

BRITISH COLUMBIA
TOURISM
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
FRAMEWORK

MAY 2022

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COLLABORATION

Emergency management is a shared responsibility between governments, communities, associations, business owners, clients, and citizens. The leaders of British Columbia's tourism industry and provincial agencies responsible for tourism and emergency management created this document to support ongoing collaboration and cooperation by British Columbians to protect the health and safety of travellers and support a resilient tourism industry.

DEVELOPED BY



TOURISM INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF BC



BRITISH COLUMBIA | Ministry of
Tourism, Arts,
Culture and Sport



BC DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA®



BRITISH COLUMBIA | Emergency
ManagementBC



bcrts
British Columbia
Regional Tourism
Secretariat



INDIGENOUS
TOURISM BC
CORPORATE



BCDMOA
British Columbia Destination Marketing Organization Association



VISION

AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR TOURISM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA THAT SUPPORTS THE SAFETY OF VISITORS, THE VIABILITY OF TOURISM BUSINESSES, AND OUR REPUTATION AS A SAFE AND WELCOMING DESTINATION.

Photo: Kelly Marsh

BACKGROUND

Tourism is critical to the socio-economic and cultural health of British Columbia. In 2019, total tourism revenues were \$22.3 billion and 150,000 people were employed in more than 19,000 tourism-related businesses. Protecting the sector is vital to B.C.'s economic strength and community health. The industry is comprised primarily of small businesses and is extremely sensitive to disruption by disasters, both through direct impact and longer-lasting reputation damage.

The number and severity of emergencies and disasters that challenge individuals, communities and all levels of government are increasing due to the diversity of extreme weather, seismic and human-caused hazards, climate change and the ongoing expansion of the urban environment. The COVID-19 pandemic, the extreme flooding and wildfire seasons of 2021, 2018 and 2017, and the heat waves of 2021 significantly affected B.C.'s tourism sector, with economic impact studies suggesting tourism was one of the hardest hit sectors in the province. The potential for an increasing

number of emergency events could erode B.C.'s reputation as a desirable, safe and welcoming destination. With the continued growth of the tourism industry and its increasing importance to the B.C. economy and communities, there is a strong need for a coordinated approach to emergency management for the tourism sector.

BC's Strategic Framework for Tourism 2022–2024 articulates priorities for tourism in the province. Among its priorities is building a strong sector that identifies climate risks, develops tools to respond, and keeps visitors and employees safe during emergencies. The B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework is an important tool in meeting those priorities through a shared plan that works to coordinate roles and responsibilities across the tourism sector. The Framework is aligned with and integrated into the broader B.C. emergency management system, and focuses on meeting the needs of visitors in an emergency and ensuring the long term health of the visitor economy.

PURPOSE

The B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework (the Framework) provides a unified structure to support tourism partners and visitors on matters related to the four pillars of emergency management, namely mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The Framework will help reduce the industry's vulnerabilities and risks and lessen the potentially adverse impacts to visitor experiences during emergencies.

For the purposes of this Framework, an emergency is defined as a present or imminent event that is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure or a force of nature that requires prompt coordination to protect the safety and well-being of persons or property. A disaster is an event that has resulted in serious harm to the health, safety or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property.

The Framework supports the Province's comprehensive emergency management plans by strengthening integration and consideration of visitors and the visitor economy before, during and after an emergency event. This includes addressing visitors' unique needs during emergencies, improving tourism industry preparedness, managing long term destination reputation, and reducing economic impact to tourism businesses.

Emergency management is a shared responsibility, and this framework provides a clear outline of the role various tourism partners play in improving emergency management for tourism in B.C.

SCOPE

The Framework provides a coordinated system for tourism partners to enhance all-hazard emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for the tourism industry and to integrate with the B.C. Emergency Management System and its various agencies. The Framework defines objectives, identifies roles and responsibilities of tourism partners, provides a structure

for ongoing interaction, and will be supported by a dynamic operational plan. The Framework supports the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport (TACS) mandate to support a thriving tourism sector in delivering lasting economic and social benefits to British Columbians as well as the industry's role to ensure a sustainable and globally competitive tourism sector.

OBJECTIVES

The Framework provides a foundation for tourism organizations and partners to work cooperatively and with emergency management organizations to advance the following objectives:



MITIGATION

The tourism sector continues to build resilience to support business continuity, crisis communications and post-disaster marketing in the face of disaster events.

OUTCOMES

- Ongoing research to improve tourism resilience and emergency management
- Development of standards of training
 - Database of industry resources
- Industry level coordination
 - Contingency funding
- Tools for Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) for tourism operators to mitigate or reduce risk

TOOLS

- Tourism Emergency Management Committee Annual Work Plan



PREPAREDNESS

Tourism agencies and industry are ready to respond to emergency events and support emergency agencies and visitors, and visitors' needs are integrated into emergency management plans.

OUTCOMES

- Tourism organizational preparedness training and emergency plan
- Crisis communications plan
 - Coordination of tourism system partners to support emergency response structure
- Consideration of unique visitor and destination management needs in emergency management structures

TOOLS

- Tourism Emergency Management Training Plan
- Tourism Emergency Response Communications Plan
- Prepared BC: Guide for Tourism Operators



RESPONSE

The Tourism Emergency Response Plan is ready to activate in support of emergency agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of visitors and maintain the reputation of B.C. as a safe and desirable destination.

OUTCOMES

- Coordinated visitor communication strategy
- Tourism industry resources mobilized, relative to size and scope of the event, to support emergency response to ensure the safety of visitors and to maintain confidence in B.C. as a travel destination
 - Visitor Service Network coordinated for continuity of service and information sharing
- Tourism liaisons integrated in emergency operations centres

TOOLS

- Tourism Emergency Response Plan
- Tourism Emergency Response Communication Plan
- Prepared BC: Emergency Plan for Tourism Operators



RECOVERY

The economic impact of emergencies on the visitor economy is reduced.

OUTCOMES

- Post-disaster marketing to promote visitation to impacted regions
- Disaster relief supports for tourism businesses or tourism experiences
- Investments in recapturing tourism assets post disaster
 - Tourism businesses supported to pivot experiences and delivery of services

TOOLS

- Tourism Emergency Management Committee Annual Work Plan

FRAMEWORK FOUNDATION

The Framework is centered around three pillars that structure how the vision and objectives of tourism emergency management will be advanced:

1. ALIGNMENT Tourism emergency management is aligned with the B.C. emergency management system.

2. INTEGRATION Tourism partners collaborate to integrate tourism considerations into the B.C. emergency management system.

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES Emergency management is a shared responsibility where all tourism partners play a role.

1. ALIGNMENT

The B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework is designed to integrate with the emergency management system in place in B.C., which is guided by the Emergency Program Act. B.C. uses a “ground up” model of emergency management in which response is based on the type, size, and severity of the emergency. In this shared responsibility model, governments, First Nations, businesses and industries, not-for-profit organizations, and the public collaborate in an integrated and unified approach to mitigating, preparing, responding, and recovering from disasters. Emergency management partners comply with applicable legal and regulatory obligations by developing and implementing plans to manage disasters within their jurisdiction, organization, or area of responsibility. Individuals, including business and tourism operators, have a responsibility to contribute to all four pillars of emergency management. Municipalities and First Nations governments respond to local emergencies and Emergency Management BC (EMBC) is the agency tasked with provincial co-ordination, strategic planning, multi-agency integration and business continuity activities. When needed, EMBC supports local level response through the six Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centres (PREOC) and the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC).

EMBC also maintains and manages the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS), which is the guiding doctrine for overall emergency management in B.C. This framework provides a structure for a standardized approach to developing, coordinating, and implementing emergency management programs across the province; establishes guiding principles, processes, and a common terminology; and emphasizes integration and partnerships that

facilitate communication and coordination on all levels. Based on the Incident Command System (ICS), it provides standardized language and interoperability and is used by ministries and governments across B.C. BCEMS is built on a foundation that equal dignity of all people must be respected, along with their customs and culture, and their fundamental right to the necessities of life. It has seven guiding principles for the practice of emergency management in B.C.:

1. Health and safety of all people are of primary importance;
2. Emergency management is a shared responsibility (government and public);
3. All hazards are considered;
4. Collaboration and emergency management partner engagements are the foundation to a unified approach;
5. BCEMS provides a common approach for all emergency management partners based on ICS principles such as flexibility, scalability and adaptability;
6. Communication is clear, accurate and timely; and
7. Continuous improvement is critical.

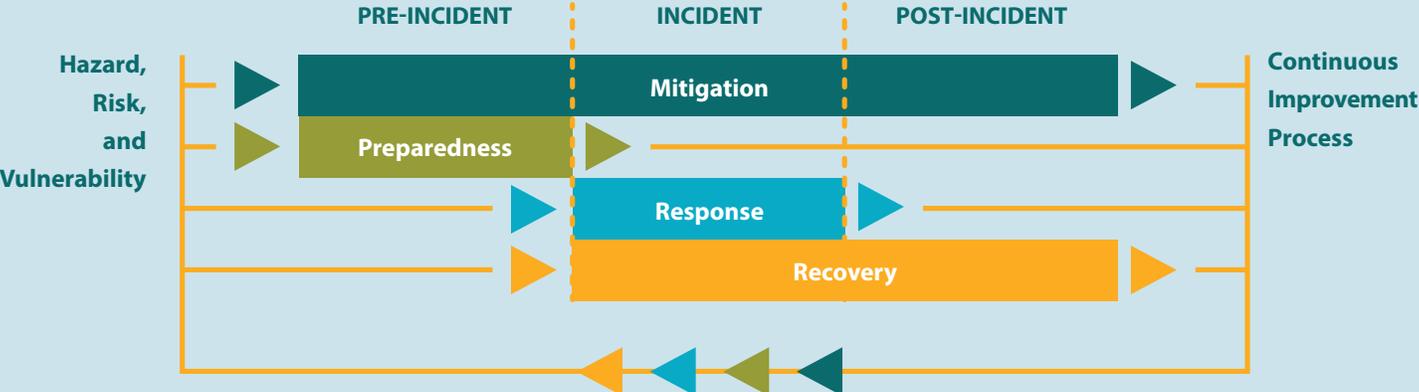




BCEMS uses a four-phase approach to emergency management. Under this model, emergency management consists of four interconnected phases:

- Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

These phases occur sequentially, and sometimes concurrently, as seen below. Each phase poses different challenges that must be addressed by an emergency management program.

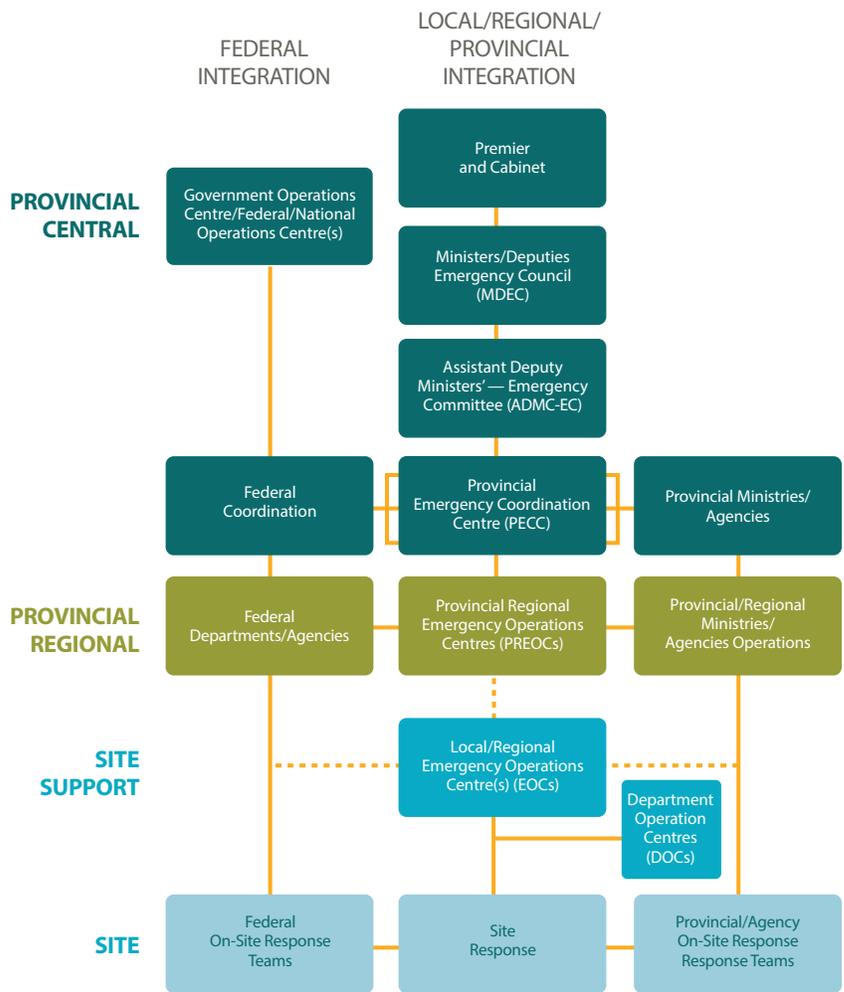


Source: Emergency Management BC

BCEMS recognizes four levels of response, which are activated as needed during an event.

These are site level, site support, provincial regional, and provincial central. Each level above site command is responsible for providing increasingly broader coordination, planning and support to the operations occurring at site level. Site command is most commonly assumed by a response agency that is managing the activities at ground level, but unified commands can be set up when the incident involves a more complicated response. Site support most commonly takes the form of department operations centres from response agencies and the emergency operations centres of local authorities. Provincial regional and provincial central support are provided through EMBC and provincial level operations centres from involved agencies and ministries.

At the provincial level, the Assistant Deputy Ministers' Emergency Committee (ADMC-EC) and the Ministers/Deputies Emergency Council (MDEC) provide policy support and interface with the premier and cabinet.



Source: Emergency Management BC

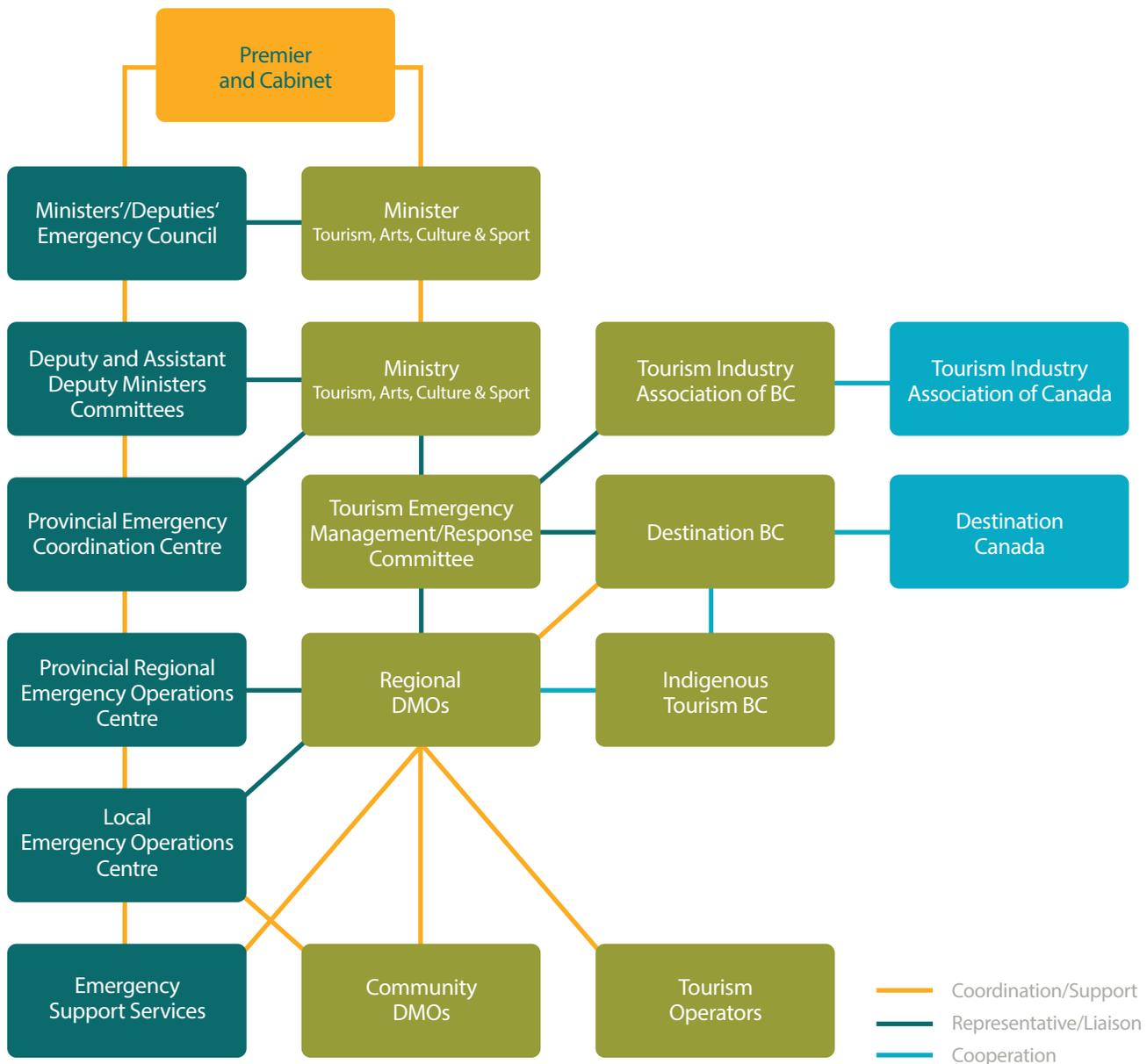
— Required Reporting
 - - - Information Sharing



2. INTEGRATION

The B.C. tourism emergency management organizational structure is designed to integrate with and support the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS) in all four pillars of emergency management, bringing together diverse partners in the tourism system that differ greatly in size, organization, scope, and responsibility. To provide operational clarity and coordination, the organizational structure of tourism emergency management is informed by that of BCEMS, facilitating interoperability

and alignment with the multilayered structure. The Framework recognizes the shared responsibility of all tourism organizations in supporting the safety of visitors, the viability of tourism businesses, and our reputation as a safe and welcoming destination. Roles and responsibilities of tourism partners serve to coordinate with and support key emergency management agencies, provide representation and liaise between agencies and the tourism sector, and facilitate cooperation for unified actions and messaging.



3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Emergency management is a shared responsibility, and tourism organizations are tasked with delivering on actions identified under the four pillars of emergency management. Following are the organizations responsible for leading on key areas to achieve the objectives of the Framework:

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS, CULTURE AND SPORT (TACS)

TACS co-chairs the Tourism Emergency Management Committee (TEMC) and provides provincial leadership for the tourism sector by working cross government to integrate the unique needs of visitors and the visitor economy into the B.C. emergency management structure. This includes representing tourism in policy discussions, training and exercises, provincial response centres and support programming. TACS also provides a liaison to the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre when activated.

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF BC (TIABC)

TIABC co-chairs the TEMC, provides tourism industry input on policy discussions around emergency management that impact the tourism sector, and assists with communications between tourism industry and emergency management organizations.

DESTINATION BC (DBC)

DBC leads on initiatives that support the long-term destination reputation of B.C. through planning and coordinating communications, initiating marketing campaigns, coordinating training delivery with RDMOs, and conducting research on tourism emergency management. DBC also liaises with the BC Wildfire Service and provincial Joint Information Centre when activated.

B.C. TOURISM REGIONS (RDMOS)

The six Regional Destination Management Organizations are best positioned to work directly with local tourism partners and therefore lead, in collaboration with DBC, on the planning, creation, distribution and delivery of emergency management training tools for tourism operators and community destination management organizations. They also lead in local emergency response through providing connections between emergency operations centres and tourism operators for emergency support services (ESS) and visitor redirection.

COMMUNITY DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS (CDMOS)

The CDMOs are the key connection to the visitors and provide travel planning assistance to travelers to recapture and redirect, working closely with communities, RDMOs, and DBC.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC (ITBC)

While respecting the authority of First Nations governments to lead emergency management within their communities, Indigenous Tourism BC provides guidance and support to Indigenous tourism businesses as part of B.C.'s tourism emergency management system.

TOURISM OPERATORS

Tourism business are responsible for preparing their tourism operation so that they can respond effectively, recover quickly, and keep visitors safe.



IMPLEMENTATION

The B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework is a shared plan that works to coordinate roles and responsibilities across the tourism sector to better service needs of visitors in an emergency and to ensure long term health of the visitor economy. Implementation requires planning and operational actions.

TOURISM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (TEMC)

The TEMC manages and implements the B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework that focuses on mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for the tourism sector. The TEMC is co-chaired by representatives from TACS and TIABC. Membership is inclusive of diverse organizations in the B.C. tourism system. In addition to the chairs, core representation on the committee includes:

- Destination BC (DBC)
- Emergency Management BC (EMBC)
- Regional Destination Management Organizations (RDMOs)
- B.C. Destination Marketing Organizations Association (BCDMOA)
- Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC)

Other organizations may be invited to advise the committee such as B.C. government agencies (e.g., BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, BC Chamber of Commerce) and other tourism organizations (e.g., BC Hotel Association, go2HR).

The TEMC is responsible for overseeing ongoing work that advances the objectives of the B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework, and will be guided by a modular operational work plan, which is reviewed and updated regularly.



Photo: BC/Jordan Dyck

TOURISM EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (TERT)

The TERT is activated when an event occurs and facilitates the transfer of information, enhances mutual assistance operations, and coordinates overall response. Core members include representatives from TACS, TIABC, DBC, ITBC, and EMBC, plus emergency program coordinators from affected B.C. tourism regions: Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Kootenay Rockies, Northern BC, Thompson Okanagan, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver, Coast & Mountains. TERT meets on a regular basis, as needed until deactivated by consensus to achieve the following objectives:

- Consolidate information on situational awareness and impacts;
- Coordinate mutual assistance efforts, identify potential issues for the tourism sector, and determine response/recovery priorities;

- Ensure coordination of messaging and marketing needs; and
- Determine how to best activate and coordinate industry assets.

The TERT is guided by the Tourism Emergency Response Activation Plan, which has been modeled to support EMBC's All-Hazard Plan, and outlines specific roles and responsibilities. The level of activation would be determined by the severity of the impact of the event on tourism, the need for coordination and communications, and the existence of unique policy issues.



OPERATIONAL PLANNING

The Framework will be supported by a dynamic modular operational plan, to be refreshed annually to respond to current needs and conditions. The operational plan aims to move forward the framework objectives through achieving the identified outcomes and is guided by evolving priorities. This could include actions like improving tourism operators' resilience through emergency business continuity planning, coordinating CDMO training on B.C. Emergency Management System, or facilitating the creation of visitor specific emergency awareness resources.

The Tourism Emergency Management Committee will continually assess the resources being used to implement the Framework and identify opportunities for investments that advance the Framework's vision and support implementation of its components.

The following resources form part of the modular operational plan supporting the B.C. Tourism Emergency Management Framework:

- **1.1 TRAINING PLAN** guides emergency planning and training for tourism organizations;
- **1.2 TOURISM EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN** a scalable plan to guide response to an emergency event;
- **1.3 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN** emergency response communications guidelines and protocols;
- **1.4 PREPARED BC GUIDES** EMBC guides for tourism operators to plan for emergencies; and
- **1.5 ANNUAL WORK PLAN** refreshed annually and monitored by the TEMC to support continuous improvement of the system and reflect current priorities and conditions.



