Emergency Management

- In May 2016, Federal, Provincial, and Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for EM agreed to work together to enhance engagement with Indigenous people in developing solutions to strengthen Indigenous EM.
  - They also endorsed the PS plan to engage partners on strengthening search and rescue (SAR) capacities in Canada, and instructed officials to accelerate stakeholder engagement on the development of a Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) and Emergency Management Strategy for Canada.
- Since 2016, PS has continued to expand engagement on EM issues with all partners (including small, remote, and off-reserve communities) to ensure a whole-of-society approach to Indigenous EM in Canada by:
  - exploring options for enhancing Indigenous engagement and representation within the FPT fora, in collaboration with Seniors Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM) and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC);
  - holding ongoing bi-lateral and multilateral meetings with National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs), INAC, and the provincial and territorial co-leads for Indigenous EM; and,
  - collaborating with the federal family on complementary initiatives.



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## FPT Approach to Indigenous Emergency Management (cont'd)

- FPT Ministers met in May 2017 to discuss Indigenous emergency management, inviting members from Canada's NIOs to participate in discussions on the development of an inclusive approach for strengthening Indigenous EM.
- At this meeting, AFN Director of Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services, Irving Leblanc, participated in a discussion on how FPT and Indigenous partners can work together to develop a collaborative approach to support Indigenous EM.



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## FPT Approach to Indigenous Emergency Management (cont'd)

### Key outcome from the discussion with FPT Ministers and NIO leaders (May 25, 2017):

- “Work collaboratively with Indigenous representative organizations and communities to develop an inventory of emergency management capabilities in Indigenous communities across Canada”.

### Key observations from this meeting included:

- the need for early engagement with Indigenous communities in the development of policies and programs that affect them;
- ensuring that the development of the EM Strategy is inclusive and culturally aware; and
- undertaking effective engagement of the EM Strategy to address capacity gaps.



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## Inventory of Indigenous EM Capabilities

- AFN will play a lead role engaging First Nations communities to collect data in collaboration with partners. PS and AFN are discussing potential contribution funding to facilitate this role.
- INAC has confirmed that it will gather information related to the status of First Nation emergency plans currently available through its regional offices to support the inventory.
- Ontario, as co-chair on the SOREM Indigenous EM Working Group, has offered to provide the Project Management function for the inventory.
- In the interim, PS is actively seeking initial input from key partners (e.g. NIOs, provinces and territories, other government departments, academia) as applicable to inform the inventory and methodology.



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## Emergency Management Strategy for Canada

- The Prime Minister has mandated the Minister of Public Safety to work with provinces and territories, Indigenous Peoples, and municipalities to develop a comprehensive action plan that allows Canada to better predict, prepare for, and respond to weather-related emergencies and natural disasters—**this is the Emergency Management Strategy for Canada (EM Strategy)**.
- The purpose of the EM Strategy is to coordinate, empower, and mobilize Canadian society in order to adapt to build resilience against the mounting economic, social and environmental impacts of disasters in Canada.
- There are five strategic objectives of the EM Strategy:
  1. enhance whole-of-society collaboration and governance to strengthen resilience;
  2. improve understanding of disaster risks in all sectors of society;
  3. increase focus on whole-of-society disaster prevention and mitigation activities;
  4. enhance disaster response capacity and coordination and foster the development of new capabilities; and
  5. strengthen recovery efforts by building back better to minimize the impacts of future disasters.
- PS is continuing to engage National Indigenous Organizations as the Strategy is being developed.



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## Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN)

- Public Safety Broadband Networks (PSBNs) are secure high-speed wireless data communications networks that can be used by emergency responders and public safety personnel to communicate with each other in emergency situations and during day-to-day operations.
- With PSBNs, public safety users could use applications that require large amounts of data:
  - Downloading or uploading information – e.g. sending imaging/diagnostic data from an ambulance on route to the hospital
  - Streaming video – e.g. from cameras mounted on Emergency Response Team (ERT) helmets
  - Sensor data – e.g. oxygen tank monitor on firefighters
- The Government of Canada is committed to engaging diverse stakeholders and producing evidence-based analysis on implementation models for a potential PSBN to support decision making going forward



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## Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN)

- PS is focusing on common or unique elements that would need to be considered for a variety of potential implementation approaches:
  - E.g. Existing capabilities and innovative solutions, public safety user requirements, coverage, governance, efficient use of spectrum, and costs and revenue sources
- Range of stakeholders being engaged include:
  - provincial, territorial and municipal governments, Indigenous community representatives, first responders, industry, critical infrastructure operators, representatives from small and remote communities, academia and international public safety counterparts
- Among other events currently being planned, several one-day workshops are tentatively scheduled for major cities across Canada:
  - Winnipeg (took place on October 12, 2017), Halifax (November 29, 2017), Vancouver (December 12, 2017), Toronto (Week of January 15, 2018), Montreal (Week of January 22, 2018)
  - Suggestions for potential participants can be sent to: [ps.interoperability-interoperabilite.sp@canada.ca](mailto:ps.interoperability-interoperabilite.sp@canada.ca).



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## Search and Rescue (SAR)

- In Canada, Search and Rescue (SAR) services are a shared responsibility among federal, provincial and territorial governments and a wide range of partners including Indigenous communities.
- PS would welcome an opportunity to engage Indigenous communities on the topic of SAR. The desired outcome would be to seek feedback from Indigenous communities on SAR issues in their communities.
- We are seeking input on how to include Indigenous communities within a sustainable, national SAR governance structure.
- Feedback received from engagement will be taken into consideration during PS efforts to lead the establishment of a strengthened SAR governance structure.



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## Dedicated NIO-SOREM Face-to-Face Meeting

- PS has invited NIOs to attend a dedicated session on Indigenous EM on November 15, 2017.
- This is a dedicated pre-meeting with a similar format of the May 2017 meeting of FPT Ministers and NIO leaders.
- The agenda for this meeting was co-developed with some PTs and NIOs through the Indigenous EM WG, with key items as follows:
  - Inventory of EM capabilities in Indigenous communities;
  - Disaster mitigation, response, and recovery in Indigenous communities; and
  - Supporting involvement of Indigenous communities in EM.



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## Engagement Opportunities with AFN

- Continue discussions with AFN to enhance Indigenous engagement and representation within the FPT fora, in collaboration with SOREM and INAC.
- Continue discussions on engagement workshops to seek input from AFN and Indigenous representatives on the initiatives that were presented today (EM Inventory, EM Strategy for Canada, Public Safety Broadband Network and Search and Rescue).
- PS continues to explore opportunities to strengthen AFN capacity in EM through a proposal-based contribution funding.



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## Next Steps

- Continue to work with AFN to strengthen Indigenous EM in Canada.
- Work with AFN to initiate the planning and logistics for an engagement workshop on key EM initiatives.
- Work with AFN to advance the development of the Indigenous EM Inventory.