



Prince George Office



1004 Landooz Road,
Prince George, BC
V2K 5S3



Tel: (250) 962-1603
Fax: (250) 962-9552
Toll Free: 1-877-621-1603

Vancouver Office



Suite 1020-1200 W. 73rd Ave
Vancouver, BC
V6P 6G5



Tel: (778) 945-9911
Fax: (778) 945-9916
Toll Free: 1-833-381-7622

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: BCAFN Chiefs

FROM: Nikki Saadat, BCAFN Senior Economic Development Policy Analyst

DATE: Tuesday, October 8th, 2024

RE: BCAFN Emergency Management Portfolio Update

PURPOSE

To provide BCAFN Chiefs an update on the current status of the emergency management multilateral funding services agreement.

DISCUSSION/BACKGROUND

The First Nations Emergency Management Services Negotiation Team is taking a collaborative role in transitioning from the current bilateral agreement between ISC and EMCR to a multilateral framework ensuring First Nations full jurisdiction and authority over emergency management. This effort builds on the 2019 EMS MOU and aligns with UNDRIP, DRIPA, BC's Disaster Risk Reduction Plan (2023-2030), and the FNLC Climate Agenda. The Negotiation Team is composed of members from FNLC, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR). Leadership members at the multilateral negotiation table are informed by a technical working group that is currently developing a Terms of Reference to assist discussions. Negotiations are taking place from April 2024 to August 2025 and all phases of the multilateral agreement are outlined in Appendix A.

Phase 1 priorities focused on the following:

- 1. ISC Core Funding to Bands for Capacity, Mitigation, and Preparedness**
- 2. Direct Community Emergency Preparedness Funding**
- 3. Predictable and Timely Funding for FNESS and First Nations**
- 4. Expansion from Bilateral to Multilateral Agreements**

ANALYSIS / UPDATE

The multilateral agreement negotiations are currently at the start of Phase 2 and updates are provided below:

1. ISC Core Funding to Bands for Capacity, Mitigation, and Preparedness

The technical working group is working to identify the top 32 at-risk communities that include fire, flood, drought, and tsunami risks. FNESS's Brenden Mercer has led the development of a risk formula to disburse \$2.8M across 8 regions in BC. While the focus is currently on the top 32 communities, attention





Prince George Office



1004 Landooz Road,
Prince George, BC
V2K 5S3



Tel: (250) 962-1603
Fax: (250) 962-9552
Toll Free: 1-877-621-1603

Vancouver Office



Suite 1020-1200 W. 73rd Ave
Vancouver, BC
V6P 6G5



Tel: (778) 945-9911
Fax: (778) 945-9916
Toll Free: 1-833-381-7622

must also be given to the total 204 First Nation communities. Rob Klinck and others from ISC have also expressed interest in applying this risk formula to a national model under their Non-Structural Mitigation Program (NSMP).

2. Direct Community Emergency Preparedness Funding (not through UBCM)

Since 2017, UBCM has held \$369 million from EMCR, taking a 5% admin fee, but only 6% of those funds have gone to First Nations. Currently, \$75 million remains, with no plans for a refill. Of the 370 communities funded, 115 were First Nations (56%), but only 16 received over \$150,000, and just 4 received over \$1 million. Unused funds meant for First Nations are returned to the general pool but still counted as "approved." It's recommended that \$40 million of the remaining funds be transferred to a First Nations organization. The CEPF program was designed for local governments, so the technical working group is exploring options to adjudicate funding and identify a First Nations body to distribute funds long-term.

3a. Predictable and Timely Funding for FNESS

FNESS is focused on improving governance and service delivery to strengthen community resiliency. They are awaiting approval for a \$5.5M funding request and working to integrate advanced tech like OpsReady and cultural burning practices. FNESS is working with FNLC and ISC to secure sustainable funding and align spending with mandates, however, core funding remains a challenge. FNESS recently appointed 3 new directors to oversee administration, operations, and governance. FNLC EM Coordinator and BCAFN policy staff will review FNESS's workplan in October/November, with findings to be reported to FNLC. The FNESS AGM on November 2, 2024, will review bylaws and finalize director appointments.

3b. Predictable and Timely Funding for First Nation Communities

Meetings with ISC focused on simplifying the "task number" process and expanding qualification requirements for faster funding approval. ISC is also resolving old response and recovery claims and clarifying the need for Band Council Resolutions (BCRs) related to task numbers. Additional funding and training materials for finance teams are being considered to streamline claims management. FNLC is working with Crown partners to develop a Memorandum to Cabinet and Treasury Board Submission to secure funds and improve First Nations' access to historically disadvantaged budgets.



www.bcafn.ca



events.bcafn.ca

Prince George Office

Ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Lheidli T'enneh

Vancouver Office

Ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the X'məθk'əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)



Prince George Office



1004 Landooz Road,
Prince George, BC
V2K 5S3



Tel: (250) 962-1603
Fax: (250) 962-9552
Toll Free: 1-877-621-1603

Vancouver Office



Suite 1020-1200 W. 73rd Ave
Vancouver, BC
V6P 6G5



Tel: (778) 945-9911
Fax: (778) 945-9916
Toll Free: 1-833-381-7622

4. Expansion from Bilateral to Multilateral Agreements

BC's endorsement of the Phase I work, outlined in the Minister's letter, and supported by ISC and FNLC as outlined in a separate letter directed to BC Chiefs, affirms the foundation for moving through Phase 2 and 3 after interregnum.

NEXT STEPS

1. Finalize Phase 1 and prepare for Phases 2 and 3 discussions as outlined in Appendix A.
2. Review UBCM funding and explore reallocating resources to a First Nations organization.
3. FNLC and ISC to form a sub-working group to advance the Memorandum to Cabinet and Treasury Board Submission.

Appendix A: Phased Approach to Multilateral Agreement

Negotiations will take place over three phases which are outlined as follows:

PHASED APPROACH TO A NEW MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT

Phase 1 (April – August 2024):

- Immediate needs to be implemented in 2024 which may include but not be limited to:
 - ISC Core Funding to Bands to support capacity, mitigation and preparedness (e.g., Emergency Management Coordinators, mitigation projects).
 - Community Emergency Preparedness Funding directly to First Nations (not UBCM).
 - Predictable, substantial, and timely funding for FNESS and Nations to support response and recovery.
 - Expansion of Bilateral to Multilateral.
- Goal: Agreement-in-Principle

Phase 2 (Sept 2024 – Mar 2025):

- A high-level overarching rights-based framework.
- Inclusion of key partners (e.g., FNESS and FNHA) and implementation of critical recommendations¹.
- Goal: Framework Agreement agreed to Spring 2025.

Phase 3 (April – August 2025):

- Full recognition of First Nations jurisdiction over emergency management services.
- Goal: Finalization and implementation by September 2025.

¹the BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan (2022), the Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction by First Nations in BC 2023-2030, and other keystone documents (e.g., Abbott-Chapman Report; "Trial by Fire: Nadleh Whut'en and the Shovel Lake Fire Report"; the Tsilhqot'in report "The Fires Awakened Us (Nagwedizik'an Gwaneš Gangu Chinidžed Ganexwilagh); and the 2022 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Parliament of Canada "Emergency Management in First Nations Communities—Indigenous Services Canada").



www.bcafn.ca



events.bcafn.ca

Prince George Office

Ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Lheidli T'enneh

Vancouver Office

Ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the X^mməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sḱwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)