

Provincial Emergency Program, Emergency Management British Columbia

2007 was a very productive year for the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) in British Columbia (BC). Seismic planning was moved to the forefront of hazard planning with the launch of the Seismic Integrated Response Planning (SIRP) Project.

Earthquakes

The SIRP project has been developed to facilitate the refresh of the British Columbia Earthquake Response Plan. A two-year strategy outlining this project, which will culminate in a fully refreshed provincial earthquake response plan, has been developed. This plan will build upon the strong foundation of the British Columbia Emergency Response Management System (BCERMS), the Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centres (PREOCs), and the Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System (TEAMS). The refreshed plan will be a fully operational document including realistic planning assumptions, response actions, and functional components, all of which will help to coordinate response and support local governments in an effective and efficient manner following an earthquake

A Steering Committee has been assembled to oversee this project. This committee is composed of emergency management experts from Provincial, Federal and Local governments and First Nations as well as a leading earthquake scientist and communications expert. Additionally, Henry Renteria, Director of The Governor's Office of Emergency Services for the State of California has volunteered to act as an external advisor to this committee. We are extremely pleased to have Henry involved with this project. His experience and expertise is an invaluable resource.

Under direction of the Steering Committee, working groups have been established to facilitate scenario development, exercise planning, communications, and building response actions.

Fortunately, the Province of BC has not experienced a major damaging earthquake in modern times and we are looking internationally to learn from others who have hands-on experience with major earthquakes: how they responded, and how they recovered, and the lessons learned. This evidence based research will be used to form a basis for our planning assumptions. Building on this, a series of plausible earthquake scenarios throughout the province will be used to generate response actions.

A strong emphasis has been placed on collaboration with academic organisations this year. Students from The School of Community and Regional Planning at The University of British Columbia, The School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at The University of Victoria, and in Disaster and Emergency Management at Royal Roads University have been engaged in various projects related to seismic hazard planning. Additionally, collaboration and liaison with federal earthquake, tsunami, and volcano scientists continues with the desire to integrate scientific research with practical human consequence management for the emergency management community.

Tsunamis

The Tsunami Integrated Preparedness (TIP) project, initiated by PEP after the devastating tsunami in South Asia was a two-year project that worked closely with stakeholders including Federal, Provincial, and Local governments, communities, private industry, First Nations, humanitarian organisations, and the media to coordinate these partners and ensure the enhancement of BC's tsunami preparedness.

Under the TIP project, \$1 million in funding was provided by the Province, as well as \$500,000 from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and \$350,000 from Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada to British Columbia coastal communities for tsunami preparedness. Twenty-one high risk

communities received \$20,000 each and forty-three lower risk communities received \$10,000 each for preparedness initiatives.

Some of the key deliverables of the TIP project are a refreshed BC Tsunami Notification plan, an enhanced Provincial Emergency Notification System (PENS), Weatheradio capability for tsunami notifications, tsunami signage for at-risk communities, a Warning and Alerting Toolkit for Local Authorities, numeric wave modeling, and an educational website that can be found on the PEP website at www.pep.bc.ca.

Volcanoes

PEP worked closely with Natural Resources Canada to refresh the Interagency Volcanic Event Notification Plan. This plan outlines notification procedures for volcanic events within and outside of Canada. This plan was fully refreshed and tested this year.

Ongoing earthquake and tsunami outreach continues: promoting awareness of seismic hazards throughout the Province and encouraging preparedness by reaching out to communities, local governments, private industries, other provincial ministries, and federal organisations. We are also working with a school district in the Metro Vancouver region on earthquake awareness, safety, and planning, with the goal of enhancing earthquake education in the curriculum throughout the Province.

The Provincial Emergency Program continues to be an active participant in the WSSPC, the Cascadia Region Earthquake Workgroup (CREW), and has played a key role in the planning the 2008 National Earthquake Conference.

Submitted by Maiclaire Bolton, Seismologist, Provincial Emergency Program, Emergency Management British Columbia.