

# British Columbia Emergency Social Services Council (BCESSC) Terms of Reference

## 1. Name and Address

The name of this body shall be the British Columbia Emergency Social Services Council (BCESSC).

The business mailing address will be the office of the Provincial Emergency Program, ESS Office, PO Box 9201 Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria BC V8W 9J1

## 2. Authority

Statutory authority for the creation of committees to advise or assist the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Minister responsible or the Director of the program named in the *Emergency Program Act*, RS Chap. 111, 1996 is provided in Section 3(1) of the Act.

## 3. Policies

The *Emergency Program Act*, Emergency Management Program Regulation, Local Authority Management Regulation, and PEP policies are the basis from which the province, local authorities and BCESSC members will address community ESS response efforts in BC. The *Emergency Program Act* deals with both local and provincial government's powers and responsibilities to manage disasters or emergencies. This Act also provides a measure of protection for those engaged in community emergency response to a disaster or emergency under Section 18, Exemption from Civil Liability.

## 4. Purpose

The purpose of this council shall be to provide a forum for a collaborative approach to the delivery of Emergency Social Services (ESS) within the Province of British Columbia.

## 5. Objectives

The primary objectives of BCESSC are to provide an integrated approach to ESS and enhance the level of services throughout British Columbia. The key objectives of the BCESSC will include:

- A. Information sharing and networking between ESS Support Organizations (Non-Government Organizations (NGO), other government ministries and agencies) and the ESS Office/PEP;
- B. Understand and re-enforce the roles and responsibilities of the ESS Support Organizations within the ESS framework;
- C. Opportunity to learn from and better coordinate emergency responses;
- D. To provide support for communities, ESS Support Organizations in the delivery of ESS;
- E. To increase the capacity of communities and ESS Support Organizations to provide Emergency Social Services;
- F. A collaborative effort between government and non-government organizations to provide feedback and propose suggestions to issues, policy and procedures for emergency response as it relates to ESS; and
- G. Promotion and awareness of the ESS training program, educational activities and other training

opportunities.

## **6. Structure**

The organization of BCESSC shall include:

- One Chair from the Provincial Emergency Program's (PEP) ESS Office;
- All recognized ESS Support Organizations (Non-Government Organizations (NGO), other government ministries and agencies); and
- Working groups (sub-committees) to be determined and appointed by the Council.

## **7. Membership**

BCESSC is composed of representatives from non-government organizations, provincial ministries and agencies with roles in ESS within the geographic boundaries of British Columbia.

Each member organization maintains its own identity, yet works closely with the province and other ministries and agencies to improve service and to eliminate unnecessary duplication.

BCESSC membership will be by invitation of current membership or by expression of interest from an organization. Consideration whether to accept applications from these organizations will reflect the representation and decision-making needs of BCESSC as a whole.

Once BCESSC determines that the organization will be considered for membership and it meets the membership criteria, the organization must indicate in writing to the Chair and demonstrate their capability to work within the principles adopted by the members of BCESSC.

Criteria for membership includes:

- Non Government Organizations, government ministries or agencies with a potential role in ESS response operations;
- A commitment to abide by the Emergency Program Act and Regulations;
- A commitment to contribute to, and accept feedback on, all matters related to ESS from PEP;
- Any non-governmental organizations should be registered under the Provincial or National Societies Acts;
- Must have an established staff/volunteer management system that ensures an appropriate level of screening and training;
- A defined process or recognized guideline for ensuring the privacy of people affected by disaster.

Any number of representatives may attend and participate in regular meetings, with the provision that each member organization will have only one vote.

## **8. Chair**

The ESS Office will provide leadership and coordination as Chair for BCESSC.

Chair roles and responsibilities include:

- Serve as the Chair of meetings for BCESSC;

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- Be responsible for preparing the meeting agenda, and forward the agenda prior to the meeting or conference call to BCESSC members for their review and input;
- The Chair will arrange for a recording secretary who will record, prepare and distribute the minutes of BCESSC meetings and/or conference call and other materials as required.
- Coordinate and facilitate the activities of BCESSC;
- Handle correspondence and act as a spokesperson for BCESSC as required;
- Provide communications (oral and written) to the members, as required;
- Serve as principal representative of BCESSC to other groups as required; and
- Perform other duties as may be required by BCESSC.

Recommendations of BCESSC will be made a by majority of members in attendance at the meetings to the Chair. The Chair will reflect the level of support to the recommendation from the BCESSC membership in this process.

## **9. Meetings**

Meetings and/or conference calls will be held quarterly or as required to complete BCESSC objectives.

Requests for special meetings may be made by any BCESSC member organization or by the Chair. The Chair will poll the members, and if a majority concur, the special meeting will be called.

## **10. Working Groups and Sub-Committees**

BCESSC working groups and sub-committees will be created to further any ESS initiatives of BCESSC and shall be provided with clear objectives and milestones.

Working groups will meet at the call of the working group chair and will report as requested or as necessary to BCESSC, and at least twice per year.

Working group and or sub-committee membership may include non-members of BCESSC such as subject matter experts to ensure the capability to bring in any and all subject matter experts required to meet objectives.

## **11. Budget and Finance**

BCESSC as a whole will not undertake any fundraising activities nor disburse any funds collected on behalf of local authorities, while recognizing the mandate of individual organizations to do so in cooperation with a local authority.

PEP will consider covering operating expenses on a case by case, pre-approved basis for expenses incurred for BCESSC and/or BCESSC working groups.

## **12. Termination**

Membership in BCESSC and as an ESS Support Organization may be terminated by:

- The voluntary withdrawal of the organization by submission of a letter to the Chair;
- By mutual agreement of both the BCESSC Chair and the organization's representative;
- Failure to meet and adhere to these Terms of Reference;

- Conduct contrary to the intent and objectives of BCESSC, as verified by the Chair;
- Membership criteria are no longer being met.

Prior to the termination of an organization's membership from BCESSC, the Chair or their delegate will work to reasonably resolve any differences or challenges preventing their continued participation on the Council.

### **13. Amendments**

Proposed amendments to these Terms of Reference must be distributed at least 10 working days prior to a meeting at which the amendments will be considered.

Amendments will be adopted by majority agreement at a meeting of the BCESSC.

### **14. Review Provision**

The Council will review the Terms of Reference, at a minimum, every two years and make any necessary changes as agreed to by a majority of the council. A review may occur at any time at the discretion of the Chair.

### **15. Adopted**

Formally adopted and approved this 17 day of July at 2006.  
(day) (month) (year)