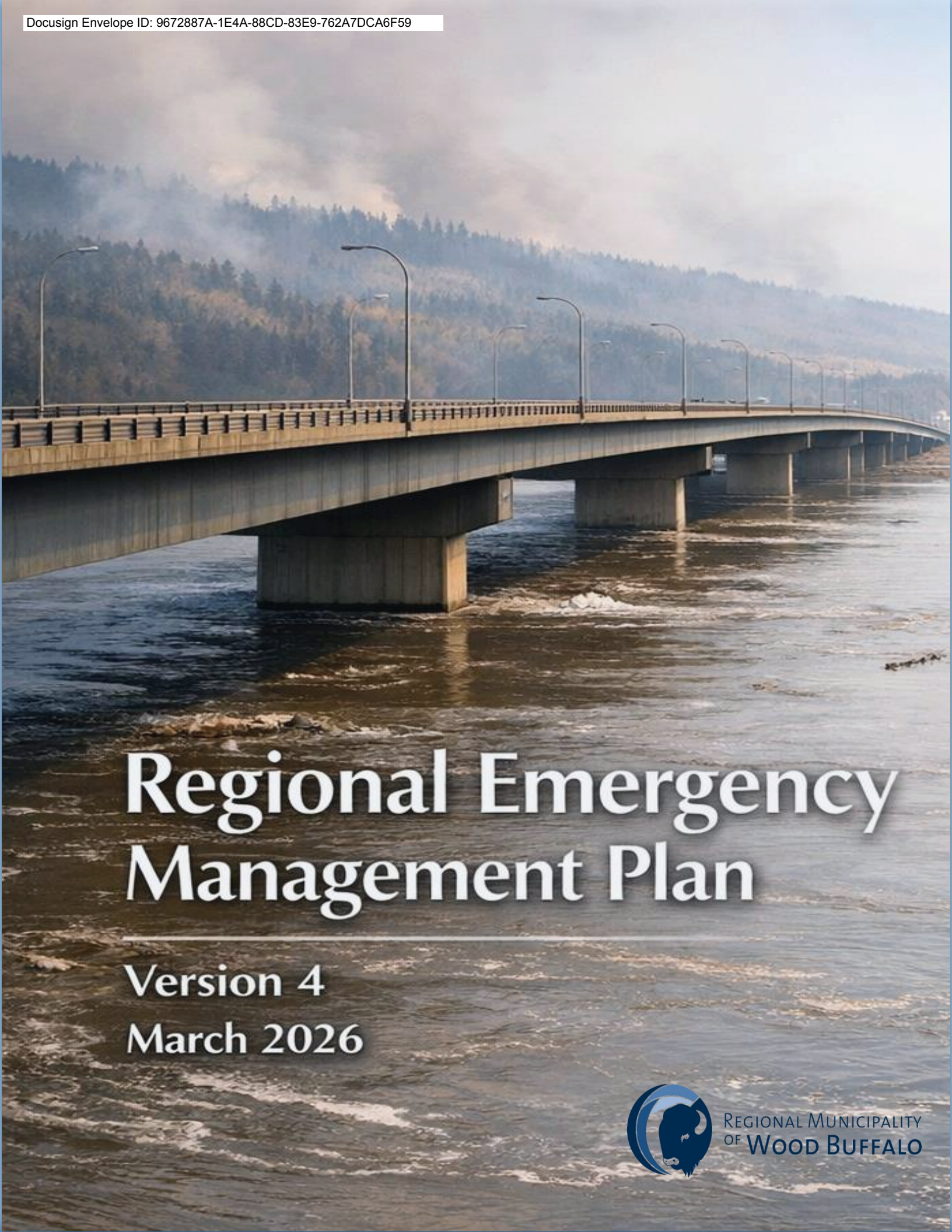


Regional Emergency Management Plan

Version 4
March 2026

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

The following Regional Emergency Management Plan will come into effect upon signing and be made available to the public at such time.

Signed this 22nd day of June, 2026.

Signed by:
55116504DB5749F...

Chief Administrative Officer
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

DocuSigned by:
A0CE655AGD294B9...

Director of Emergency Management
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

CONTENTS

FOREWARD

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo has experienced significant incidents, emergencies and disasters over the years. As a result, emergency management planning continues to be a critical component to ensuring preparedness – for responders and residents – and a contributing factor to resiliency in the region. Collaboration with internal departments, external stakeholders – including, but not limited to First Nation, Métis and Industry partners – as well as community-based organizations, has resulted in increasing preparedness, and understanding of the hazard and risk landscape across the RMWB.

Situated in the northeastern section of Alberta, the RMWB covers more than 60,000 square kilometres, making this the second largest municipality in Canada, by land mass. The RMWB includes nine rural communities and the Urban Service Area (USA) of Fort McMurray. Rural communities include Anzac, Conklin, Draper, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort McKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Janvier, and Saprae Creek Estates. The Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) addresses natural and human-induced hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities throughout the vast Region.

Focusing on community-based emergency preparedness, the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and its supplementary Community Emergency Management Plans (CEMP) have been developed to ensure prevention/mitigation, preparedness, and effective and efficient response and recovery from incidents that may impact all or part of the Region. Community-based emergency planning ensures that each area of the Region has a well-thought plan to guide response, and that is relevant to each areas needs, hazards, risks and vulnerabilities.

As part of emergency planning, the RMWB is required to conduct regular assessments directly related to the hazards, risks and vulnerabilities in the Region. At the time of review, the RMWB is in process of updating the current Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA), with anticipation to complete an updated Hazard Identification Risk Analysis (HIRA) by the end of 2026. The results of the HIRA will be added to the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP), upon completion.

The REMP is intended to enhance resiliency and support the priorities of life safety, protection of property, the environment and the economy, when possible. The Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) – or other aptly named plan – is a legislated requirement under the Alberta Emergency Management Act. It provides the Director of Emergency Management and other emergency officials a framework to guide preparedness, response, recovery, and prevention/mitigation efforts throughout the Region.

The REMP is not intended to be used as a training manual. The plan is flexible so that it can meet individual community needs within the Region, and be amended as required, to support an all-hazards approach to incident response. Subject to annual review, the Regional Emergency Management Plan will continue to support legislated requirements and all elements of the emergency management cycle.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AEA	Alberta Emergency Alert
AEMA	Alberta Emergency Management Agency
AFRRCS	Alberta First Responders Radio Communications System
AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
AHS	Alberta Health Services
AIMS	Alberta Incident Management System
ANS	Automated Notification System
ASIST	Alberta Saskatchewan Incident Support Team
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
BI	Broadcast Intrusive
BNL	By Name List
BWA	Boil Water Advisory
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CCP	Crisis Communications Plan
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
CEMP	Community Emergency Management Plan
COWS	Continuity of Water Supply
DAD	Disaster Assistance Directive
DFAA	Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements
DG	Dangerous Goods
DEM	Director of Emergency Management
DRP	Disaster Recovery Program
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAC	Emergency Advisory Committee
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
EM	Emergency Management
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMAP	Emergency Management Assistance Program
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
ESS	Emergency Social Services
FDD	Freezing Degree Days
FO	Field Officer
GOA	Government of Alberta
GOC	Government of Canada
HARP	Hazard Assistance and Resilience Program
HIRA	Hazard Identification Risk Assessment
HRVA	Hazard, Risk and Vulnerabilities Assessment
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
ISC	Indigenous Services Canada
IMT	Incident Management Team
JIC	Joint Information Centre
LAEMR	Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation
LISA	Live Incident Situational Awareness
MGA	Municipal Government Act

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWAP	Municipal Wildfire Assistance Program
NBI	Non-Broadcast Intrusive
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLRHC	Northern Lights Regional Health Centre
NPAS	National Public Alerting System
PECC	Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSC	Public Safety Canada
RECC	Regional Emergency Coordination Centre
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
RES	Regional Emergency Services
RMWB	Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SOA	Standing Offer Agreement
SOE	State of Emergency
SOLE	Stale of Local Emergency
USA	Urban Service Area
VPR	Vulnerable Persons Registry
WBEA	Wood Buffalo Environmental Association
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

1.0 PLAN ADMINISTRATION

The Director of Emergency Management (DEM), as chair of the RMWB's Emergency Management Agency (EMA), is responsible for the maintenance and development of the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP). The Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC), consisting of the mayor and two Councillors, shall review the plan. This plan has been developed in accordance with the *Alberta Emergency Management Act (The Act),* the *Local Authorities Emergency Management Regulation (LAEMR),* and pursuant to the *Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Emergency Management Bylaw No. 25/008.*

The responsibility of developing and reviewing the plan may be delegated, but ultimately falls to the DEM, under the oversight of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), to ensure that all legislated requirements and standards are met.

1.1 Review

The REMP will be reviewed as follows:

- Annually – minor revisions and updates
- Bi-annually – full review and revision
- After an exercise
- After an emergency, incident or disaster
- As directed by the Director of Emergency Management (DEM)

1.2 Revisions

Version control of the plan is managed by the Emergency Management Branch of Regional Emergency Services (RES). Re-issue of this plan, following amendment or review, will be recorded in the table below. Redistribution of the plan will be the responsibility of the DEM. A master, hard copy, of the REMP is to be stored within the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC).

Revision	Details	Revised By	Date of Release
001	Initial Release	Chris Graham, ADC Emergency Management	September 1, 2018
002	Update and revision	Jody Butz, DEM & Regional Fire Chief	May 20, 2022
003	Update and revision	Jody Butz, DEM & Regional Fire Chief	March 25, 2024
004	Update and revision	Katie MacDonald, Acting DEM	March 2026

1.3 Plan Availability

The REMP is available electronically and can be found at www.rmwb.ca. This document is public facing and available to residents in pdf format.

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The primary focus of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's (RMWB) Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) is to effectively manage the effects of significant incidents and disasters within the region, through preparation and mitigation efforts. The number and severity of significant incidents and disasters is increasing across Canada (Public Safety Canada [PSC], 2021). Factors such as climate change, and human-caused incidents influence the threat of flooding, fires, severe weather, and industrial accidents across the Region.

The plan is based on a flexible all-hazards approach, that supports the transition of emergency management throughout the four phases of the emergency management cycle prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Ahead of a disaster or significant incident, this is achieved by:

- Providing a framework for emergency and disaster management activities
- Ensuring appropriate strategies are developed to minimize adverse effects of a disaster
- Developing risk-based plans with a community focus through Community Emergency Management Plans (CEMP)
- Describing the organizations' roles, responsibilities, and procedures for effective incident management
- Outlining operations for effective incident management across the four phases of the emergency management cycle
- Describing the committees and agencies established for the coordination of multi-agency responses
- Assessment and regular re-evaluation of the likelihood and potential impacts to life safety, public health, infrastructure, environment, and economy

2.1 Hazard Mitigation and Risk Reduction

Elected Officials provide guidance to Municipal Administration on mitigation and risk reduction through several avenues, including the following:

- Adhering to the Alberta Emergency Management Act
- Review and assessment of hazards and risks
- Approval of funding and resources for mitigation and emergency management projects
- Collaboration with other agencies
- Ensuring plans and programs align with the REMP
- Support for training and development of personnel involved with the Incident Management Team
- Support for public awareness campaigns related to emergency management
- Community and stakeholder engagement, as required
- Support for critical infrastructure maintenance and improvements
- Support for the development and maintenance of Business Continuity Plans (BCP)

2.2 Principles of Emergency Management

All events, whether natural or human caused, should be managed in alignment with the Regional Emergency Management Plan. The REMP is intended to:

- Provide prompt coordination of Municipal resources when the potential consequences of an identified incident or disaster are outside the scope of normal capacity or capabilities
- Identify jurisdictional boundaries and authorities during an incident or disaster

- Document the roles and responsibilities of internal and external partners during all phases of an incident or disaster
- Detail how the REMP will be utilized and maintained

2.3 Comprehensive All-Hazards Approach

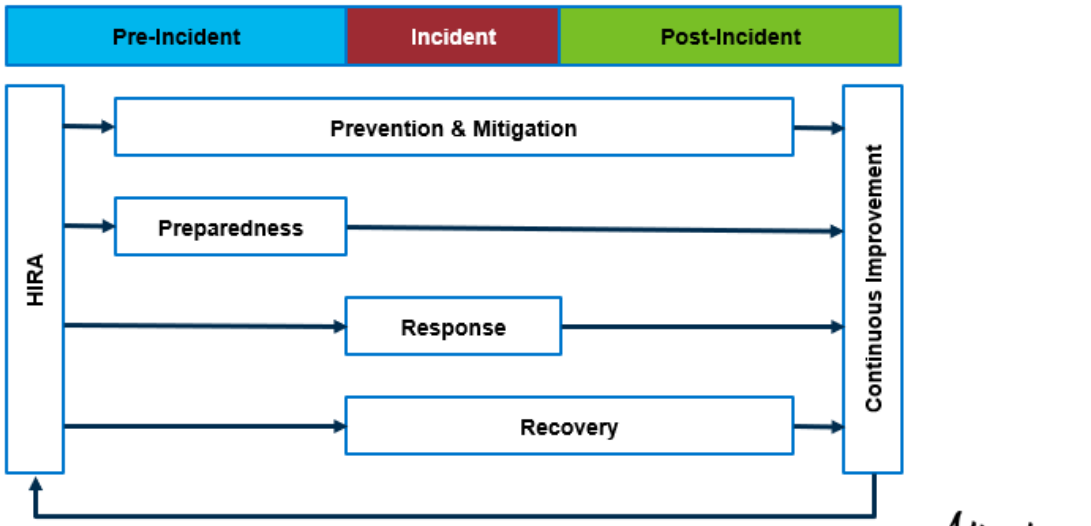
A comprehensive approach is adopted throughout emergency management planning to ensure that risk reduction and community resilience occur while maintaining effective response and recovery capabilities. An all-hazards approach employs generic emergency planning methodologies, modified as necessary according to the circumstances (AEMA, 2020), allowing an organization to be flexible. It encompasses natural and technological hazards and ensures one Incident Management Team (IMT) can respond to any emergency or disaster that may occur.

Planning occurs after identifying and evaluating all risks, often through a hazard identification risk analysis (HIRA). Focusing on an all-hazards approach allows impacts with the similar consequences to be managed similarly. Regardless of the all-hazards approach, some risks will necessitate specific measures, interventions and actions.

The comprehensive all-hazards approach provides an overarching framework for emergency management by acknowledging the need to dedicate sufficient resources to all phases of the emergency management cycle (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Emergency Management Cycle



Source: Alberta Emergency Management Agency (2022)

2.3.1 Prevention and Mitigation

Prevention and mitigation include hazard identification, risk assessment and implementation of measures to reduce exposure to vulnerabilities from potential consequences of events. Land use, zoning management, building and maintenance of critical infrastructure, flood mapping, berms, FireSmart, and public education campaigns are all examples of prevention and mitigation initiatives that have occurred, or are occurring in the Region.

- **Prevention** reflects actions taken to avoid occurrence of negative consequences associated with a given threat or hazard.
- **Mitigation** is action taken to adapt to, eliminate, or reduce the impacts of disasters on lives, property, the environment, and the economy.

2.3.2 Preparedness

Preparedness is building capacity to effectively respond when people, property, the environment, or economy are impacted by disasters (AEMA, 2020). This includes plans for timely response, relief, and rehabilitation during an emergency or disaster.

Preparedness activities may include the establishment of mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding (MOU), standing offer agreements (SOA) and resource inventories. A robust training and exercise program that supports continual learning, development, and preparation for emergency response is a critical component of preparedness that allows responders to be more effective and efficient.

2.3.3 Response

Response is when immediate actions are taken during an emergency or disaster. These actions minimize the impacts of the incident and serve to protect lives, stabilize the incident, and protect property and the environment to the greatest extent possible.

Response operations deal with the immediate issues related to the emergency or disaster. RCMP, Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), as well as internal municipal departments and branches respond to everyday emergencies. When emergencies exceed available capacity at the municipal level, external resources may be requested. Significant incidents, emergencies and disasters may require the activation of the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC), Emergency Social Services (ESS) and other supports as required.

2.3.4 Recovery

Recovery begins when an incident is stabilized, and actions are taken to repair and restore a community, after an incident.

The intent is to minimize impacts of the incident on residents. To achieve this, pre-emptive recovery plans are critical, to limit disruption to residents living in impacted areas. There are three recognized phases of recovery:

- **Short-term**: This supports the immediate needs of individuals businesses and communities impacted by an incident. This begins as soon as possible following incident stabilization. An example would be restoration of power and gas supply to impacted homes.
- **Medium-term:** A coordinated response that supports impacted areas in the reconstruction of infrastructure, restoration of the environment, economy and the provision of appropriate psychosocial supports. Medium-term recovery can occur for weeks and months after an incident.
- **Long-term:** Continuation of coordinated response for as long as required after an incident has ended. Long term recovery may include disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects, or ongoing, additional psychosocial supports made available to impacted residents.

2.3.5 Other Principles of Emergency Management

Additional principles of emergency management include:

- **Collaboration:** emergency management is the responsibility of all levels of government. Collaboration may also include working with community partners, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations to achieve an effective response.
- **Leadership:** works simultaneously with collaboration. Strong leadership supports relationships and the ability to trust decision makers during emergencies.
- **Flexibility:** an all-hazards approach to emergency management. The ability to support different types of emergencies while involving many organizations, allows for an incident to be handled from either the top-down or bottom-up.
- **Interoperability:** how response organizations can integrate, operate and communicate during an emergency using different systems, structures, personnel, and resources.
- **Continuous Improvement:** the most effective way to enhance emergency management is to continually develop processes, while implementing best practices.

The Local Authority is responsible for managing the consequences of incidents to reduce impact. Consequence management enables efficient and effective support to communities through key response and recovery plans.

2.3.6 Regional Emergency Management Capacity and Capability

In Alberta, the Local Authorities manage emergencies and disasters within their jurisdictional boundaries. Apart from a regional advisory role, the Government of Alberta (GOA), except in extraordinary circumstances, does not take control of response from the Local Authority. The Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) may have field officers to respond and support a local authority through a response.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) has a robust Incident Management Team (IMT) that may be activated to support response needs. Despite this, regional capacity may become exhausted, in which case there are provincial resources and IMT's, outside of the RMWB, that may be requested through appropriate channels.

2.3.7 Resilient Communities

Strong links between individuals, volunteer organizations and Local Authorities enhance community preparedness and resiliency. Individuals and communities should be prepared to support themselves during an emergency or disaster, for a minimum of 72 hours. Community members should be informed of the risks and follow direction from Emergency Officials and trusted news sources, such as the RMWB website.

3.0 GOVERNANCE

The *Alberta Emergency Management Act* (*The Act*) (appendix A) is the primary emergency management legislation in the province. The Act establishes the powers and responsibilities of provincial and municipal governments.

The *Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (LAEMR)* (appendix B) came into effect on January 1, 2020. The LAEMR provides direction on emergency management roles, responsibilities and requirements for municipalities. The LAEMR provides the requirements for the Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC), Emergency Management Agency (EMA), regional collaboration, and emergency management planning, training and exercises.

In the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) the *Emergency Management Bylaw* (25/008) (see appendix C) outlines responsibilities of the EMA. The Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) outlines the structure and decision-making process during emergencies and disasters, highlights procedures, processes and identifies key roles for responders.

EMS 010 (replaces ADM-240) (see annex N) defines the roles and responsibilities of Municipal Departments and Branches that may be required to support incident response.

3.1 Reporting Structure and Governance

Reporting structure and governance is outlined below, representing information from Bylaw 25/008, the RMWB's Emergency Management Bylaw. The Emergency Management Bylaw was updated in 2025 replacing Bylaw 18/006.

3.1.1 The Local Authority

In accordance with *The Act*, the local authority is responsible for the direction and control of the municipality's emergency response. The local authority is also responsible for preparedness and maintenance of emergency plans and programs through *The Act (2025), Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008* and the *Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (2020)*.

3.1.2 Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC)

As per *The Act*, the Local Authority must establish an Emergency Advisory Committee. The EAC is comprised of Mayor and two (2) Councillors, as per municipal Bylaw 25/008. The EAC requirements are outlined in Sec. 11.1(1) of *The Act (2025):*

> *A local authority shall appoint, subject to the regulations, an emergency advisory committee consisting of a member or members of the local authority or, in the case of an improvement district, a special area or a national park, a person or persons the local authority designates, to advise on the development of emergency plans and programs, and to exercise any powers delegated to the committee under section 11.3(1)(a).*

To provide additional direction and clarity on the requirements outlined in *The Act (2025)*, the RMWB has Emergency Management Bylaw No. 25/008. The EM Bylaw sets administrative responsibility, requirements and structure within the Local Authority. As per Bylaw 25/008, the EAC is required to meet at least twice per year to review emergency plans, programs, and make recommendations. The EAC is chaired by the mayor, and includes the following additional responsibilities:

a) Declaration of a State of Local Emergency (SOLE), as specified in Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008

b) Advising Council on the status of emergency management plans and programs
c) Providing updates on the status of emergency preparedness in the Municipality, at least once each year
d) Reviewing any Emergency Management policies developed by the CAO for adoption by Council
e) Reviewing the annual business plan and budget as developed by the DEM

The members of the EAC serve as liaisons for all elected officials. Meetings must be held, at least annually, as per governing provincial emergency management legislation. EAC meetings also provide an opportunity for members to bring emergency management related concerns forward from constituents.

3.1.3 Emergency Management Agency

The *Alberta Emergency Management Act* (2025) stipulates that the local authority must establish an Emergency Management Agency (EMA) to act as the agent of the local authority in exercising its powers and duties, which includes the appointment of a Director of Emergency Management. As per Section 11.2.(1):

> *A local authority shall establish and maintain, subject to the regulations, an emergency management agency to act as the agent of the local authority in exercising the local authority's powers and duties under this Act.*

Responsibilities of the EMA, chaired by the Director of Emergency Management (DEM) include:

a) report to the EAC at least once per year
b) approve and administer emergency management plans
c) implement command, control and coordination system as per legislation
d) include external organizations in the development of emergency management plans

3.1.4 Chief Administrative Officer

The role of the Chief Administrative Officer is to appoint a Director of Emergency Management and serve as the caveat between the DEM and EAC. The roles and responsibilities of the CAO, related to emergency management are outlined in Sections 18-21 of Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008. These requirements include:

a) Appoint a Director of Emergency Management
b) Appoint Deputy DEM's, as required
c) Approval of the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and corresponding plans
d) Advise the Mayor and EAC on declaration of a SOLE, in consultation with the DEM
e) Declare a SOLE should the mayor and members of the EAC be unavailable to do so
f) Ensure business continuity plans are activated within the organization
g) Establish spend limits and reporting requirements for an emergency response
h) Ensure information sharing with Elected Officials
i) Encourage organizational participation in training, exercises and preparedness

3.1.5 Director of Emergency Management

The role of the Director of Emergency Management (DEM) is to ensure emergency preparedness and to oversee all functions of Emergency Management within the Region, as set out in *The Act*. Additional responsibilities for the DEM come from Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008, and include the following:

a) development and maintenance of the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)
b) development of business plans and budgets for approval
c) annual reporting to the EAC

d) consultation regarding declaration of a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)
e) assume direction and control of the municipal emergency response

3.1.6 EMS 010

Updated in early 2026, EMS 010 is an administrative order, approved by the CAO. This order details Emergency Management roles and responsibilities within the Municipal organization and is an additional governing document intended to support emergency response throughout the organization (Annex N).

3.2 State of Local Emergency

The Alberta *Emergency Management Act* specifies the authority with respect to the declaration, renewal, and termination of a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) as well as the powers delegated to the local authority once a SOLE is declared. Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008 aligns with *The Act* and provides additional guidance for declaring a SOLE. Parameters for the Local Authority to declare, or terminate, a SOLE can be found in Sections 21-22 of *The Act* and are summarized below:

a) Must identify the nature of the emergency
b) Must indicate which area the emergency exists in
c) Must identify which powers may be utilized during the emergency
d) Must publish the declaration to notify impacted residents
e) Must provide a copy of the declaration to the Minister
f) Must renew or terminate the declaration at the end of 7 days unless declared in relation to a pandemic

In accordance with *The Act,* the Minister may revoke a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) if the declaration is deemed inappropriate. The declaration of a SOLE provides extraordinary powers only for the area of the municipality that is directly affected by the declaration. Powers available under a SOLE are outlined below (see Table 1):

Table 1

POWERS AVAILABLE UNDER STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY	CAO*	DEM**
Activate the Regional Emergency Management Plan or related plans and programs	X	X
Control or prohibit travel to or from an area of the Region	X	X
Authorize the conscription of persons needed to meet needs of emergency	X	X
Fix prices of goods and services to ensure price stability during the emergency	X	X
Authorize acts necessary to respond to the emergency, not specified in Section 19(1) of *The Act.*	X	
Provide for the restoration of essential facilities, distribution of essential supplies and provide essential services prior to re-entry to impacted area(s)	X	X
Cause the evacuation of persons, livestock, and personal property from any area of the Region and arrange care for those persons, as required		X
Acquire or utilize any real or personal property considered necessary to prevent, combat, or alleviate the effects of an emergency or disaster.		X
Authorize entry into any building or land, without warrant, while implementing an emergency plan or program		X
Cause the demolition or removal of any trees, structures or crops if necessary or appropriate to reach the scene of a disaster to stall or combat its progress		X

***Note**: The CAO can delegate these powers and may authorize any person, at any time, to exercise powers granted the CAO for the part of the Municipality impacted by the SOLE. In the absence of the CAO, extraordinary powers delegated to the CAO are assumed by the Acting CAO or the DEM.*

***Note**: The DEM can delegate these powers and may authorize any person, at any time, to exercise powers granted the DEM for the part of the Municipality impacted by the SOLE. In the absence of the DEM, all powers delegated to the DEM are delegated to the Deputy DEM.*

3.3 Operational Structure

The Emergency Management Department coordinates preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts through the operation of the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC). Emergency management requires collaboration with municipal departments, external agency partners, and the provincial government.

Municipal departments may have incidents that would impact services to residents and therefore would be required to respond should an issue arise. In these circumstances, the department responsible for the incident, would take the lead on the response, establishing Incident Command, and coordinating with the Director of Emergency Management (DEM) to stabilize the incident and restore services as quickly and safely as possible. Support functions may be established through the RECC, and the Incident Management Team (IMT).

When individual capacity to deal with an incident is exceeded by an emergency, municipal emergency resources are requested and applied. This is the first level of activation for the Municipality. If these resources become exhausted, the Municipality may access mutual aid resources from adjacent municipalities or industry partners.

If an incident expands beyond the capacity of the Municipality, additional resources may be requested through the province, specifically through the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC). In turn, if resources are beyond the capacity of the province, they may be requested by the province, through the Federal government (Public Safety Canada) and the Government Operations Centre (GOC). Emergency management partners, including industry and non-government organizations (NGOs) contribute to planning, response, and recovery efforts at all levels.

3.3.1 Indigenous Partnerships and Emergency Response

The RMWB is a specialized municipality, with First Nations' reserves within regional boundaries. First Nation Reserve lands are independent of Municipal jurisdiction. First Nations' hold all rights and responsibilities for emergency management activities that occur on Reserve lands, including the support of *on reserve* Members when an evacuation is ordered. First Nations members living *off reserve* are the responsibility of the RMWB.

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is the governing body responsible for funding emergency management activities for First Nations. The Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP) provides funding for First Nations' emergency management activities, although not all activities are eligible for funding through this program.

Should an emergency or disaster become multi-jurisdictional and threatens a First Nation, the Municipality's Director of Emergency Management (DEM) connects with the DEM of the First Nation to discuss concerns and share information.

AEMA First Nations Field Officer(s) and the Local Authority Field Officer(s) may also liaise to support the respective responses in a coordinated fashion. Should additional supports or resources be required, all requests must be formalized from one DEM to another. If requested, the Municipality may assist a First Nation if resources and capacity allow through the establishment of a formal agreement outlining specific services and supports to be provided and cost responsibility and recovery.

The six Métis Nations in the RMWB - Chard Métis, Conklin Métis Local, Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, Fort McKay Métis Nation, Fort McMurray Métis 1935, and Willow Lake Métis Nation – fall under municipal responsibility for emergency management. Collaboration and coordination with First Nation DEMs and Métis Emergency Management Partners occurs regularly during the planning and preparedness phases of emergency management, to ensure valuable knowledge and insight is not lost.

4.0 COMMUNITIES IN THE REGION

4.1 An Overview of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Stretching from north central Alberta to the borders of Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories, the RMWB is one of the largest municipalities in Canada. Topography is rugged as the Municipality encompasses boreal forest and the Canadian shield. The Region is rich in natural resources.

The Municipality includes one Urban Service Area – Fort McMurray – and nine rural communities: Conklin, Janvier, Anzac, Gregoire Lake Estates, Saprae Creek Estates, Draper, Fort McKay, Fort Chipewyan, and Fort Fitzgerald.

The Urban Service Area is the main hub for all services in the region. The Urban Service Area is a full-service community and supports all rural communities in the region for services, goods, supplies, recreation, healthcare and education. With nearly 84,000 residents, not including a shadow population of workers coming in and out of the community for work, Fort McMurray continues to grow and meet the needs of the residents in the Region.

4.1.1 Demographics

Table 2

2025 Census Data by Community

Community	Population	Pets	Dwellings
RURAL COMMUNITIES			
Anzac	659	274	255
Conklin	229	90	104
Fort Chipewyan	641	118	274
Fort Fitzgerald	13	34	13
Fort McKay	60	20	27
Gregoire Lake Estates	199	73	82
Janvier	77	67	87
Saprae Creek Estates	786	327	260
Draper	137	76	53
URBAN SERVICE AREA			
Timberlea	38,038	8,157	13,864
Parsons Creek	4,386	714	1,776
Thickwood	16,405	4,327	5,898
Waterways	266	102	105
Downtown	12,811	1,160	5,345
Abasand	4,656	1,206	1,716
Beacon Hill	2,016	640	694
Gregoire	3,770	999	1,494
Saline Creek	45	11	15

Note: First Nations peoples living on reserve are not reflected in Municipal Census Data

4.2 Rural Communities

A Community Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) for each community in the Region can be found at rmwb.ca/CEMP. The community plans reflect the uniqueness of each area in the region and identify hazards, risks, priorities and demographics for the individual communities. The CEMPs exist to ensure a focus on community-based emergency planning, rather than attempting to apply a "one size fits all" approach to emergency management. Detailed census data for each rural community can be found HERE.

4.2.1 Conklin

Conklin is the southernmost community in the RMWB, located approximately 155 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray. It is located on Christina Lake and can be accessed from Highway 881.

Conklin has commercial facilities (gas station, post office, store, café, lounge, and lodging), a volunteer fire department and the Conklin Community School from ECS to grade nine, which is part of the Northland School District.

The Conklin Multiplex provides recreational and community services, including a municipal office, fitness area, arena, banquet hall, children's play area, food services, and mobile library access. The community also has several outdoor recreational areas for community use.

4.2.2 Janvier

The hamlet of Janvier is located between Anzac and Conklin, approximately 120 kilometres south of Fort McMurray, on the shores of Bohn Lake. Janvier is bordered by Chipewyan Prairie First Nation and home to Chard Métis. It can be accessed from Highway 881 as well as a small airstrip located in the community.

School aged residents attend Father R. Perin School, operated by Northland School Division, from ECS to grade nine. Community services include a volunteer fire department, a satellite RCMP detachment, municipal building, and outdoor recreational facilities.

4.2.3 Anzac

The hamlet of Anzac is on the eastern shore of Gregoire Lake and can be accessed via highway 881, approximately 45 km southeast of Fort McMurray.

Anzac is home to the Willow Lake Métis Nation and provides community services such as a volunteer fire department, Anzac Recreation Centre, outdoor recreation facilities, restaurants, fuel, and stores. The Anzac Community School educates children from ECDP-grade 5, while the Bill Woodward School educates those in grades 6-12.

4.2.4 Gregoire Lake Estates

Located on the shore of Gregoire Lake, the hamlet of Gregoire Lake Estates is accessed from Highway 881 between Gregoire Lake Provincial Park and Fort McMurray First Nation 468, approximately 35 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray. There are no services located in Gregoire Lake Estates,

however, there is access to fuel and a store on Fort McMurray First Nation 468 Reserve and additional services in Anzac. Emergency services also come from Anzac volunteer fire department.

4.2.5 Saprae Creek Estates

Saprae Creek is an acreage hamlet approximately 25 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray. Saprae Creek is situated on the crest of the Clearwater River Valley. Some residents of Saprae Creek have small "hobby farms", which include a variety of barnyard animals. Saprae Creek is accessible by road from Saprae Creek Trail (formerly Hwy 69).

Saprae Creek does not have retail stores, but does have a volunteer fire department, and recreational facilities at Vista Ridge All Seasons Park including snow skiing, golf, skating and other facilities.

4.2.6 Draper

The community of Draper is primarily made up of acreages built along the banks of the Clearwater River. Access to the community is through Waterways and provides residents with direct access to all services within Fort McMurray. Draper has no commercial or emergency services, receiving both from Fort McMurray.

4.2.7 Fort McKay

The hamlet of Fort McKay is located 58 kilometres north of Fort McMurray on the west bank of the Athabasca River. Fort McKay is home to Fort McKay Métis and is adjacent to Fort McKay First Nation. The community of Fort McKay can be accessed from Highway 63.

Services include a volunteer fire department, Fort McKay School (ECDP to Grade 6), Fort McKay Community Centre, an amphitheatre, Fort McKay Arena, wellness centre, and the Fort McKay Elders Centre.

4.2.8 Fort Chipewyan

Located on the northwest shore of Lake Athabasca, Fort Chipewyan is an isolated community, accessible only by air and water for the much of the year. The hamlet of Fort Chipewyan lies between two Reserves: Allison Bay and Doghead. Fort Chipewyan is home to Mikisew Cree First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation.

Residents rely on the development of a winter road for a short window during the winter months. The ability to construct and safely utilize the winter road is largely dependent on climate conditions, but allows residents to access materials, goods and services during the winter months, that may be more difficult to achieve during the rest of the year.

Community services include the Fort Chipewyan Airport, volunteer fire department, Mamawi Hall, Sonny Flett Aquatic Centre, Archie Simpson Arena, Athabasca Delta Community School - operated by Parkland School Division - and Fort Chipewyan Community High School. Fort Chipewyan is a full-service community with grocery stores, restaurants, and lodging.

4.2.9 Fort Fitzgerald

Located on the border of Alberta and the Northwest Territories, Fort Fitzgerald is the northern most hamlet in the municipality. The nearest urban centre is Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, 25 km north. Fort Fitzgerald can be accessed from the south along the Wood Buffalo Winter Road to Fort Chipewyan, from the northwest on Highway 5 and by the Slave River waterway.

4.3 Transportation

Being a remote northern community, transportation is essential to community operations, access and the safety of residents. Transportation options to and from the Region include access via highway, air and rail – for the movement of industry goods. Additionally, access via the river systems is possible to some communities, as well as access via winter road, during winter months, to Fort Chipewyan.

4.3.1 Transit

RMWB Transit provides bus service within the urban service area of Fort McMurray and to the surrounding communities of Fort McKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Anzac, Conklin and Janvier, providing over 4,400 journeys per day. Fixed route and paratransit service is provided 7 days per week with a fleet of 60 conventional, 12 specialized buses and 3 contractor-operated routes.

4.3.2 Canadian National Railway (CN Rail)

The Municipality is serviced by CN Rail. This is a 320 km railway that runs from Lynton (just east of Fort McMurray International Airport) to Boyle where it connects to CN's mainline and continues south to Edmonton. Rail transportation to the Region only services the oilsands and timber industries. There are no passenger services to the Region. Rail traffic runs adjacent to the rural communities of Anzac, Janvier, and Conklin.

4.3.3 Highways

Fort McMurray and Fort McKay are connected to Edmonton via Highway 63. Fort McMurray is also serviced by Highway 881, a corridor that connects the southern rural communities and Lac La Biche to the urban service area of Fort McMurray. Winter roads are constructed and maintained each year to supply land access from Fort McMurray to Fort Chipewyan, and then on to Fort Smith, Northwest Territories and to Saskatchewan via the La Loche Winter Trail.

4.3.4 Air

The Fort McMurray International Airport (YMM) is 13 km southeast of Fort McMurray. It is the largest airport in northern Alberta, with daily flights to Edmonton and Calgary. The airport is managed by the Fort McMurray Airport Authority, a community-based not-for-profit organization. The airport is critical for the receipt and delivery of goods and supplies when egress is impacted by an emergency in the Region. The airport has its own fire and emergency services and engages the RMWB's emergency management branch to collaborate on training and exercise opportunities.

Fort Chipewyan Airport (YPY) services the remote community of Fort Chipewyan, located 300 km north of Fort McMurray and 8 km north of the community. Operated by the Municipality, YPY is an all-weather facility with a maximum runway length of 1,524 meters (5,000 feet). The Fort Chipewyan airport is the hub for transporting goods, services and people to the community during most of the year, operating seven days a week for most of the year. As per Canadian Airport Regulations (CARs), an annual exercise is conducted to ensure continued operation.

4.3.4.1 Additional Airstrips

A landing strip is available in the rural community of Janvier and is used for emergency medical airlifts and private aircraft. There is no scheduled air traffic for the Janvier airstrip. The Snye aerodrome is accessible airspace for float planes to land and takeoff. Conklin also has an airstrip that can be accessed for medical evacuations as required.

In addition to these airports, there are twelve active and six abandoned private airstrips operated by oil companies to support oilsands operations. These airstrips are generally used to fly the workforce in and out of the Region.

4.3.5 Bridges

Three major bridges traverse the Athabasca River on Highway 63, connecting the north and south Fort McMurray. The Grant MacEwan Bridge provides traffic flow south with direct access to downtown Fort McMurray via the Franklin Avenue tunnel. The Steinhauer Bridge connects three southbound lanes of traffic on Highway 63, and the Athabasca Bridge provides five lanes to northbound traffic.

A fourth bridge, the Peter Lougheed Bridge (commonly known as "*The Bridge to Nowhere"*), is located north of Fort McKay, Alberta. There are also several secondary bridges that span rivers and creeks within the Municipality. Loss of any bridge in the region has the potential to create delays, egress and supply issues for the Region.

4.4 Hospital, Medical Facilities & Nursing Homes

A variety of community-based and acute care health services are available to the population. These services include:

- The Northern Lights Regional Health Centre (NLRHC)
  - 123 bed facility
  - 24-hour emergency care
  - Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
  - Complete surgical services
  - Radiology
  - Medical laboratory
- Willow Square Continuing Care Centre
  - 108 beds
  - Private, personal living space and care for adults and seniors
  - 24/7 care and support
- Rotary House Seniors Lodge
  - Retirement home in downtown Fort McMurray.
- The Nunee Health Board Society
  - Located in Fort Chipewyan
  - Nursing station
  - Wellness centre
  - Home care
  - Public health
- Kahkiyow Keykanow Elders Care Home
  - AHS Facility in Fort Chipewyan

5.0 RISK ENVIRONMENT

The success of any emergency management plan is contingent on understanding risks and vulnerabilities, and how they could impact a community. The purpose of the planning process is to produce a realistic analysis of the hazards a community faces and develop a program for prevention/mitigation and response that will deal with hazards, whether anticipated or not.

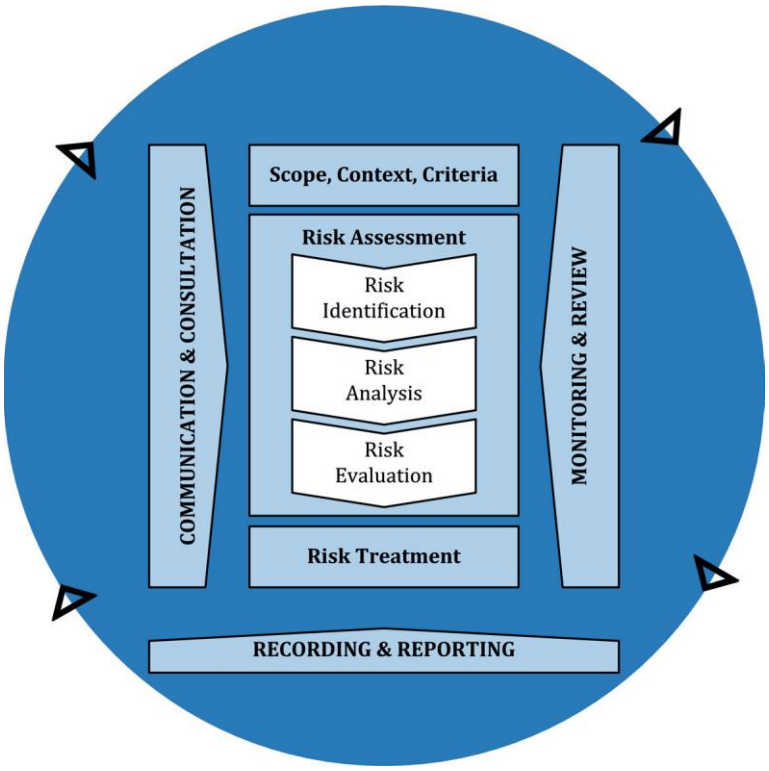
An updated Hazard Identification Risk Analysis (HIRA) is underway for the Region in 2026. While some aspects of the HIRA have been completed, results are not anticipated until 2027. The HIRA will replace the HRVA in the Regional Emergency Management Plan moving forward.

5.1 Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis

The Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) is a systematic analysis and ranking of the risks, hazards, and vulnerabilities – both natural, human, and/or technological - that may impact public health and safety, property, or the environment. Each risk is ranked based on the probability of its occurrence and the potential severity of its impact.

The HRVA model used for this analysis follows the risk management process described in the "*CSA ISO 31000:18, Risk management — Guidelines*" (see figure 4).

Figure 2
Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis Model



5.1.1 Hazard

A potential damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption, or environmental degradations. Hazards could include natural forces (such as wind, drought, etc.) or technological induced threats (such as aircraft incidents, motor vehicle collisions, industrial accidents, explosions, etc.)

5.1.2 Risk

The probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses (deaths, injuries, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions.

5.1.3 Likelihood

Likelihood reflects the frequency of occurrence for a particular hazard event and can range from rare events occurring every 200 years to more frequent events, which usually have a high number of recorded incidents or anecdotal evidence.

5.1.4 Vulnerability

A condition or set of conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes that increases the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. Vulnerability is a measure of how well prepared and equipped a community is to minimize the impact of or cope with hazards.

5.1.5 Severity

The severity of any risk can be quantified as follows:

- **Likelihood** of a risk is the chance of an event or an incident happening, whether defined, measured or determined objectively or subjectively.
- **Impact** of a risk, sometimes called its consequence, is the effect that a risk will have on the assets-at-risk should the hazard or threat develop into a disruptive event or incident

In 2020 a Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) was completed with input from internal RMWB departments, external partners, and stakeholders. The severities are a product of *Likelihood x Impact.* Natural and human-caused hazards in the Municipality were mapped and scored as:

- Insignificant
- Minor
- Moderate
- Major
- Catastrophic

The information produced from a HRVA enables Elected Officials, Administration, and the Emergency Management Branch to address community vulnerability and support funding and programs to enhance community resilience.

5.2 Hazards in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Prioritization of the risks supports, risk-informed, interdepartmental decision-making, such as program delivery and assessments. The following table provides the final output of the risk analysis process (see Table 4).

The Risk Analysis Summary is a prioritized ranking based on the evaluated severity and likelihood for each risk event. In addition, the use of HRVA risk criteria colour coding groups the risk events from *extreme risk* to *very low risk.* The changing potential impacts of likelihood, resulting from climate change influences, is also reflected in the table below. To allow some preliminary consideration of the effects of climate change on the likelihood of risks facing the RMWB, a time frame of 10 years was adopted for this HRVA.

Table 3

Risk Analysis Summary

Risk Event	Severity	Likelihood	Climate Change Influence on Likelihood
WUI Wildfire	Major	High	Increasing
Ice Jam Flooding	Major	Moderate	Uncertain ****
Slope Instability	Moderate	High	Increasing
Cyber Attack	Minor	Very High	N/A
DG Release (rail, tractor)	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Fort Chipewyan Access	Moderate	Moderate	Increasing
Opioid Crisis	Moderate	Moderate	Uncertain
Water Availability	Moderate	Moderate	Decreasing
Train Derailment	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Aviation Accident	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Major Pipeline Release	Major	Low	N/A
Severe Summer Storm	Minor	High	Increasing
Air Contamination	Minor	High	N/A
Tailings Dam Dyke Failure	Catastrophic	Very Low	Increasing
Pandemic	Major	Low	Increasing
Severe Winter Storm	Moderate	Minor	Increasing
H2S Release	Moderate	Minor	N/A
Major Structural Fire	Moderate	Minor	N/A
Terrorist Attack	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Industrial Explosion	Moderate	Moderate	N/A
Utilities Disruption	Minor	Low	Increasing
Critical Infrastructure Failure	Minor	Low	Increasing
Significant MVA	Major	Very Low	N/A
Labour Disruption	**Minor**	**Very Low**	**N/A**

5.2.1 Hazard Overview

The Disaster Risk Matrix below is a qualitative risk matrix that graphically represents the likelihood and severity of the hazards identified to the RMWB. The arrows indicate the expected influence of climate change on the hazard event's likelihood:

- *Arrow to the right* indicates an expected increase in the hazard's likelihood due to climate change
- *Arrow to the left* indicates an expected decrease in the hazard's likelihood due to climate change
- *Question mark* indicates an uncertain influence of climate change on the hazard's likelihood

Table 4

RMWB Disaster Risk Matrix

RMWB Disaster Risk Matrix

Risk Treatment Considerations		
	Extreme Risk	Eliminate/Immediate Risk Treatment. These are extreme risks, unacceptably high, driven by relatively high likelihood and consequences. Immediate risk treatment required. Monitor rigorously.
	High Risk	Mitigate. These are high risks and warrant management action to reduce the likelihood or consequence of the risk. High priority risk treatment required. Monitor closely.
	Moderate Risk	Accept or Mitigate to ALARP (as low as reasonably practicable). These are moderate risks and may be relatively well understood and managed through the application of control measures or counter measures. Some risk treatment required to reduce to lower levels. May develop mitigation controls and/or contingency plans.
	Low Risk	Accept. Low risks are common place and should be monitored and accepted. Additional risk treatment not likely required.
	Very Low Risk	Accept. Risk events do not require further consideration.

Likelihood Ranking *Likelihood Ranking Score*			Very Low 1	Low 2	Moderate 3	High 4	Very High 5
Likelihood Description			May only occur in exceptional circumstances. Has occurred in last 20 years	May occur and has occurred in last 10 years	Has occurred once within last 5 years	Has occurred twice in last 5 years	Has occurred 3 or more times in last 5 years
Severity	Catastrophic 5	10+ Fatalities > 100 Displaced Major infrastructure damages Long-term economic, social, and environmental impact	Tailings Dam Dyke Failure →				
	Major 4	5 - 10 Fatalities 25 - 50 Displaced Major infrastructure damages Short-term & widespread economic, social, and environmental impact	Significant MVA Pandemic Influenza →	Major Pipeline Release	Ice Jam Flooding ?	WUI Wildfire →	
	Moderate 3	<5 Fatalities >10 Injured 10 - 25 Displaced Widespread infrastructure damages Long-term and localized economic, social, and environmental impact		Terrorist Attack Industrial Explosion	DG Release Fort Chip Access → Water Availability ←→ Train Derailment Aviation Accident	Slope Instability →	
	Minor 2	0 Fatalities <10 Injured 5 - 10 Displaced Minor infrastructure damages Short-term and localized economic, social, and environmental impact	Labour Disruption	Utilities Disruption → Critical Infrastructure Failure →	Severe Winter Storm → H2S Release Major Structural Fire	Severe Summer Storm →	Cyber Attack
	Insignificant 1	0 Fatalities <5 Displaced Minor infrastructure damages Minor economic, social, and environmental impact					

Note: The RMWB Disaster Risk Matrix was last updated in 2020 by Associated Engineering

5.3 High Risk Events

5.3.1 Wildfires

Wildfires in the RMWB are a significant risk to residents as communities in the Region are surrounded by boreal forest. Where Alberta Wildfire jurisdictions are concerned, the RMWB encroaches on two different Forest Areas: Lac La Biche to the south, along Hwy 881, just north of Janvier, and the Fort McMurray Forest Area throughout the rest of the Region.

Wildfire is a natural and frequent occurrence within the RMWB. In the last 25 years the RMWB experienced several Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) wildfires that impacted residents of First Nations, rural communities and the urban service area.

The 2016 Horse River Wildfire impacted the entire Region and forced the evacuation of nearly 80,000 residents from the urban service area, and damaged more than 2,400 structures. The 2023 and 2024 wildfire seasons saw the evacuation of Fort Chipewyan and southern Fort McMurray, respectively.

When an evacuation order is issued, it becomes the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure the safety of residents and to provide adequate care, such as food and shelter, for individuals who may require it due to lack of insurance or alternative solutions. This requirement comes from Section 19 of the Alberta Emergency Management Act. Prior to returning home, re-entry plans are established to ensure the safe return of residents to their community.

Climate change related factors, such as increased temperatures in spring and summer, longer fire seasons, and reduced precipitation are likely to cause a significant increase in the annual likelihood of wildfire events in the RMWB (Walkinshaw, 2017). With climate change factors, the likelihood of wildfires having more detrimental impacts on communities is on the rise.

5.3.2 Ice Jam Flooding

Because of the confluence at the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers, and the connection to the Athabasca River Basin, the RMWB is prone to riverine flooding. River breakup is an annual event in the RMWB and poses the greatest flood-related risk to the region.

River breakup occurs when spring snowmelt enters the basin causing the river ice to break near the urban service area before it has fully thawed. This occurrence increases the risk of flooding for the lower townsite and other areas in Fort McMurray when large chunks of ice may push together, creating an ice jam. The ice jam is then unable to move freely through a river system, forcing water levels to back up and rise behind the ice jam. When water levels are impacted significantly and riverbanks are no longer able to contain the water, flooding occurs.

Normal river elevation of the Clearwater River is 241.2 metres above sea level. Flood conditions develop when the water levels rise to 243.3 metres. Since 1835, 15 of 16 floods in the Urban Service Area (USA) have been ice jam floods.

The 2020 Fort McMurray flood event reached a 1:100-year water levels impacting several areas including Downtown, Waterways, Draper, and low-lying areas of Taiganova. This flood impacted the municipal Under Ground Services (UGS) building, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

Approximately 13,000 people were evacuated and about 1,230 structures were affected. Climate change influences on the likelihood of ice jam flooding depends on a complex interplay between freeze-up and break-up mechanisms, river flow timing, and river and ice interactions with the surrounding environment (Turcotte et al., 2019). Considering climate change influence on precipitation, temperature, and ice jam is assessed as *high*, the RMWB approved additional funding and resources to complete mitigation projects reaching beyond the initial scope. This may minimize impacts of future flood events.

Permanent berm construction is nearly complete and seasonal flood mitigation measures are deployed annually in preparation for river breakup. These measures will support future ice jam flooding events, reducing the impacts of overland flooding on developed areas, not preventing flood events. The effectiveness of these mitigation measures remains unknown. As a result, the related risk resulting from future ice-jam-related flooding in the region was assessed as uncertain.

5.3.3 Slope Instability

The geological conditions within the RMWB, specifically within certain Urban Service Area neighbourhoods, present hazardous slope movement conditions. Regional slope instability is continually monitored and assessed by geotechnical engineering. Loss of vegetation attributed to the 2016 Horse River Wildfire on slopes adjacent to the at-risk neighbourhoods exacerbated this condition. As such, shallow slope failures are expected to increase (Thurber Engineering Ltd., 2017).

Climate change is very likely to increase the likelihood of extreme summer precipitation events. In addition, increasing WUI fire risk will increase the likelihood of erosion-prone slopes, beyond those already exacerbated by the 2016 Horse River wildfire. For these reasons, the direction of change of slope instability risk to RMWB, because of climate change, was assessed as *increasing*.

5.3.4 Cyber Attack

A cyber attack "includes the unintentional or unauthorized access, use, manipulation, interruption or destruction (via electronic means) of electronic information and/or the electronic and physical infrastructure used to process, communicate and/or store that information" (Public Safety Canada, 2010, p.3).

Cyber attacks pose a significant threat to the RMWB's critical infrastructure. There are also potential economic impacts to residents. With the changing landscape of internet use – more people using the internet more often for everyday tasks - Canadians, and their employers are more susceptible to cyber attacks (Communications Security Establishment [CSE], 2022). The impact of municipal level cyberattacks can erode confidence in government and increase threats to daily operations (Public Safety Canada, 2019).

5.3.5 Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Materials

The Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Act of Alberta defines Dangerous Goods (DG) as "a product, substance, or organism included by its nature or by the regulations in any of the classes listed in the Act's schedule" (Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Act [DGTHA], 2021, p. 2).

Further, a release is defined as "a discharge, emission, explosion, outgassing, or other escape of dangerous goods…from a means of containment being used to handle or transport the dangerous goods" (DGTHA, 2021, p. 3). There are extensive volumes of dangerous goods transported through the RMWB daily, increasing the likelihood of a DG incident.

The mode of transportation for dangerous goods includes rail and tractor trailer. The Lynton Rail Yard is located at the end of Saprae Creek Trail, near the community of Saprae Creek Estates. This is the access point for DG transportation via rail to and from the Municipality. The main corridors of Highway 63, Saprae Creek Trail, and Highway 881 are dangerous goods routes.

The transportation of DGs along these routes poses a risk to any community along the way. A DG vapour release could impact the urban service area and any adjacent communities. Additional impacts may be emergency services access to impacted areas. Certain DGs have an emergency evacuation requirement in case of release. Pipeline and on-site hydrogen sulphide (H2S) releases are addressed separately.

5.3.6 Air Quality

Air quality can be affected directly or indirectly by disasters, such as a chlorine gas release, H2S release, industry emissions, structural fire emissions, and wildfire smoke. The Wood Buffalo Environmental

Association (WBEA) has monitored air quality in the RMWB since 1997 when it was re organized into the WBEA. WBEA currently operates ambient and odour monitoring stations through top-notch technology to provide current and accurate monitoring data for the Region. The following figure illustrates the air quality health index utilized to determine health risks to residents.

Figure 3
Environment and Climate Change Canada

In addition, Fort McKay has developed a Fort McKay Air Quality Index (FMAQI) to assess nitrous oxide, ozone, and PM2.5 (airborne particulate matter that have a diameter less than 2.5 µm). The oilsands industry also maintains air quality testing protocols.

5.3.7 Water Availability

Natural and/or human causes may impact the ability of municipal water treatment plants to produce potable water for communities. Additional water concerns for the region are related to drought conditions.

Water management is the responsibility of all levels of government and restrictions may be implemented at any time to ensure water is being conserved for long term sustainability (Government of Alberta [GOA], 2024). The drought index for the province fluctuates year over year depending on projected precipitation and the monitoring of water and snowpack levels in basins, rivers, and lakes (GOA, 2024).

In the event of reduced availability, or lack of potable water, interruption to domestic and economic activities may occur. To support these situations, the Municipality has Continuity of Water Supply (COWs) plans. Compromised water quality may have detrimental impacts to residents if it is prolonged and would require additional collaboration and coordination among departments and external partners.

5.3.8 Pandemic and Infectious Disease

A pandemic is the widespread, large-scale outbreak of an infectious disease that causes an increase in morbidity and mortality, and which can also cause significant economic, social, and political disruption (Madhav et.al, 2017).

Typically, the World Health Organization (WHO) declares (and has the international authority to do so) a pandemic situation. In 2020, a worldwide pandemic created a plethora of concerns across the world. The RMWB was impacted as well as most other regions of the country. Public Health restrictions were implemented, and the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency was made to support enforcement of public health restrictions. The RMWB also declared local states of emergency on several occasions to gain extraordinary decision-making powers to support the pandemic response. It is not the

responsibility of emergency management to manage pandemic situations, however, emergency management may support certain functions, if formally requested to do so. The RECC will only be activated for these types of emergencies if there are organizational needs to track and support mandated responses, and to ensure business continuity for municipal services.

6.0 OPERATIONS

6.1 Regional Emergency Coordination Centre

The Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) is the established space where the municipal Incident Management Team (IMT) coordinates response to incidents. The RECC brings together representatives from municipal departments and partner agencies. Through this effort, the sharing of resources becomes more fluent. The RECC is equipped with specialized situational awareness technology, resources and tools used that support a more effective and efficient response.

6.2 Activation of The Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)

The REMP is activated by the Director of Emergency Management (DEM) in response to any event that has a significant community consequence. Timely activation is critical to maximize potential for life safety, minimize property loss, and to lessen negative impacts on the environment and economy. When necessary, the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), an Incident Command Post (ICP), or both, may be activated to support incident response. Activations occur under the direction of the Director of Emergency Management (DEM). An activation may result when *any* of the following criteria are met:

- The number of people who could be at risk is significant
- The event requires centralized decision making to mitigate impacts
- The event requires attention outside the scope of regular business activities
- The event is preplanned and requires active management to ensure public safety
- Multiple agencies are involved in the response
- The event has multiple response sites
- Resource coordination is required because of limited local resources
- Conditions are uncertain and an event may escalate
- Additional communications resources are required due to public and political interest
- A declaration of State of Local Emergency (SOLE) occurs

6.3 Operating Structure – Incident Command System

Most incidents are handled at the local level by emergency response personnel. Incidents may rapidly expand to become multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency responses. When this occurs, use of the Incident Command System (ICS) – a standardized incident management system – is implemented as per provincial regulations that direct Local Authorities.

ICS is designed to support incident management through coordination of resources, communication, planning, logistics and financial support related directly to the incident.

ICS is recognized as the preferred emergency management response system in North America, and many other countries. The principles and practices of ICS are the focus of any incident response. The primary purposes of using the ICS model are:

- Safety of responders and others
- Achieve incident objectives
- Effective and efficient use of resources

6.4 Principles of ICS

Based on fourteen principles, the ICS model allows for the standardization of processes and the integration of individuals, regardless of organizational affiliation, into an incident response. ICS training

is available to municipal employees and external partners in collaboration with the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). The fourteen principles of the Incident Command System (ICS) include:

- Management by Objectives
- Common Terminology
- Chain of Command and Unity of Command
- Establishment and Transfer of Command
- Modular Organization
- Manageable Span of Control
- Resource Management
- Integrated Communications
- Information and Intelligence Management
- Accountability
- Incident Locations and Facilities
- Incident Action Plan (IAP)

Implementing and abiding by the principles leads to higher rates of success when utilizing the Incident Command System.

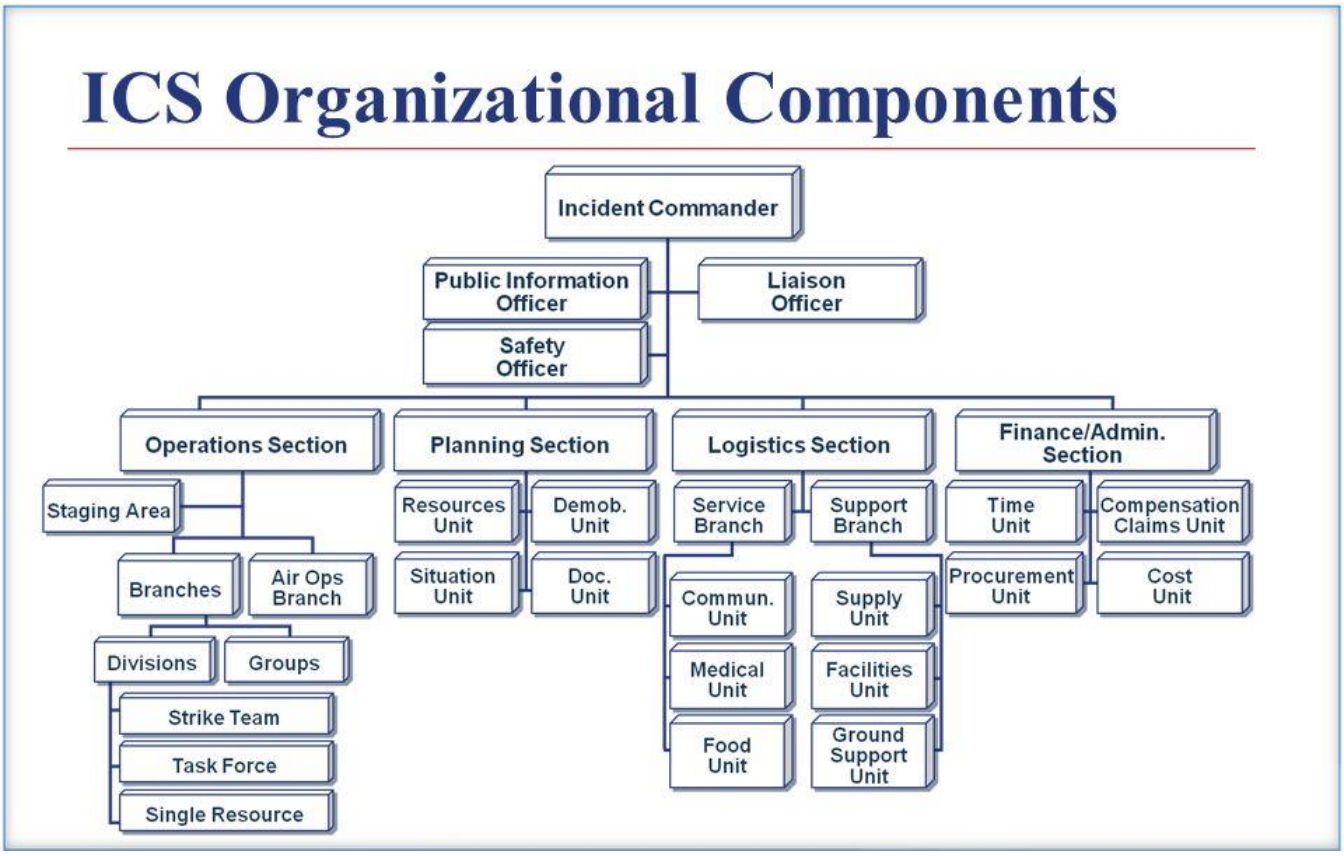
6.5 ICS Organization

The functions performed from the RECC are divided into five sections:

- Command (IC, Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer)
- Operations Section
- Planning Section
- Logistics Section
- Finance/Admin Section

ICS functions are overseen by Section Chiefs or the Incident Commander. Section Chiefs, along with Command Staff, report to the Incident Commander or Deputy IC as required. Under each section, there are units that support all incident needs and functions. The establishment of an ICS organization ensures effective resource management, safety and setting of incident objectives.

Figure 4
ICS Organization Chart (ICS 207)



Staffing requirements are identified by the Incident Commander or Section Chief and then filled based on incident size and complexity. For additional information on the establishment and functioning of an ICS organization, refer to annex G - Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) Manual 2025. Additional information on the use of ICS for Incident Management can be found in the Alberta Incident Management System (AIMS), see appendix D.

6.6 Levels of Activation

The magnitude and scope of the emergency will determine what level the RECC is activated to. This will also support determining required positions within the Incident Management Team (IMT). When the RECC is activated by the DEM, Incident Command System (ICS) positions are staffed according to activation level (figure 5). When the DEM determines that the RECC is no longer required for emergency response and recovery operations, the RECC will be demobilized.

Figure 5
RECC Levels of Activation

Level	Event/Situation	Activity
1 ROUTINE	• Routine daily activities and planning underway	• Level 1 Staffing • Enhanced awareness for developing incidents
2 MONITORING	• Potential threat identified • Pre-response readiness activities and enhanced monitoring of situation	• Level 2 Staffing • Virtual support may be adequate • Minimum staffing in RECC may be required • ICS forms *not* required – key activities and decisions tracked
3 PARTIAL	• Response decisions and actions required • Partial evacuation may be required • Includes action for planned events (parades, river breakup etc.) • Some resources/support required	• Level 3 Staffing • ICS forms required • Formalized operational periods required • Development of Incident Action Plan (IAP) implemented • Enhanced staffing required to support incident needs
4 FULL	• Enhanced response decisions and actions required • Involvement of multiple agencies and jurisdictions • Widespread evacuation may be required • Structural damage and impacts to critical infrastructure likely • Resource needs exceed local capacity • Declaration of State of Local Emergency (SOLE) likely	• Level 4 Staffing • ICS forms required • Formal operational periods required • Incident Action Plan (IAP) required • Heavy reliance on municipal staffing and external partners to support response

Level 1 Staffing: ROUTINE – Emergency Management Team performing normal day to day functions

Level 2 Staffing: MONITORING – Limited conscription of RMWB staff

Level 3 Staffing: PARTIAL– Command Staff, General Staff, SITL, DOCL, RESL, ESS Branch Director, other positions as identified by the IC or Deputy IC

Level 4 Staffing: FULL – All ICS positions as required

7.0 REGIONAL EVACUATION PLAN

An evacuation is the process of removing people from an area where a present or imminent danger is occurring. Incidents or emergencies that may warrant an evacuation will usually present one or more of the following characteristics:

- Threat to life safety
- Threat to, or risk of, significant property damage
- Threat to, or risk of, significant environmental impacts

Evacuation planning is intended to support potential evacuations of part, or in some cases, all, of a community. Evacuation routes have been developed for each community in the RMWB. Information on evacuation routes can be found in Community Emergency Management Plans (CEMP), which are available at www.rmwb.ca/CEMP.

Evacuation planning requires a level of flexibility for emergency responders. The goal in evacuation planning is to ensure the safe, effective, and coordinated evacuation of the area under threat, with life safety being the top priority when an evacuation is called.

Egress limitations create challenges for all communities in the Region. It is acknowledged that egress concerns may cause delays during an evacuation

7.1 Scope

The Local Authority will make every effort to balance the rights of individuals, protect personal property and reduce environmental impacts. As a result, evacuations should only be ordered under circumstances where life safety, property or the environment are at risk.

The scope of the Municipality's evacuation plan is determined during the planning process and depends on the following variables:

- Area being impacted (rural, urban, or combination of communities)
- What types of evacuation may be considered (vehicle, air, water)
- Roles other organizations and municipalities may play in supporting an evacuation
- Communication

7.1.2 Authority and Maintenance

The *Alberta Emergency Management Act (The Act)* grants a Local Authority the ability to cause the evacuation of persons, removal of livestock and personal property, from any area of Alberta that is or may be affected by a disaster.

The Act also requires a local authority to provide adequate care and protection of those persons, livestock, and personal property, as per section 19(1)(g). The authority to conduct evacuations is outlined in the RMWB's Emergency Management Bylaw (25/008).

7.2 Evacuation Plan Development

Evacuation planning is a combination of fundamental principles, specific hazard plans and require collaboration and coordination across internal departments, levels of government, and community agencies.

7.2.1 Pre-planning

When an evacuation alert or order is issued, the following considerations are being made:

- Is the area to be evacuated municipal jurisdiction?
- How much of the area may be threatened?
- What is the population of the impacted area?
- Are there additional jurisdictions involved? (Ex: First Nations Reserve Lands or Forest Protection Area)
- What are the requirements for supporting evacuated residents?
    - Are there vulnerable populations in the area?
- What are the evacuation routes?
    - Are there any egress concerns or barriers to those routes? (Ex: seasonal construction)
- Is there critical infrastructure in the area? (Ex: hospitals, firehalls, water treatment plants)
- What are the potential businesses/industry impacts?

7.2.2 Threat Assessment

A threat (risk) assessment is a process used by emergency authorities to determine the nature and extent of a risk through analysis of potential hazards and evaluation of existing conditions. Completion of a threat (risk) assessment allows authorities to make informed decisions with the best interests of the impacted area or community in mind. The steps in this process include:

- Hazard identification
- Information gathering
- Estimation of the consequences of the risk
- Frequency of the risk
- Severity of the risk

Real-time risk assessments are the most effective way to understand the impact that a hazardous situation is currently having. Based on the outcome of the real-time risk assessment, the type, category, and extent of an evacuation will be considered. This may also be called a situation “size up”.

7.2.3 Evacuation Populations

All activities and efforts are focused on effective and efficient evacuation when the need for an evacuation arises. Demographics include categories such as age, sex, income, race, religion, and socioeconomic status.

When considering evacuation of an area, these factors are considered to ensure the safest evacuation possible. To further assess evacuation, the following are also considered:

- Available transportation and potential limitations
- Location of Emergency Social Services (ESS) site(s)
- Persons who may require specialized or additional assistance (Vulnerable Persons Registrants)
- Populations in known areas of high risk (flood zones, near hazardous material storage)
- Languages spoken

The RMWB has developed and implemented a Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR), for individuals who live alone and may require additional support during an evacuation. A By Name List (BNL) for individuals living rough is also maintained.

The Vulnerable Persons Registry focuses on seniors, individuals with physical or developmental disabilities, cognitive impairments, or mental health challenges during an emergency. For personal

emergencies, registrants on the Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) have enhanced support through 9-1-1 Dispatch, informing emergency responders from fire and police of potential needs of the registrant.

The By Name List (BNL) was developed in partnership with the Wood Buffalo Wellness Society for the Coordinated Access System. The BNL includes individuals who are experiencing homelessness, or "living rough", in the Region and provides contact information for those individuals. Collaboration with the Living Rough Committee to establish emergency information and muster locations for individuals experiencing homelessness. Access to the BNL is supported by the RMWB's Community Services Division.

7.2.4 Prioritization of Evacuees

Different hazards may dictate variations in the criteria for populations as outlined above. If evacuees need to be prioritized due to a risk, priority would be as follows:

Stage 1 – Medical Evacuation (Medevac)

- Medevac is used for those individuals with high medical needs, residing in a health-care facility
- These individuals would be evacuated by Alberta Health Services under the Alberta Emergency Health Services Act
- If local conditions (e.g., smoke or inclement weather) prevent normal medical flights or transport, emergency medical evacuation assistance may be requested

Stage 2 – Vulnerable Persons Registry Registrants

- Includes registrants of the VPR program
    - Includes companion animals for VPR registrants where possible and applicable
- Other identified vulnerable populations as per above

Stage 3 – Remaining Residents (General Population)

- Includes any, and all, remaining individuals in an impacted area and their companion animals

Stage 4 – Responders

- Emergency responders (police, fire, EMS, peace officers etc.), as required for life safety

7.2.5 Evacuee Movement

Through the Live Incident Situational Awareness (LISA) tool, evacuation routes, status and traffic plans can be generated and monitored to support response. This tool was developed by municipal departments to enhance situational awareness and planning during an evacuation.

In most evacuation scenarios, evacuee movement will occur on roads and highways, in personal vehicles and via transit buses. Given the potentially large numbers of vehicles that may be accessing roadways, gradual or staged evacuations are ideal.

7.2.5.1 Traffic Management

Traffic management is critical to ensuring a safe and efficient evacuation. Additional routes for emergency vehicle access should be considered as evacuation planning is completed. Traffic management is supported by emergency responders (fire, police and Peace Officers) in the Region.

7.2.5.2 Air Evacuation

Some communities may require air support to achieve evacuation, due to a threat, or geographical location. Fort Chipewyan is one such community that will require support via air for approximately nine months each year. When air support is required, coordination of this will occur from within the Logistics Section of the RMWB's Incident Management Team (IMT). Use of the Logistics structure for this will provide oversight by the local authority.

7.2.5.3 Evacuation by Water

Some communities may also evacuate via water. The expansive waterway system that runs through the Urban Service Area (USA), connects into the Athabasca River, Lake Athabasca and beyond. These waterways allow for alternative methods of evacuation when roadways are not viable or present. Water evacuation presents an additional set of concerns as water levels decline. Evacuation supports are mobilized at strategic departure and arrival locations to support evacuees using this method of evacuation.

7.3 Evacuation Sectors

For evacuation purposes, the RMWB has been divided into the following sectors: rural north, rural south, the Urban Service Area (USA). These three primary sectors may be divided into sub-sectors based on an impacted area.

7.3.1 Rural North

Communities in the rural north sector are Fort Fitzgerald, Fort Chipewyan, and Fort McKay. In addition to these communities, there is consideration for oil sands, work camp and industry sites north of Fort McMurray. It is also important to note that these communities also have critical infrastructure.

7.3.2 Urban Service Area (USA)

Fort McMurray is considered the Urban Service Area (USA) – the area that provides services to most residents in the RMWB. Within the USA, critical infrastructure, residences, schools, leisure centres, stores and more can be found.

The USA is divided into ten neighbourhoods, which include North Parsons Creek, Timberlea (including Eagle Ridge and Stone Creek), Thickwood, Lower Townsite, Waterways, Draper, Abasand and Grayling Terrace, Beacon Hill, and Gregoire and Prairie Creek. Within each of these neighbourhoods, there are additional sub-neighbourhoods (for example the L's, and the B's in Timberlea). These sub-neighbourhoods are often based on local knowledge which is a tool used in supporting evacuation of a small area.

7.3.3 Rural South

Rural south includes all outlying communities from the USA, south of the Athabasca River. The rural south sector includes Saprae Creek Estates, Gregoire Lake Estates, Anzac, Janvier, and Conklin.

7.4 Evacuation Planning Maps

Planned evacuation maps are an excellent preparedness tool for effective evacuation. Socializing these maps, and corresponding zones to residents ahead of a potential emergency can make stressful situations easier. Planned evacuation maps were completed for Lower Townsite, Waterways, Grayling Terrace and Draper because of flood risk and potential inundation. As mitigation efforts continue, these

maps may be referenced for any all-hazards response. Evacuation zones and corresponding mapping support a timelier evacuation. Evacuation planning maps should include the following information:

- Clear description of the zone and its boundaries
- Number of Households in zone
- Estimated population in zone
- Evacuation Route for zone
- Identified hazards in zone
- Muster Points/Shelter Locations (if applicable) in zone
- Facilities and/or critical infrastructure in zone (health care, schools, childcare facilities etc.)

Evacuation zone maps are being developed and will be made available in Community Emergency Management Plans moving forward.

7.5 Evacuation Strategies and Alternative Measures

Evacuation method(s) are determined by community location, current hazard and threat level. Additional considerations may be included when determining when and how to minimize a threat to life safety, through evacuation. There are always risks with an evacuation, which may cause alternative routes or methods to be used to ensure life safety. When a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) is called, the Local Authority (DEM) can cause an evacuation of residents when life safety is at risk. An evacuation may also occur without a SOLE under the Municipal Government Act (MGA), when there is a risk to life safety, and time does not allow for the declaration of a SOLE.

7.5.1 Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place is an effective alternative to evacuation. Shelter-in-place refers to remaining inside your home, school, place of work, or other safe facility, during an emergency. The threat to life safety is less in a safe location than it would be if an evacuation is called. Shelter-in-place may be issued by the Local Authority (DEM) or by emergency responders responding to an immediate threat.

There are circumstances where an evacuation may cause more danger to residents than sheltering in a safe place. Some shelter-in-place scenarios may include the release of contaminants into the environment, excessive smoke from wildfire, inclement weather, and active aggressors. Shelter-in-Place may be the most appropriate measure if an evacuation would expose individuals to more risk, or if an incident requires stabilization before an evacuation can occur.

7.5.1.1 Shelter-in-Place Considerations

Environmental Contamination

Evacuations may be caused by contamination of the environment or critical infrastructure, or the result of chemical, biological, radiological, and/or nuclear releases. The presence of contaminants in an emergency area may complicate evacuation operations, resulting in the need for additional procedures and equipment to support these situations.

Emergency responders may not be able to enter an area without subjecting themselves to an unreasonable level of risk, which results in a need for quick access to necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to lessen the threat. If residents are unable to move through an impacted, without risk of contamination, sheltering in place would be the most viable option to protect human life.

Spread of Disease

Airborne disease is another type of contaminant that could require shelter-in-place measures. Individuals working in facilities, such as hospitals, may be exposed to airborne diseases that could result in a need for isolation or decontamination procedures. Decontamination could necessitate specialized screening and cleaning of resources before movement of people, requiring shelter-in-place.

Severe Weather

Severe weather (such as a tornado, winter storm, or heavy rainfall) may result in shelter-in-place alerts or orders to ensure life safety. Public notification and clear instructions on how to stay safe may also be required. Severe weather could also result in evacuation of some areas and shelter-in-place for others.

Air Quality

Extreme temperatures and smoke from wildfires are two additional threats to the region. In either of these circumstances, a shelter-in-place alert or order may be issued to provide community members with additional information on how to remain safe. Both circumstances may have detrimental impacts on people with pre-existing health conditions.

Incorporating air cleaning mechanisms in homes and large facilities may help individuals during times of heavy smoke or poor air quality. It should be highlighted that these risks have the potential to impact any part of the region, with spring and summer being the highest risks seasons.

Active Aggressor

While active aggressor situations would be led by law enforcement, support may be required from emergency management for messaging and public notification. Recognizing the RCMP have the RAVE app for resident notification, this is a subscriber-based tool and may not reach all impacted residents. Beyond that, emergency management would not be involved in these scenarios.

7.5.2 Evacuation

The decision to evacuate an area or shelter-in-place can be difficult. Emergency authorities must consider the incident priorities (life safety, incident stabilization and protection of property and environment) and make informed decisions based on the least amount of disruption to residents and the community.

A partial community evacuation can usually be supported by the local authority and community. This allows evacuees to stay as close to home as possible and lessens stressors for re-entry when the time comes.

Full, or large-scale evacuations often mean that evacuee supports will be required on a greater scale. When this occurs, neighbouring communities may be called upon to support evacuees through partnerships, and previously established memorandums of understanding (MOUs). The following strategies may be used to support the safe, coordinated, and orderly evacuation of people:

- **Partial evacuation:** used to delineate impacted areas and typically refer to a specific area, community or neighbourhood within the region
    - Number of evacuees should not overwhelm regional resources
    - Often involves on-scene activity by emergency responders who may direct and coordinate the evacuation

- **Phased evacuation:** used to minimize congestion when egress or evacuation routes are limited
    - Can support smooth flow of traffic and fewer resources being required to support initial evacuation

- **Full Evacuation:** Used for larger incidents that impact a significant portion, or multiple communities in the region. The threat is likely to cause far-reaching damage, compromising critical infrastructure and hindering evacuee movement
    - May quickly overwhelm regional resources, additional resources likely required
    - Requires extensive effort by emergency responders to coordinate, transport and support impacted populations
    - Alternate evacuation routes may be necessary

7.6 Alerts

An ***alert*** is used to inform a population of a potential or impending threat to their community. Alerts may be used for evacuations or to shelter-in-place. Alerts provide the threatened population with a warning and should allow time for residents to leave their homes on short notice. Alerts may also provide information to residents regarding evacuation routes, potential hazards during the evacuation and emergency social services (ESS). Alerts ***do not*** require a declaration of a state of local emergency (SOLE). When an alert is issued, registrants of the Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) are contacted and movement of those individuals is coordinated, as required.

7.7 Orders

An ***order*** is issued when there is an imminent threat to life safety. Under an order, the impacted population must depart a specified area *immediately.* The Local Authority is responsible for issuing orders under a State of Local Emergency (SOLE).

When an ***evacuation order*** is in place, individuals refusing to leave the area increase the risks for emergency responders and themselves. Individuals failing to leave an area under an order are not guaranteed any services, supports, or emergency resources, putting themselves at increased risk. During and after an order, access control to the impacted area is implemented to ensure public safety.

To ensure accountability and information sharing, it is critical that emergency responders (fire, police, peace officers, sheriffs, etc.) provide door to door evacuation notice to residents and encourage them to leave the area. Children cannot be forced by their guardians to remain in a home under imminent danger or an evacuation order. This grants law enforcement the authority to remove a child from an unsafe situation under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.

8.0 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Emergency communication is critical during any incident. Public information ensures that evacuees have the information they require to sustain evacuations and the incident. Responders require information to share with evacuees and effectively respond to incidents, in a calculated manner. Gaps in information lead to confusion, chaos and mistrust.

Internal and external, or public, communication methods vary depending on response requirements and responding agencies, however, emphasizing "trusted sources" of information can greatly support incidents as they unfold, eliminating false and inaccurate information. As a result, the following communication tools have been implemented to enhance communication during incidents:

- Alberta Emergency Alerts (AEA)
- MIR3
- Alberta First Responder Radio Communications System (AFRRCS)
- Rmwb.ca - Central hub for emergency information
- QR Code Tool
- RMWB social media + Trusted Sources of Information
- Media Relations
- Pulse customer service

8.1 Internal Communications

Internal communications focus on the ability of the Incident Management Team, specifically the Information Officer, to communicate with the entire organization during an incident. Whether seconded to support an incident response, or maintaining business continuity, employees require information that will allow them to adjust to the current situation. A responsibility of the Information Officer is to support these internal communications. The development of key messaging, and all staff emails supports this need.

8.2 Public Communications

Public communication is required of every response, through the Information Officer. The level of involvement will vary from incident to incident. The public expects accurate, timely and reliable information when an emergency occurs. When information is not available people turn to unreliable sources of information, creating additional problems for responders and the Incident Management Team. As a result, a robust Crisis Communications Plan (CCP) (annex C) has been developed in anticipation of emergency events. The CCP provides guidance on communications and processes, as well as pre-determined messaging and templates for evacuation alerts and orders. The CCP is reviewed and updated each year, and is constantly evolving based on best practices, and the changing communications landscape.8.2.1 Joint Information Centre (JIC)

A Joint Information Centre (JIC) can make a difference between effective and ineffective incident communication. The intent of a JIC is to bring Information Officers (and Assistant Information Officers – (AIOs)) from multiple lead response agencies together, to develop and provide coordinated public messaging that can then be shared on a variety of public platforms. This allows for all responding agencies to have the same accurate, reliable, and timely messaging.

8.3 Responder Communications

Responder communication is used among emergency responders to coordinate and facilitate incident stabilization and response. Capacity to support interoperability is critical for effective response and when this is not met, communication breakdown occurs, creating additional challenges. Key systems

that support responder communication are MIR3 and the Alberta First Responder Radio Communications System (AFRRCS).

Other tools, such as Microsoft Teams, SharePoint and email are effective resources used in communicating incident information between field responders and the Incident Management Team. Detailed, incident specific, communications plans are developed by the Communications Unit within the Logistics Section to clarify communication methods to be used during incidents. This also fosters interoperability among responding agencies and ensures clear assignment, use and understanding of responder communications.

8.4 Communication Tools

8.4.1 Alberta Emergency Alerts (AEA)

Alberta Emergency Alerts (AEA) may be sent out at different intervals of emergency response. An alert may be issued as part of pre-warning, evacuation, ongoing communications, or a re-entry program. An alert may include:

- A brief description of the nature and severity of the emergency
- Instructions on what to do next
- Details on where to go and what to take, if an evacuation occurs
- How to ensure your property is left safely
- Direction on companion animals and livestock evacuation (if applicable)
- Shelter-in-place instructions, if necessary
- Evacuation routes for the impacted area
- Where to find information

Upgraded by the province to integrate into the National Public Alerting System (NPAS) in 2023, the Alberta Emergency Alert system was adopted by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) that same year. With the adaptation of the AEA system, residents with cell phones can now receive broadcast intrusive alerts anywhere in the region, without requiring the AEA app.

The AEA system connects with cellphones within a specified geographical area, determined by the alert issuer, and will push broadcast intrusive (BI - formerly critical) alerts to all cellphones within that range. Critical alerts are issued when public safety is threatened, and time is limited. These alerts will interrupt all television and radio broadcasts and be pushed to any cell phone in the designated area.

Non-broadcast intrusive (NBI - formerly non-critical) alerts are only received by individuals with the app and are used to inform the public of a potential hazard. 24/7 support for AEA is available through the province and the RMWB has trained AEA alert issuers authorized to send alerts on behalf of the municipality, as required. For more information on the AEA system, and to find active emergency alerts in the province, click HERE8.4.2 MIR3

MIR3 is an automated notification system (ANS) used to communicate with members of the Incident Management Team (IMT), Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) Registrants, Emergency Social Services (ESS) Team and the municipal Safety department. The system also serves as a database for individuals trained in specific roles and functions within the IMT, simplifying the call out process.

MIR3 allows individuals to be pre-identified and grouped together for quick alerting in an incident. Profiles can receive phone calls, emails, text messages or a combination of all notification methods. This is a contracted service initiated and supported by the Emergency Management Department.

8.4.3 Alberta First Responder Radio Communications System (AFRRCS)

The Alberta First Responder Radio Communications System (AFRRCS) was introduced provincewide in response to a need for heightened interoperability among emergency responders. The system became operational in July 2016 (Government of Alberta [GOA], 2024b). The key feature of AFRRCS is the ability of interagency responders to share talk groups, allowing more effective coordination of on-scene emergency response. The AFRRCS system is used in day-to-day operations for emergency responders across the region.

8.4.4 QR Code Tool

The QR Code Tool was developed in response to information gaps between emergency responders and the public during evacuations. In circumstances where an evacuation may impact enough residents to activate Emergency Social Services (ESS), the dual purpose QR Code Tool may be used.

First, emergency responders can quickly scan the code to find up-to-date information that may be shared with evacuees; information such as registration centre locations, how to register, animal care and rescue, and how to access additional resources. The large 'sticky note' QR code was designed in high-vis colours, allowing emergency responders to 'mark' residences that had been attended for door-to-door notification during an incident.

The large QR codes remain on the door of the residence, and residents are provided with a smaller pocket-sized version of the QR code that they can take with them as they evacuate. This simple tool functions to enhance interoperability between emergency responders on the ground, the public, and the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) where supports are being coordinated and the QR Code Tool is updated. Information on the "back end" of the QR code is updated directly in the RECC.

8.4.5 Social Media + Trusted Sources of Information

Social media is an integral component of modern emergency communication with residents. As media and information consumption habits have shifted away from traditional outlets such as radio and television, many residents now receive real-time information through social platforms. These platforms enable the municipality to rapidly share accurate, timely and actionable information during emergencies.

The municipality strongly encourages residents to follow trusted and verified sources of information. During emergencies, a significant amount of time and resources are dedicated to monitoring social media and correcting misinformation and disinformation that can spread quickly online and create confusion or unnecessary concern.

For this reason, residents are strongly urged to rely on credible sources for emergency information, including official municipal and government channels such as the municipality's social media accounts and **rmwb.ca**. Information shared through unofficial or unverified sources may be inaccurate, incomplete or outdated.
During emergencies, the municipality may limit or disable comments on social media posts. This approach helps ensure information remains clear, accurate and focused on verified updates, while reducing the spread of misinformation, speculation or off-topic discussions. It also allows staff to prioritize timely communication and direct response efforts through appropriate channels, ensuring critical information is not missed or diluted.

While many residents now receive information through digital and social media platforms, traditional media outlets remain an important channel for reaching diverse audiences across the region. Local news organizations, including radio, print and broadcast media, play a critical role in ensuring emergency information reaches residents who rely on these sources for timely updates.
The municipality maintains strong and trusted relationships with media partners and works collaboratively with them during emergencies to share accurate, verified information with the public. When appropriate, the municipality will provide timely news releases, accommodate media interviews and hold media briefings to ensure the public receives consistent and up to date information.

8.4.6 RMWB.ca – Central Hub for Emergency Information

During an emergency, the municipality will publish all critical incident information at **rmwb.ca/alert**, including evacuation alerts and orders, States of Local Emergency (SOLE) declarations and other key updates. This page serves as the primary and most trusted source of information for residents.

All communications channels will direct back to this central hub. Information shared on social media, through media outlets and via other tactics such as advertising will reinforce and amplify updates from *rmwb.ca/alert*. This approach ensures residents can access consistent information, regardless of how they receive it.

9.0 SUPPLEMENTARY RESPONSE PLANS

9.1 Emergency Social Services Plan

The safety of residents is the primary motivation for evacuation. When residents are displaced due to an evacuation order, Emergency Social Services (ESS) may be activated to meet the immediate, basic needs of evacuees (annex A). These needs may include food, shelter, clothing, water, or other necessities.

The establishment and location of Registration Centers and Accommodations Sites will depend on the complexities of the incident. ESS has pre-determined facilities throughout the region that may be utilized in an emergency. These facilities vary in size and availability is dependent on the impacted area. The community will be notified of the establishment of a Registration Centre or other ESS Site via the RMWB website, social media, broadcast media, and press releases.

ESS may be activated to assist with operations at a muster point if the intended period of evacuation is relatively short. For evacuations that may require a longer evacuation time, Registration Centres will be set up at locations in a “safe zone”.

Registration Centres are designated facilities established to support evacuees through registration and provide access to ESS supports. Evacuees are encouraged to maintain personal emergency plans, however, individual circumstances may require additional support. Preferred short-term accommodation options include:

- A destination of the individual's choosing (e.g., relatives, friends)
- Accommodation arranged through insurance displacement coverage
- ESS Congregate or Group lodging (e.g., hotels, motels, group lodging facilities)
- A Registration Centre

Evacuees will be permitted to return to their homes and businesses as soon as possible after safety requirements and assessments have been completed.

9.2 Community Emergency Management Plans

Community emergency management plans (CEMP) are focused on community specific hazards, risks and vulnerabilities that could impact specific areas of the region. CEMP plans include the following elements:

- Three highest rated risks for identified community
- Defined evacuation perimeter (sector and sub-sector)
- Estimated number of residents in area (based on current census data)
- Population demographics for the area
- Estimated time required to evacuate area
- Pre-determined potential registration or evacuee centres in the area
- Public Information details and/or communication methods to be used
- Evacuation routes
- Consideration for staging area(s)

9.3 Animal Care and Rescue Plan

As a result of the need for animal care and rescue supports during the 2016 Horse River Wildfire, the first version of the Animal Care and Rescue Plan (annex B) was developed in 2017. Several plan activations have resulted in a robust, collaborative plan that engages animal support organizations throughout the Region.

The intent of the plan is to support evacuated community members with immediate animal care needs, as required. The Animal Care and Rescue Plan is the responsibility of Bylaw Services. Annual maintenance and review of the plan is required to align with REMP review. The Animal Care and Rescue Plan will be activated when animal support needs are identified during an emergency.

9.4 Additional Emergency Response Plans

Plans currently exist for high-risk hazards in the region. While these plans are not public facing, they have been developed to guide responders through different incident responses, support decision making processes and align with municipal and incident priorities. It is important to note that not all plans discussed, or annexed, are managed by the Emergency Management Branch. Interdepartmental collaboration is key to maintaining and ensuring regular review and update of each plan. Below is a list of additional plans included as Annexes to the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP):

- Crisis Communications Plan
- Continuity of Government – Pandemic Plan

- Operational Plans (RES)
- Dangerous Goods Manual
- Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) Manual
- Waste Management Plan
- Traffic Management Plan
- Damage Assessment Plan
- Re-Entry Plan
- Recovery Plan
- Continuity of Water Supply (CoWS) Plans
- River Breakup Plan
- Fire Control Plan

10.0 INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES

10.1 Resources

The following resource considerations will be made when an incident occurs, requiring the activation of the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC):

- Staging areas, base and camps (ex: parking lot for trucks, rest areas for personnel)
- Access routes and transportation needs
- Identification of skill requirements (personnel)
- Availability and accessibility of resources
- Repair and maintenance of resources
- Responder needs (food, shelter, water)
- Safety and security of persons (impacted residents and responders)
- Critical incident stress management (CISM)
- Extended response planning
- Deployment and demobilization of resources
  Pre-determined resource lists

The Resource Unit Leader (RESL) is responsible for ensuring that resources (both equipment and personnel) are checked into an incident and their status tracked as the incident progresses. This occurs

with collaboration between the Logistics and Operations Sections and is achieved through proper onboarding and check-in processes.

The RMWB has developed a QR code check in system for all personnel and equipment utilized during an incident. When resources are checked in, it allows the Resource Unit to quickly and efficiently monitor locations and the Time Unit to track time and ensure resources are receiving adequate rest periods. Attached to the check in is resource onboarding (important information), time sheets and expectations for the response. This information can be amended for the specific incident.

Accurate and efficient resource tracking is critical for tracking expenses, damages and other potential impacts in the aftermath of an incident. Resources can be requested by any Section or member of the Incident Management Team but must be approved by the Section Chief and/or the Incident Commander (or ECC Director if an ECC is established). Individual resource requests, exceeding $25,000, must be approved by the Incident Commander (or ECC Director), up to the approved limit, as outlined by the CAO and in alignment with Emergency Management Bylaw 25/008 and EMS 010.

All resource ordering is conducted through the Logistics Section via the Supply Unit and/or the Logistics Section Chief. No resource should be ordered without completion of an ICS 213-RR (resource request) form. This document supports resource tracking, completion of orders and cost tracking. 213-RR's cannot be fulfilled if the appropriate approval signatures have not been obtained.

10.2 Financial Considerations

Every incident has a financial component. Spending must be tracked in an efficient manner to support reconciliation, tax dollar stewardship, and payment to suppliers and partners. Financial considerations and processes are established ahead of an incident for simple activation during a response. The following are considerations for establishing financial processes:

- Extraordinary expenditures
- Authorization of expenditures
- System to be used
- Resource (personnel) considerations
- Potential for cost recovery
- Payment method for incidents

From experience, a comprehensive plan has been developed to support purchasing, tracking and payment of expenses during incidents. Use of shared documents allows the Logistics and Finance Sections to interact seamlessly, track and document all expenses. This information is then compiled into a comprehensive report after demobilization. Additional responsibilities of Finance in an incident are for personnel time, equipment time and expenses. All incidents will require responders to support, which incur expenses.

11.0 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RECOVERY & GRANT PROGRAMS

Emergency management recovery programs are present at different levels of government and aim to support effective, efficient recovery efforts in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Grant programs are used to aid planning, preparedness and mitigation efforts ahead of an incident. Without these programs the impacts of a disaster have the potential to financially devastate communities, especially those with limited resources.

11.1 Hazard Assistance Recovery Program (HARP)

The Hazard Assistance Recovery Program (HARP) (see appendix H), launched in 2025, is available through the Government of Alberta (GOA) to support Local Authorities with cost recovery of *some* eligible, uninsurable expenses, post-disaster. The HARP program replaces the Disaster Recovery Program (DRP) and the Municipal Wildfire Assistance Program (MWAP), amalgamating these programs under one umbrella with updated criteria and parameters. Not all incidents and disasters are eligible for cost recovery. Local Authorities must apply to the program and have the application accepted prior to submission of expenses.

The document outlining eligible expenses is the Disaster Assistance Directive (DAD), established in May 2025. Within the Disaster Assistance Directive, there are five (5) funding streams:

- Response
- Individuals and Small Businesses
    - Eligible Private Sector Response Expenses
    - Eligible Private Section Restoration Expenses

- Restoring Resilient Infrastructure
- Relief and Recovery Support
- Disaster Mitigation

For more information and detail on the Disaster Assistance Directive, see appendix G.

Proper and complete documentation must be available to submit eligible expenses under a HARP claim. Inadequate proof of eligible expenses will result in non-reimbursable expenses that the Local Authority will be responsible for. A stringent approval and tracking system are in place to ensure claims are maximized for the highest possible cost recovery.

Despite the cost recovery program, the Local Authority is still responsible for 10% of all reimbursable expenses, regardless of expense eligibility. This means that if the Local Authority claims $1,000 in eligible expenses, the HARP program would reimburse a maximum of $900, and the Local Authority would be responsible for the remaining $100. This cost sharing alleviates some stressors on a Local Authority, but also ensures ultimate responsibility remains in place.

Also of note is a graduated cost sharing structure for individual claims on properties, due to disasters. Previously, the DRP program has a "one and done" policy in place. The HARP program has a graduated policy where first time claims on a property would be eligible for 90:10 cost sharing, second claims 70:30, third claims 50:50. Beyond three claims, the property in question becomes ineligible for the HARP program.

11.2 Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA)

The Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement (DFAA) programs are managed by the Government of Canada, through Public Safety Canada and are designed to provide high level disaster assistance to provinces and territories impacted by natural disasters. Through different funding streams, provinces and territories can apply for DFAA funding when eligible. The DFAA program was updated in 2025. DFAA does not provide cost recovery directly to individuals but is a source of indirect funding for provincial/territorial recovery programs, such as HARP.

11.3 Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP)

The Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP) is a program under Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) that provides disaster assistance to First Nations communities. When an emergency impacts First Nations communities, cost recovery and other supports would come through the EMAP program. Local Authorities, such as the RMWB, are ineligible for EMAP funding through ISC. For more information on EMAP, see appendix I.

11.4 Emergency Management Preparedness Program (EMPP) Grant

Emergency Management Preparedness Program grants are provincial grants that can be applied for at different intervals to support development of emergency management programs in communities. The grants provide enhanced training opportunities for communities and regional partners when granted.

12.0 RE-ENTRY AND RECOVERY

12.1 Re-entry

After an incident is stabilized, it will be necessary to plan for residents to return home. This function is led by the Planning Section and is critical for the safe return of community members. The decision to re-enter an evacuated area is guided by several factors:

- Incident stabilization
- Access to the community
- Condition of critical infrastructure (must be operational, with some limitations)
- Hazards have been identified and/or eliminated
- Weather conditions allow for a safe return
- Essential Services are re-instated and able to support the community

The degree of damage will vary within an impacted area. A simple solution to support re-entry in these instances is through phased re-entry. Like phased evacuation, phased re-entry is done area by area to ensure calm, smooth return is possible.

12.1.1 Requirements for Re-entry

Most evacuees are eager to return home, especially if they have been faced with an extended evacuation and disruption to daily lives. Prior to re-entry, emergency authorities must ensure the following requirements are met for the safe return of evacuees:

- Damage assessments for homes and businesses (as required)
- Utilities assessments
- Debris Removal
- Transportation plan to support individuals without transportation
- Psychosocial supports
- Extended supports for municipal operations
- Communication of re-entry plan to public
- Food, fuel and medical needs can be met

Communication of the re-entry plan is critical to successful re-entry. In developing re-entry communication to the public, the following consideration are made:

- Re-entry process (phased, all at once etc.) and timing
- What services are available (or not)
- What utilities are functional (or not)
- Where to find reliable information
- Travel limitations and vehicle restrictions (if any)
- Security and/or checkpoints
- Any other pertinent information (ID requirements, expectations etc.)
- Re-entry supports (if applicable)

12.2 Recovery

The sooner recovery can begin, the better. Recovery should, in theory, begin as soon as an incident is stabilized. Recovery includes the restoration of infrastructure, and the emotional, physical, social, and economic well-being of impacted residents.

The RMWB maintains a Community Contact List that references Essential Services and Agencies *(Annex R).* This list contains contacts for internal and external partners and agencies that may be required to support response and/or recovery. The Community Contact List also supports re-entry efforts to ensure that resident needs are met and available as required for a safe re-entry to the community. Essential Services personnel will be required to remain in, or return early, to an impacted area to provide response and recovery support.

12.2.1 Incident Debriefs

After an emergency, incident debriefs occur for incident personnel. The focus of the debriefs is to allow an opportunity for responders to discuss the incident in a safe environment and identify strengths and gaps from the response. Incident debriefs are generally focused on overall operational experiences – the functioning of the responders within the greater organization.

These debriefings are generally formal and completed to support the development of an After-Action Review (AAR). Debriefs are often broken out into smaller sessions, based on function during the response to ensure that all views and organizational elements involved are captured. These debriefs should be completed as soon after demobilization as possible to ensure accurate recollections of the incident can be captured from responders. ICS 214 forms can be referred to for personnel to remember precise date, times, factors and decisions from the incident.

12.2.2 Critical Incident Stress Management

Response to large incidents can have a significant impact on the mental health of emergency responders. For this reason, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) debriefs can be highly beneficial to responders.

While not a requirement, CISM typically focuses on peer-to-peer debriefing and provides additional opportunity for responders to discuss the impactful experiences they had during the incident, not so much the operational. The RMWB has a team of employees with CISM training able to support this specific type of debrief.

12.2.3 Other Community Considerations

Recovery from an incident can include long lasting impacts on residents. There will frequently be a spike in the need for mental health and psychosocial supports (MHPSS) in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. As a result, there may be a need for additional psychosocial supports to be established in the community. Establishing additional supports relieves the strain on current supports and supplements the current system.

Another factor for community recovery may be safety and security. Situationally, needs may arise for enhanced law enforcement presence in a community to ensure residents are settling back into routines. While a uniformed presence is not always the answer, additional resources of this nature may be required to ensure a feeling of public safety in a community that recently experienced vulnerability.

13.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING AN INCIDENT

13.1 Mayor and Council

- Support the Director of Emergency Management in the management of the emergency response and provide strategic direction, through the Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC)
- Mayor (or delegate, if unable) to declare, renew, or terminate a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) as recommended by the DEM and CAO
- Provide advice on the long-term impact of an incident on residents, critical infrastructure, and reputation
- Elected officials do not fill roles within the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre, or need to attend the facility, unless specifically requested by the Director of Emergency Management

13.2 Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC)

The EAC, composed of the current Mayor, two councillors and the Director of Emergency Management (DEM), and often the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), provides a forum for members to support emergencies through

- Keeping the community informed on public-facing emergency management matters
- Serves as spokesperson(s) between the incident and elected officials during an emergency
- Supports engagement with governments for financial recovery and resource allocation
- Authorizes major expenditures, as required

13.3 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

During activation of the Regional Emergency Management Plan, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is responsible for providing necessary corporate resources to assist the Director of Emergency Management (DEM) in managing the event. The following is a non-comprehensive list of CAO responsibilities in emergency management:

- Work with the DEM to ensure emergency management plans, programs and measures are utilized appropriately
- Sign off on significant purchases and aid agreements, as required
- Act in a strategic advisory capacity for elected officials during an incident

- Provide municipal resources to the DEM during emergency response and recovery
- Work with the DEM on determining recovery/renewal priorities and the transition from response to recovery
- Maintain essential and non-essential services outside of the incident site (business continuity)

13.4 Director of Emergency Management (DEM)

The Director of Emergency Management is responsible for the following activities during an incident. The below activities are specific to during an incident:

- Enact emergency management plans on behalf of the municipality during an incident
- Act as Director of emergency operations on behalf of the Emergency Management Agency
- Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
- Activate the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) and provide notification to members of the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) regarding activation
- Ensure Elected Officials and the CAO are advised of the emergency and the response actions being taken
- Recommend a declaration, renewal and/or termination of a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)
- Direct emergency operations consistent with the Act and with the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)
- Coordinate all emergency services and other resources
- Determine if existing resources are sufficient for the response
- Work with the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC) to access additional resources as needed
- Work with CAO to determine recovery/renewal priorities and the transition from response to recovery
- Serve as spokesperson for technical information for the emergency
- Collaborate and coordinate with other DEMs in the Region to ensure an effective and efficient response

13.5 Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) acts as the appointed agent of the Municipality in exercising the Local Authority's powers and duties under the Alberta Emergency Management Act. Responsibilities during an incident include:

- Supporting the enactment and implementation of municipal emergency plans
- At the request of the DEM, respond to incidents as members of the Incident Management Team
- Conduct emergency response operations under the direction of the DEM
- Access to and maintenance of emergency related equipment during a response
- Recommend risk reduction, mitigation, and preparedness measures to the DEM

13.6 Municipal Support

During an emergency, municipal departments will typically be assigned to tasks based on the current Incident Command System (ICS) structure. Areas of expertise will often align with these assignments under the Incident Management Team (IMT). Requested supports from municipal departments and divisions may include:

- Human Resources and Safety
- Corporate Services
- Chief Of Staff (Strategic Communications)

- Legislative Services
- Environmental Services
- Indigenous and Rural Relations
- Legal Services
- Planning and Development Services
- Strategic Communications
- Project Management Office
- Public Works
- Regional Emergency Services
- Community Services

When an activation occurs, trained individuals may be called upon to fulfill a role under the ICS organization for the incident. These individuals bring specialized skillsets and participate in emergency management training and exercises to prepare for incident response needs.

The transition from day-to-day operations means that the individuals supporting the IMT can leave their roles and focus solely on incident response. As a result, Departments and Divisions may need to activate business continuity plans to ensure necessary functions continue in non-impacted areas, for the duration of the incident and recovery.

The following sections includes more details on common municipal department, and branch, roles and responsibilities that may be requested or required for an incident response.

13.6.1 Strategic Communications

Employees from Strategic Communications regularly fulfill the Information Officer and Assistant Information Officer roles. Functions may include:

- Develop and release public information under direction of Incident Commander
- Monitoring social media, media, and community discussions to determine information gaps
- Coordinate and provide media availability
- Provide regular community updates to evacuees and those impacted by incident
- Lead development of key messaging
- Support Emergency Social Services and evacuee information development and sharing

13.6.2 Planning and Development, Project Management Office & Facility Services

These departments support several functions during a response, including filling roles in the Planning Section, Logistics Section and Operations. Supporting roles or functions may include:

- Provide input and assessment on the use of facilities
- Develop strategies and process for damage assessments
- Assist with damage assessments
- Ensure building safety and integrity of critical infrastructure
- Participate in recovery planning

13.6.3 Public Works

Public works includes Parks, Roads, Facility Maintenance, Fleet and Transportation Services. Different resources under Public Works may be assigned to the Operations Section to complete specific tactics. Aside from day-to-day operation, these departments may be accessed to provide support for:

- Closure of municipal roads and traffic control

- Establishment of checkpoints
- Operation of heavy equipment
- Incident containment efforts
- Municipal transit for evacuations
- Municipal transit for movement of Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) Registrants
- Demobilization post incident

13.6.3.1 Preparedness Support

Public works provides critical support during most incident responses. What is not always noticed is the role that Public Works takes on during preparedness and mitigation efforts. With flooding in the Downtown area still a risk, although less so, preparedness efforts for annual flood events have been re-evaluated.

Preparation of sandbags ahead of flood season has traditionally been an extraordinary expense that poses numerous challenges. Challenges include sandbags freezing - making them unstable and unusable when needed – storage and the logistics associated with moving sand from one location to another, if conditions allow. After re-evaluation of the sandbag process, it has been determined that the following be implemented to ensure more flexibility and effective and efficient use of resources moving forward:

- Empty, 1 cubic metre and 50lb sandbags are to be procured and stored at North Operations Centre (Building B) for quick access during an incident
- Sand to be procured from local aggregate company and picked up or delivered directly to the site(s) where sandbagging is required
    a. Heated sand is recommended for use during colder seasons
- Municipal resources (equipment) to be deployed to the appropriate site(s) for on-site sandbagging, as needed, to protect critical infrastructure
- Critical infrastructure requiring protection will be identified through the Operations Section
- Sand and additional equipment will be procured through the appropriate Logistics Section ordering process during an incident

13.6.4 Environmental Services

Environmental Services includes Maintenance, Solid Waste, Wastewater, Water Treatment and Underground Services. The vast array of expertise within the Division may lead to reassignment of staff to support Operations, Planning, or Logistics Sections. Additionally, dependent on the incident, Environmental Services may take the lead and assign an Incident Commander to work collaboratively with the RECC to manage an incident. Water treatment issues are a prime example of this.

13.6.5 Community Services and RCMP Support

Community Services supports a range of functions in every incident, however, Community Services and RCMP Support have historically been involved in Emergency Social Services (ESS), as part of the Operations Section. Community Service staff could also serve as an Assistant Liaison Officer (ALO) when local non-profit agencies will have significant impacts from the incident or play a role within the response or recovery efforts. Staff trained in CISM also support the recovery process through CISM debriefing for responders.

13.6.6 Regional Emergency Services - Emergency Management

Responsible for overall coordination and response to incidents. Roles and responsibilities may include involvement in any section of the ICS organization. Emergency Management team members often take

lead roles during response and guide personnel and resources during a response. Gathering information, establishing situational awareness and ensuring proper channels and legislation are followed are also responsibilities of emergency management.

13.6.7 Regional Emergency Services (RES) - Operations

Regional Emergency Services supports all incidents as required under the Operations Section. Roles and responsibilities may include:

- Firefighting for wildland urban interface (WUI) fires
- Evacuation support (door knocking)
- Specialized Rescue
- Tactical dispatch for ground operations
- Resource tracking and assignment
- 9-1-1 dispatch needs
- Dangerous goods
- Medical support

13.6.8 Regional Emergency Services - Bylaw Services

The role of Bylaw Services tends to pivot throughout an incident. Supporting the Operations Section, Bylaw Services actively take on the roles of:

- Evacuation support (door knocking)
- Traffic control
- Provide uniformed presence for ESS Sites or other emergency functions
- Provide Animal Care and Rescue support
- Support damage assessment teams as required
- Protect and secure municipal infrastructure
- Provide additional perimeter and security needs throughout the incident

13.7 External Partners and Agency Representatives

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo works with other jurisdictions, organizations, and levels of government when an incident occurs. During the planning, mitigation, response and recovery phases of an emergency, the following have been identified as important participants in all phases of emergency management. Each agency is responsible for the development of their own emergency response plan; however, cross training and interagency exercise participation are critical for more seamless response.

The following provides brief descriptions of key external agency partners that may be called upon to support an incident:

13.7.1 Alberta Wildfire

- Provide advice on the progress of wildfires within the region
- Lead public communication / information on wildfire status and wildfire operations in the Forest Protection Area
- Conduct all operations connected with the control and suppression of wildfires
- Enact Mutual Aid Agreement(s) in place when necessary
- Determine if special equipment or supplies are required and, if so, make the necessary arrangements for procurement
- Provide information and advice on time frames should evacuation be imminent

- Provide, or assist in, rescue operations where required.

13.7.2 Alberta Emergency Management Agency

The Director of Emergency Management will normally request the presence of a Field Officer (FO) from the Alberta Emergency Management Agency in the RECC. The Field Officer is a resource available to the Local Authority and may serve as a liaison between the Regional and Provincial Coordination Centres. Other responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Acting in a strategic advisory capacity
- Supporting the Local Authority through reporting requirements as outlined by AEMA
- Provide information on and access to additional public and private agencies that may assist in the management of an emergency or disaster
- Direct requests for Department of National Defense (DND) emergency response assistance to the PECC

13.7.3 Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA)

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas support annual river monitoring for the Region. For any incidents that impact rivers/waterways in the Region, AEPA is a key resource. Each spring, river forecasters connect with Emergency Management to ensure information sharing and forecasted outlooks are provided ahead of river breakup.

13.7.4 Alberta Transportation

- Provide advice on highway closures within the Municipality
- Conduct all operations connected with the establishment of barricades and monitoring of highway closures

13.7.5 Alberta Health Services and Nunee Health

- Provide advice to the RECC on public health matters, including, but not limited to water quality, immunizations, and epidemiology/disease control
- Advise on the activation of emergency plans within healthcare facilities (Northern Lights Regional Healthcare Centre (NLRHC), Willow Square)
- Advise on conditions of health care facilities in the Region including types and numbers of beds
- Establish and maintain field and inter-hospital medical communications
- Provide advice and assistance to Emergency Medical Services on issues related to pre-hospital care during disasters
- Coordinate with Emergency Medical Services, other hospitals, and any medical response personnel to ensure appropriate decanting tactics are used
- Coordinate with local emergency responders to isolate and decontaminate incoming patients

13.7.6 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

- Uphold the law
- Emergency related enforcement
- Evacuation support (door knocking)
- Traffic and route control
- Checkpoint and security support
- Enhanced presence in evacuated areas
- Temporary road closures to ensure responders can work safely

13.7.7 School Boards

There are five school boards in the RMWB. These include Fort Murray Catholic School District (FMCSD), Fort McMurray Public School District (FMPSD), Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No. 2 (also known as Conseil Scolaire Centre-Nord), Parkland School Division (Fort Chipewyan) and Northland School Division (Anzac, Janvier and Conklin).

These school boards offer early entry through grade 12 educational opportunities. The RMWB is also home to Keyano College, a privately owned college with the main campus positioned in Fort McMurray and satellite campuses in rural communities across the Region.

- Provide information on Board action(s) on any protective actions required for schools during an emergency or disaster
- During an evacuation, provide advice on the availability of schools for use as Registration Centres or ESS Sites

13.7.8 Search and Rescue (SAR)

- Assist the RCMP in ground and inland water search and rescue operations
- Assist the Fire and Police Departments in evacuations
- Assist Emergency Health Services personnel in treatment of injured, as requested

13.7.9 Utility Providers (Atco Gas, Atco Electric, Telus, Rogers, etc.)

- Monitor and provide information on system outages and damages and impacted areas
- Restore utility supply to critical infrastructure and residences
- Coordinate extraordinary circumstances and needs with the RECC

13.7.10 Industry Mutual Aid Partners

Mutual aid partners support incident response through a variety of avenues, but the most significant is the sharing of resources during an incident. This is usually in an emergency that exceeds local resources. Members of RMWB Mutual Aid are Suncor, Syncrude, Fort Hills, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. (CNRL), Cenovus and Kearl.

13.7.11 Community Agencies and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Community agencies and non-government organizations have important roles to play both during the response and recovery phases of an incident. While the Local Authority is responsible for the provision of services when an evacuation is ordered, some services need to be “outsourced” and supported by local agencies or non-government organizations (NGOs). Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Service Agreements may already be in place or may require implementation to meet the needs of impacted communities and residents.

14.0 TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Under provincial legislation and regulations (Emergency Management Act and Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation), there are training and exercise requirements that must be met by a Local Authority. Training and exercises are critical to ensure planning and preparedness for potential incidents. Training and exercises are also an opportunity to learn, practice skills, identify gaps and familiarize responders with processes and procedures in the event of an emergency.

14.1 Training

Emergency Management provides training to municipal employees, partner agencies and organizations that may play a role during an incident. Cross training with individuals from different organizations provides distinct and varying views, opinions and experiences which lead to more robust learning and training opportunities. Training courses provided through emergency management may include personnel from the following organizations or agencies:

- Members of the municipal Incident Management Team
- Community Partners
- Emergency Social Services (ESS) Team Members
- Community Organizations that support ESS
- Emergency Responders (including RCMP, Fire and Bylaw)
- New employees of the RMWB
- Employees of neighbouring municipalities
- Alberta Saskatchewan Incident Support Team (ASIST) Members
- Industry Partners

Within emergency management, there are two streams of training available, Emergency Management – specific to functioning as part of an Incident Management Team, and Emergency Social Services – specific to providing evacuee support.

Most of the Emergency Management training conducted in the RMWB is from ICS Canada or Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). In 2024, AEMA launched a Training, Certification and Standards document (appendix E) that Local Authorities now use guide emergency management training in their own Regions. With AEMA being the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) on training under ICS Canada, training standards were implemented to ensure the same quality of training is received anywhere in the province where emergency management is involved. As a result, RMWB Emergency Management follows these requirements and delivers the same, standardized training as any other community under AEMA Training, Certification and Standards to be able to facilitate courses in house under the provincial training umbrella. Following the provincial model also ensures curriculum is the

same from one region to another across the province – supporting interoperability for emergency responders.

14.1.1 Building Block Approach to Training

Emergency Management uses a building block approach for training. This method ensures that curriculum is relevant and builds from one course to the next, allowing participants to specialize as they progress through a training path. The approach promotes continuous improvement and enhances capacity. Many individuals are trained in multiple positions and can support different roles during an emergency or disaster.

Completion of courses in order will ensure that participants have core knowledge before progressing to advanced courses. This training model delivers a range of in-house and accredited training and development opportunities, which cover leadership, disaster operations and functional capabilities.

Figure 6
Emergency Management Training Building Block Approach

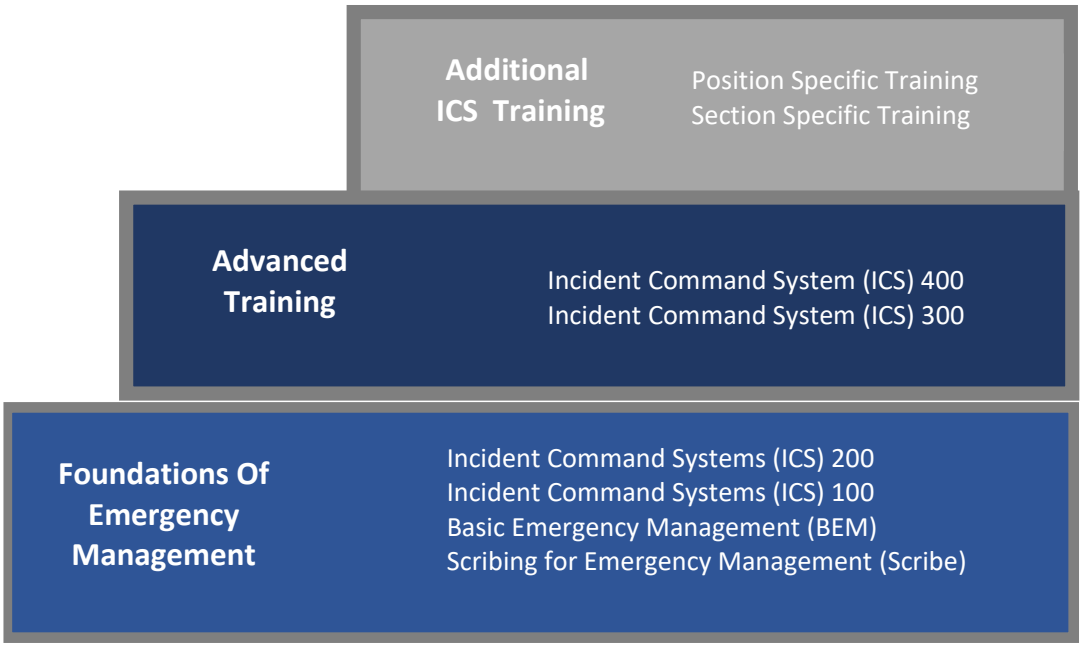


Figure 7
Emergency Social Services (ESS) Building Block Approach

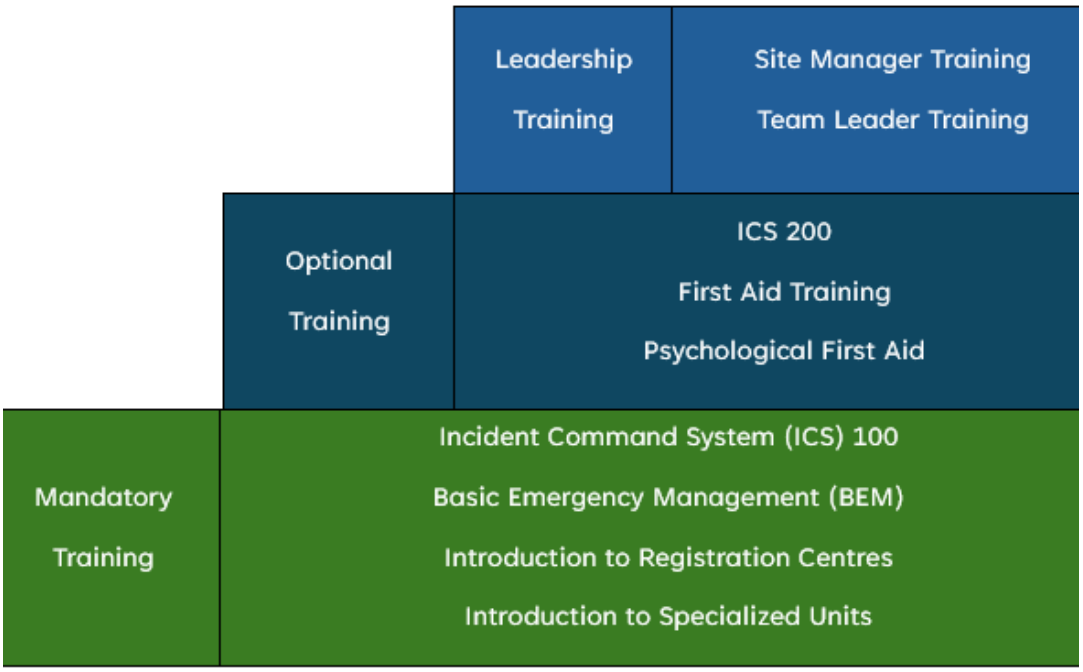
14.2 Exercises

Exercises are objective-based activities used to practice, evaluate, or test plans, procedures and processes in a controlled environment. Exercises can enhance the capacity and confidence of responders, providing a safe, low stress environment to learn. Exercise requirements for a Local Authority can be found in the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (LAEMR) (appendix B) and are outlined in more detail below.

The LAEMR requires Local Authorities to engage in at least one tabletop training exercise annually, with a functional exercise being conducted every four years. Local Authorities that activate for an incident during a calendar year may consider the event as a functional exercise and do not have to conduct another exercise. All exercises are reported to Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) through Field Officers for tracking purposes.

Exercises provide an opportunity to assess operational readiness of the organization and the effectiveness of plans. Exercises range from small-scale one to two-hour activities through to large, days long events. Regardless of size, exercises support:

- Plan evaluation
- Gap identification
- Awareness
- Developing competence in the response
- Identifying capacity constraints
- Interoperability practices
- Validation of training



- Evaluation of equipment, techniques, and processes

The following types of exercises are used to support emergency management functions and practice response skills:

- Seminars
- Workshops
- Tabletop Exercise
- Drills
- Functional Exercise
- Full Scale Exercise

Before, during and after all exercises, a rigorous evaluation process is required to ensure strengths, weaknesses and gaps are identified. Effective evaluation assesses performance against exercise objectives and areas for improvement. Evaluation also provides analysis of the exercise and how it was developed. Following an exercise, participants participate in a debrief which gathers information to support an after-action review.

GLOSSARY

A

Activation: To put in a "state of readiness", to place designated employees on stand-by and to prepare the necessary equipment, facilities and other resources to use.

Activation Level: This term describes the vastness and level of resources required to respond to an emergency. Activation levels also provide the option to increase or decrease as an incident unfolds and more information becomes available.

Agency: An Agency is a division of government with a specific function, or a non-governmental organization (private contractors and business) that offers a particular kind of assistance.

Agency Representatives(s): An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting an agency or organization's participation in the emergency response.

Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA): AEMA operates under the authority of the Emergency Management Act and assists local authorities across the province through all phases of emergency management planning through coordination and cooperation of all organizations involved.

Alberta First Responders Radio Communication System (AFRRCS): A two-way radio network for first responders (police, fire, and ambulance services) in municipal, provincial and First Nations agencies across the province. Through funding from the Government of Alberta, the networks construction, operation and maintenance were possible and AFRRCS became operational July 1, 2016.

Alert: Issued when time allows it and provides residents an opportunity to prepare to evacuate. Evacuation alerts do not require evacuation or a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) to be issued and is usually an indicator that preparations should begin for the evacuation of vulnerable populations.

All-Hazards: Describing an incident, natural or manmade, that warrants action to protect life, property, environment, public health, or safety and minimize disruptions of government, social or economic activities.

B

Branch: The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of incident operations.

Broadcast-Intrusive: critical alert messaging that is pushed through all media avenues, including television, radio, and mobile phones in a certain area.

Business Continuity: A plan, often associated to emergency management or disruptions to business, that will allow an organization to continue regular operations, despite an incident affecting a portion of the region or day to day operations.

C

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO): The person responsible for the administration of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and is accountable to Mayor and Council.

Command: The act of directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, organization or delegated authority.

Community Emergency Management Plan (CEMP): A separate plan developed for each community within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. These plans focus on specific community needs and hazards and include important and relevant information for community members.

Coordination: The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command/management authority of the viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives. The bringing together of agencies and individuals to ensure effective disaster management but does not include the control of agencies and individuals by direction.

Council: The Municipal Council of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo comprised of Mayor and 10 Council members.

Critical Infrastructure: Any facility, system, or service that is imperative to the safety and well-being of citizens and communities. This may include things like the municipal building, hospitals, and water treatment plants.

Critical Resources: Material, personnel and finances that are in short supply and are needed by more than one incident management team or are needed for high priority assignments.

Cyber Attack: unintentional or unauthorized access, use, manipulation, interruption or destruction of electronic information. This may also include damage or unauthorized use of electronic and physical infrastructure used to process, communicate and/or store that information.

D

Dangerous Goods: a product, substance, or organism included by its nature, or regulations, in any of the classes listed in the Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Act's schedule.

Delegation of Authority: A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the CAO delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Organizations may require written Delegation of Authority to be given to the Incident Commander prior to assuming command (see appendix R).

Director of Emergency Management (DEM): The Director of Emergency Management, appointed by the CAO, has the overall authority and responsibility for activities of the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre.

Disaster: An occurrence of a natural catastrophe, human caused or technological incident that results in serious harm to the safety, health or welfare of people or in widespread damage to property or the environment.

E

Emergency: A present or imminent event outside the scope of normal operations that requires prompt coordination of action or resources to protect the health, safety and welfare of people and/or to limit damage to property and the environment.

Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC): A committee established in accordance with section 11.1(1) of the *Alberta Emergency Management Act*.

Emergency Management: An organized effort and ongoing process of plans and programs to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from an incident, whether natural or human induced, that threatens life, property, operations, or the environment.

Emergency Management Act (The Act): Provides the legislative framework for local and provincial management of emergencies and disasters. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the provincial government, and local authorities. The EMA provides the authority for the granting of additional powers during a state of emergency (SOE) or a state of local emergency (SOLE) and governs the coming into force, expiration, and termination of these states of emergency. The EMA also has regulation making authority.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA): Members of the agency will act as the agent of Council to carry out statutory powers and obligations of Council under the Act and in accordance with the Emergency Management Bylaw.

Emergency Management Bylaw: Also known as Bylaw 25/009 of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, identifying local regulations and requirements for Emergency Management.

Emergency Management Cycle: A continuous cycle of planning, training, resourcing, exercising and evaluating to ensure measures are in place to efficiently and effectively respond to and recover from the impacts of any incident. Phases of the cycle consist of Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.
Emergency Medical Services (EMS): Part of an integrated service model utilized by Regional Emergency Services, EMS provides medical response and transport services to residents of the RMWB.

Emergency Response: Measures undertaken, during an emergency, to save lives and limit impacts on property, the environment, and the economy.

Emergency Social Services: Short term supports provided to emergency affected individuals, to provide adequate care and necessities to those who are displaced. These services are provided to preserve the emotional and physical well-being of evacuees and response workers affected by an emergency event. Supports may include, but are not limited to, food, clothing, accommodations, animal care and emotional support.

Evacuation: Organized, phased, and supervised dispersal of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas.

F

G

H

Hazard: A potential damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradations. Hazards could include natural forces (such as wind, drought, etc.) or technological induced threats (such as aircraft incidents, motor vehicle collisions, industrial accidents, explosions, etc.)

Hazard Assistance and Resilience Program (HARP): Replaces two previous disaster recovery programs to support uninsurable losses caused by a disaster, based on a cost-sharing model. Local authorities must apply to the program before individuals and small businesses are eligible.

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment: A systematic analysis and ranking of the risks and associated hazards – natural, human, and/or technical - that may impact public health and safety, public and private property or the environment. Each risk is ranked on the probability of its occurrence and the severity of its impact.

I

Impact: negative effects of an incident on people, property and the environment. This may also include negative effects on the economy or psychosocial factors.

Incident: An unexpected occurrence or event caused by humans or by natural phenomena that requires action by response personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property, environment and reduce economic and social losses.

Incident Command Post (ICP): The location near the site of the emergency or disaster, from which the coordinated control of the emergency operation is directed by the Incident Commander.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized organizational structure used to command control and coordinate the use of resources and personnel responding to the scene of an emergency. The Incident Command System is a system of responding that is organized by five functions: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance.

Initial Response: Resources initially committed to an incident.
compose information and ensure collaborative, aligned public messaging related to an incident.

J

Joint Information Centre: an assembly of information officers from multiple agencies who work to

Jurisdiction: The range or sphere of authority, based on geographical area, legal responsibility, or a mandated function. Organizations have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority for incident mitigation.

K

L

Likelihood: Frequency of occurrence for a particular hazard event.

Local Authority: Elected Officials (Mayor and Council) of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo as designated by the *Alberta Emergency Management Act*.

M

Memorandum Of Understanding: A document developed in the planning and preparedness phase of the emergency management cycle, usually for the provision of specific goods and/or services.

Mitigation: Measures taken in advance of an event aimed at decreasing or eliminating risks and the potential impact posed by the hazards on people, property, the environment and/or the economy.

Multi-agency response: An incident where one or more organization assists a jurisdictional organization. May be a single or unified command.

Mutual Aid Agreement: A formal agreement between two or more organizations and/or jurisdictions to provide pre-identified support and resources during an emergency.

N

Non-broadcast intrusive: an alert issued to inform community members of a potential threat or hazard, these messages do not interfere with regular radio or television broadcasts but are received by individuals within a specified range of the impacted area

Non-Governmental Organization: A non-profit organization that operates with government funding.

O

Operational Guidelines: A written procedure developed by an organization that establishes a commonly accepted course of action and specifies the functional limitations of personnel in performing emergency operations.

Order: Issued when time is of the essence and threat to life safety is likely. Orders require residents to follow through on an action immediately – whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place.

P

Planning: The process of developing a system for coordinating disaster response and establishing priorities, duties and roles and responsibilities of different individuals and organizations, including actual state of preparedness.

Preparedness: Actions designed to minimize loss of life and damage, and to organize and facilitate timely and effective rescue, relief and rehabilitation in case of disaster.

Prevention: In relation to a disaster, includes the identification of hazards, the assessment of threats to life and property, the taking of measures to reduce or eliminate potential loss to life or property and to protect economic development.

Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC): The designated facility established by the government of Alberta to coordinate response and provide support to emergency responses throughout the province.

Q

R

Recovery: The coordinated process of supporting individuals, communities and organizations impacted by emergency events to recover from an event. Including action taken to support disaster-affected communities in the reconstruction of infrastructure, the restoration of emotional, social, economic, and physical wellbeing, and the restoration of the environment.

Re-entry: The process of preparing and supporting residents to return home after an evacuation.

Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC): The protected site(s) where representatives from Emergency Management Services coordinate, monitor, and direct emergency response activities during an emergency or disaster.

Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP): A comprehensive plan based on a hazard and risk analysis that outlines how emergencies/disasters will be managed, including criteria for assessing an emergency and procedures for mobilizing emergency management personnel and agencies, including communications and coordination systems.

Registration Centre: A safe gathering place where evacuees can register and receive support services to meet their immediate basic needs.

Resources: Includes food, human resources, any animal, vehicle, vessel, aircraft, plant, apparatus, implement, earthmoving equipment, construction equipment or other equipment of any kind or any means of supplying want or need for assignment to the incident.

Response: In relation to a disaster, includes the process of combating a disaster and of providing immediate relief for persons affected by a disaster. Immediate actions to save lives, protect property and environment and meet basic human needs.

Risk: Expected losses (of lives, persons injured, property damaged, and economic activity disrupted) due to a particular hazard for a given area and reference period. Based on mathematical calculations, risk is the product of hazard and vulnerability.

Resiliency: the ability to bounce back quickly from an incident.

S

Severity: Measured as *likelihood x impact* of an event occurring.

Shelter-in-Place: People not at immediate risk but affected by or in the proximity of an incident will generally shelter-in-place in the first instance and await advice from emergency services.

Slope Instability: A significant shift in land on slopes due to a combination of natural and human factors**.**

State of Emergency (SOE): A resolution of the province of Alberta to create a temporary legal state where extraordinary powers may be used to manage an emergency or disaster.

State of Local Emergency (SOLE): A resolution of the Local Authority to create a temporary legal state in which extraordinary powers may be taken to address an emergency or disaster.

T

Threat: when a hazard becomes imminent and there is a risk to life safety, property and/or the environment

U

V

Vulnerability: The degree of loss that could result from a potentially damaging phenomenon, or the extent to which a country, area, community, or structure risks being damaged by a disaster. The conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

W

Warning: The dissemination of messages signaling imminent hazard, which may include advice on protective measures. A warning issued by Environment Canada (e.g., severe storm warning, tornado warning) for a defined area indicates that a type of severe weather is imminent in that area.

X Y Z

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Alberta Emergency Management Act

Click the link to access the Alberta Emergency Management Act (2025)

Appendix B – Local Authorithy Emergency Management Regulation (LAEMR)

Click the link to access the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation

Appendix C – Emergency Management Bylaw

Click the link to access the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Emergency Management Bylaw No. 25/008

Appendix D – Alberta Incident Management System (AIMS)

Click the link to access the Alberta Incident Management System

Appendix E – Aema Training, Certification And Standards Policies

Click the link to access AEMA Training, Certification, and Standards Policies 2024

Appendix F – Community Emergency Management Plans (CEMP)

Click the link to access Community Emergency Management Plans by community

Appendix G – Alberta Disaster Assistance Directives

Click the link to access Alberta Disaster Assistance Directives for municipalities

Appendix H – Hazard Assistance And Resilience Program (HARP)

Click the link to access more information on the Hazard Assistance and Resilience Program (HARP) for municipalities

Appendix I – Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP)

Click the link to access more information on the Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP) for First Nations

Appendix J – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Guidelines 2026

Click the link to access more information on the WUI Guidelines 2026

ANNEXES

Annex A - Emergency Social Services Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex B - Animal Care And Rescue Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex C - Crisis Communications Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex D - Rmwb Continuity Of Government – Pandemic Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex E - Operational Plans

<Internal Municipal Documents>

Annex F - Dangerous Goods Manual

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex G - Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) Manual

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex H - Waste Management Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex I - Traffic Management Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex J - Damage Assessment Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex K - Re-Entry Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex L - Recovery Plans

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex M - Continuity Of Water Supply (CoWS) Plans

<Internal Municipal Documents>

Annex N - EMS 010

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex O – Essential Services List

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex P – Mutual Aid Fire Control Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex Q – River Breakup Plan

<Internal Municipal Document>

Annex R – Delegation Of Authority Template

<Internal Municipal Document>

REFERENCES

Communications Security Establishment. (2022). *National Cyber Threat Assessment 2023-2024.* Government of Canada. https://www.cyber.gc.ca/sites/default/files/ncta-2023-24-web.pdf

Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Act, RSA 2000, Chapter D-4 (2021). *Office Consolidation.* https://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/acts/d04.pdf

Government of Alberta [GOA]. (2024a). *Drought – Information for Albertans.* https://www.alberta.ca/drought-information-for-albertans

Government of Alberta [GOA]. (2024b). *Alberta First Responders Radio Communications System.* https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-first-responder-radio-communications-system

Government of Alberta [GOA]. (2025). *Hazard Assistance and Resilience Program (HARP)*. https://www.alberta.ca/hazard-assistance-and-resilience-program

Government of Canada [GOC]. (2021, April 28). *Boreal Forest.* https://natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/forests/sustainable-forest-management/boreal-forest/13071

Public Safety Canada (2010). *Canada's Cyber Security Strategy: For A Stronger and More Prosperous Canada.* https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/archive-cbr-scrt-strtgy/archive-cbr-scrt-strtgy-eng.pdf

Public Safety Canada (2019a). *Emergency Management Strategy for Canada: Toward a Resilient 2030.* https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/mrgncy-mngmnt-strtgy/mrgncy-mngmnt-strtgy-en.pdf

Public Safety Canada (2019b). *National Cyber Security Action Plan 2019-2024.* https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/2017-cybr-rvw-cnslttns-rprt/2017-cybr-rvw-cnslttns-rprt-en.pdf

Thurber Engineering Ltd. (2017). *Draper Area Slope Stability Fort McMurray, Alberta Geotechnical Desktop Study*. https://www.rmwb.ca/en/roads-and-construction/resources/2017-Thurber-Report---Draper-Area-Slope-Stability-compressed.pdf

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2019). *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019.* https://gar.undrr.org

Walkinshaw, S. (2017). *Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Wildfire Mitigation Strategy.* Montane Forest Management Ltd. https://www.rmwb.ca/en/fire-and-emergency-services/resources/Documents/2017-Wildfire-Mitigation-Strategy.pdf

Wood Buffalo Environmental Association. (2022). *About WBEA.* https://wbea.org/about/about-our-organization/