

External and Internal Reviews of Recovery Operations Centre and 2013 Flood Recovery Framework

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2013 June flood was a significant event that required full scale emergency response and two years of coordinated recovery activities. The Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) has developed a comprehensive emergency management model that supports the establishment of a Recovery Operations Centre (ROC) to support significant events. Following the 2013 flood, a ROC was activated under the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP), and subsequently the 2013 Flood Recovery Framework was developed to guide flood recovery activities. In the interest of continuous improvement, an independent third party review has been conducted to gain insight into best practices and areas for improvement in recovery practices. Internal lessons learned were also collected. This report combines findings and recommendations from the Conference Board of Canada's (CBoC) independent review of The City of Calgary's ROC, as well as internal lessons learned undertaken by Administration.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Emergency Management Committee recommends that Council receive the *2013 Flood Recovery Internal Lessons Learned Highlights* (Attachment 1) and the Conference Board of Canada *The Road to Recovery: The City of Calgary and the 2013 Flood* (Attachment 2) for information.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, DATED 2015 JULY 15:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report EM2015-0610 be approved.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2014 July 21, Council approved the report, EM2014-0414, "2013 Flood Internal and External Debrief Reports", and directed CEMA to return in 2015 April with a review of the Emergency Management Committee's role and the coordination of an independent review of the ROC. On 2015 February 04 (EM2015-0163) and 2015 June 09 (EM2015-0439) deferral requests were made for this report to be brought to Committee in 2015 July to allow for more time in the analysis and production of the final product by the CBoC.

BACKGROUND

CEMA has established the comprehensive emergency management model, which provides a framework to structure all emergency management activities. The model illustrates emergency management is a continuum that includes non-response activities (risk assessment, prevention, mitigation and preparedness) as well as response, recovery and rehabilitation.

The ROC was implemented for the first time as a result of the 2013 June flood. For continuous improvement purposes in 2014 July, CEMA recommended that a comprehensive third party assessment be conducted on the ROC. This is consistent with reviews that have been conducted for other aspects of the comprehensive emergency management continuum such as the 2013 flood response review. Additionally, in late 2014 the ROC initiated an internal recovery

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lessons learned project to gather important lessons from the experience of participating in flood recovery activities across the organization and with external stakeholders such as the Government of Alberta (GOA).

A summary document that highlights information from the area above is included in *2013 Flood Recovery Internal Lessons Learned Highlights (Attachment 1)*. As a result of this work, a significant number of actions have been undertaken across The Corporation with the goal of stronger future recovery efforts. Additional recommendations have been included as part of the 2013 Flood Recovery Operations Centre Transition Plan presented as an attachment to PFC2015-0569 *2013 Flood Recovery Task Force – Final Report* received at Priorities and Finance Committee on 2015 July 14.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

In 2014 July, CEMA initiated an independent third-party review of the ROC structure, process and practices to identify any efficiencies and opportunities for improvement in recovery learned through the flood recovery experience. The CBoC had undertaken the review of the 2013 flood response in Calgary (*Forewarned and Forearmed: The Calgary Emergency Management Agency and the 2013 Flood* EM2014-0414 Attachment 2).

The ROC contracted the CBoC to undertake the review to ensure consistency of approach and subject matter expertise to the response review. This review included an overview of the ROC function specifically in context of its application to the 2013 flood recovery. Key stakeholder interviews with internal and external stakeholders were conducted by the independent third party to build *The Road to Recovery: The City of Calgary and the 2013 Flood* (Attachment 2).

The *2013 Flood Recovery Internal Lessons Learned Highlights* include the identified recovery strengths, recommendations, actions completed and planned improvements resulting from debriefs with the ROC Administration team, ROC Task Force, ROC Steering Committee, the Government of Alberta, and project team for the Municipal Infrastructure Recovery Program (MIRP). Many business units have incorporated ongoing improvements to their respective programs and services as it relates to recovery. Additionally, the *CEMA Recovery Operations Centre Response and Resource* manual is being revised by CEMA in partnership with flood recovery staff and will be brought forward to the Administrative Leadership Team by year end 2015.

Strong alignment and consistency of lessons learned and recommendations were identified in both the external and internal reviews, such as:

- Members of ROC SC identified efficiencies having the location of the ROC at the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in the initial stages of recovery;
- Cultivation of relationships between the municipality and organizations that support vulnerable populations;
- Development of skills inventory for use in response and recovery, and
- Capitalizing on insurance and financial tracking tools such as checklists.

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Implementation of some recommendations has begun. Should specific recovery resources be determined in the revision of the Recovery Operations Centre Response and Resource manual, requests for resources to effectively implement may be made by appropriate business units through the Action Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Conference Board of Canada:

The CBoC reviewed The City's performance regarding recovery from the 2013 June flood against other large-scale emergencies. Key stakeholder interviews with officials from the public and private sectors as well as from non-governmental organizations were included in the analysis. Insights shared by those interviewed permitted the CBoC to gather and make recommendations for best practices and provide recommendations for improved future recovery processes in order to help The City continue to build resiliency for a variety of emergencies.

Internal Lessons Learned:

Interviews and facilitated sessions regarding flood recovery lessons learned were supported by ROC staff, Human Resources and the Corporate Project Management Office. It should be noted that many individual business units from across The Corporation have held their own lessons learned sessions and made recommendations for improvements at the operational level.

Communications with Citizens:

As the long term recovery efforts will continue for several years, communications with citizens will continue within several aspects of the 2013 Flood Recovery Operations Centre Transition Plan.

Strategic Alignment

The CBoC's independent review of ROC will allow Administration to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with best practices in the field of emergency management and municipal governance. This report aligns with the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) and the 2020 Sustainability Direction. Calgary, our communities and neighbourhoods are striving to be safe, resilient and supportive: By 2020, communities will have demonstrated the resiliency to self-activate to respond to natural disasters. Council priorities in 2015-2018 include "Build resiliency to flooding" and "Enhance The City's capacity and resiliency to prepare for and respond to pandemics, natural disasters and emergency situations".

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) is repeatedly referenced in literature regarding disaster recovery. The Flood Recovery Task Force has centered its key result areas within the 2013 Flood Recovery Framework on the TBL sustainable development principles.

The social impacts of the flood event continue to be monitored as part of long term recovery. This is supported through ongoing liaison with directly impacted communities and the strong network of relationships between The City and its service agencies.

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Environmental impacts continue to be identified and assessed as part of long term recovery efforts. The City continues to work with other orders of government to understand the impacts, to identify next steps and responsibilities in repair and mitigation, specifically with respect to overall water management in Alberta.

Managing emergency events and disasters is fundamental to municipal, provincial and national economic stability and resiliency. The City has demonstrated the ability to quickly respond to and recover from such events, and preparedness efforts will continue to minimize response and recovery costs in the future. Global research demonstrates the cost benefit analysis between a resilient city and positive economic growth.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

None

Current and Future Capital Budget:

None

Risk Assessment

The importance of emergency management investments are most often recognized post disaster. Recommendations have been provided through internal and external processes which will enhance The City's emergency management with regards to recovery. The collection of lessons learned, and implementation of recommendations from the independent review and debrief process will assist with improving coordinated recovery from future large scale emergency events.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The best practices and areas of improvement identified by the Conference Board of Canada and internal review of the Recovery Operations Centre function and the 2013 Flood Recovery Framework have been considered as elements of the 2013 Flood Recovery Transition Plan and will support the revisions by CEMA to the Recovery Operations Centre Response and Resource Manual.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 2013 Flood Recovery Internal Lessons Learned Highlights
2. The Road to Recovery: The City of Calgary and the 2013 Flood (Conference Board of Canada)