



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-545

From: Corporate Administration

Date: November 7, 2024

Subject: Emergency Management Bylaw Amendment – Removal of Maximum Requisition

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board give Emergency and Disaster Management Service Establishment Amendment Bylaw No. 2563, 2024, which removes the maximum requisition permissible for the service from the bylaw, first three readings.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Province enacted the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* (EDMA) effective November 8, 2023. The legislation replaced the *Emergency Program Act* previously in place in BC and expanded the scope of responsibilities placed upon local governments relative to emergency planning, preparation, response and recovery for and from emergencies.

On February 8, 2024, the Regional Board approved additional Emergency Management positions for the organization to position itself to be able to implement the new responsibilities under EDMA as per the following resolutions:

MOVED, SECONDED and CARRIED,

That the Regional Board approve and establish two additional FTE positions within the Community Services department in 2024 – an Emergency Program Officer, and an Emergency Program Coordinator.

That the Regional Board provide operating pre-budget approval of the 2024 supplemental request for two additional FTE positions and include \$250,000 in Function 300 - Emergency Planning budget funded by \$202,000 from the Operational Reserve, and \$48,000 from the Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program Grant.

That the Regional Board authorize the Peace River Regional District to send a letter to the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness with copies to the BC Premier and South and North Peace MLAs requesting that the Provincial Government provide the funding that is required by the Peace River Regional District to complete the requirements of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act; namely an amount of \$300,000 be provided for emergency planning costs in 2024 which includes staffing.

Provincial Grant funding was made available to assist local governments with the new responsibilities, however, the funding does not fully cover the cost of the new positions and responsibilities. The current maximum requisition in the bylaw that establishes the Emergency and Disaster Service (Function 300)

will not provide sufficient taxation revenue to cover the costs of the service, with the new responsibilities under EDMA.

Required content for service establishment bylaws is set out in s.339 of the *Local Government Act (LGA)*. The requirement for a maximum amount that may be requisitioned for the service is NOT applicable to establishing bylaws for a small list of services listed in LGA s.339 (2)(e), including bylaws establishing programs in preparation for emergencies. The attached bylaw amendment removes the maximum requisition from the bylaw, which will allow for a budget to be prepared that adequately funds the expanded scope of meeting requirements under EDMA. Also attached is a Draft Consolidated bylaw showing the proposed changes inserted in the original bylaw. New additions are shown in yellow highlight, and deleted language is stricken.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- Emergency Management

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

As stated above, costs for both new positions (Emergency Management Officer and Emergency Program Coordinator) are accounted for within Function 300 – Regional Emergency Planning. Both positions are vital to delivering the legislated requirements for ongoing Indigenous engagement and collaborative emergency planning within the PRRD, as dictated by the BC modernized emergency management legislation. In 2024, a \$48,000 portion of these staffing costs has been covered through BC Emergency Management and Climate Readiness Indigenous Engagement Requirements funding program. For 2025, verbal confirmation from BC Emergency Management and Climate Readiness regional staff indicates further forthcoming financial assistance to all local governments to assist and finance a portion of these ongoing staffing costs. However, the exact amount and timing of this funding being received in 2025 are yet to be determined. As such, an increase in requisition for 2025 (from \$296,983 to \$526,990 or 77%) is required to fund the 2 new positions for this function. This bylaw amendment intends to remove the existing requisition limit to allow for these ongoing staffing costs. Regional emergency planning is exempt from having a requisition limit under LGA.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

Upon approval of first three readings, the bylaw will be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for approval.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

The *Local Government Act*, s.349(1)(b) authorizes the amendment of an establishing bylaw with the consent of at least 2/3 of the participants. The Minister may order that assent of the electors be obtained in the same manner as was received when the service establishment bylaw was adopted, or that approval of the electors be sought in the service area.

Attachments:

1. Draft Emergency and Disaster Management Service Amendment Bylaw No. 2563, 2024
2. Draft Consolidated Emergency and Disaster Management Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1598, 2005.

External Links:

1. [Emergency And Disaster Management Act](#)
2. [October 5, 2023 Regional Board Meeting](#) – See Item 8.9 titled “Update on the Proposed Emergency and Disaster Management Act – CS-BRD-248”
3. [November 16, 2023 Regional Board Meeting](#) – See Item 9.1 titled “Emergency and Disaster Management Act – DR-BRD-074”
4. [January 25, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting](#) – See Item 5.2 titled “Emergency Management Legislation and Regulatory Modernization – Impacts to PRRD – CS-COW-002”
5. [January 25, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting](#) – See Item 5.3 titled “Additional FTE Request – Modernized Emergency Management Legislation Requirements – CS-COW-004”