



June 17, 2005

To: ESS Directors, Co-Directors and Alternates
Mobile Support Team Members
ESSA Regional Representatives
Volunteer ESS Regional Trainers
Cc: MHR Regional ESS Coordinators
ESS Support Organizations
MHR Regional Executive Directors
PEP Regional Managers
Inter-Provincial ESS Directors

Re: Emergency Social Services (ESS) Program Office Update
Written/compiled by Maggie Grant

Important Message from the ESS Program Office:

In the course of appointing a new cabinet for the Government of BC, a number of responsibilities were reassigned to different ministries. The ESS Program Office has been advised that responsibility for ESS will now come under the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. There are no details available at this time, however we wanted to let you know that all ESS teams and other stakeholders will be advised as soon as we have more information.

Depending on when this information becomes available, we may advise you through the July ESS Watch or by means of a separate mail notification. In either case, we intend to post the most current information we have in this regard on our web site (www.ess.bc.ca), so you may want to check it periodically for updates. In the meantime, business will continue as usual.

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**Ministry of
Human Resources**

Emergency Social
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This edition of the ESS Program Office Update includes the following topics:

- a) **JEPP Grant for ESS Vests**
- b) **Provincial Integrated Recovery Council**
- c) **Personal Disaster Assistance Renamed**
- d) **Design for ESS Long Service Pins**
- e) **Emergency Preparedness Conference Draw**
- f) **Replacing Old ESS File Forms**
- g) **Use of Supplier Consent**
- h) **Supplier Reimbursements**
- i) **The Earthquake and Tsunami Smart Manual**
- j) **ESS Translation Guide**

a) **JEPP Grant for ESS Vests**

To further support the integration of BCERMS into community ESS operations, the ESS Program Office applied last fall to the federal government's Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) for cost-share funding.

We are pleased to announce that our JEPP application has been approved. The Ministry of Human Resources ESS Program Office and JEPP are each contributing 50% of the purchase price for a set of ten orange 'Operations' vests for each community ESS team. Since the Operations Section is by far the largest component in the ESS Reception Centre model, this initiative will enable communities to bolster existing supplies of vests for Operations personnel, and also to contribute to the continuation of a unified look for ESS under a BCERMS structure.

The vests are one-size, with Velcro closures, plastic pockets for function identification, and ESS logos front and back. Packages of ten vests will be automatically distributed directly from the supplier, Treen Safety Inc in Vancouver, to every ESS Director listed in our database. Distribution is expected to begin in early July, so if there are any recent changes to mailing address, or if you have recently stepped down as ESSD in your community, please **advise our office by June 30th** (1-800-585-9559) to ensure the vests are redirected to the correct person or address.

We again extend our thanks to all those ESS teams who have been working so diligently over the past year to adapt their ESS plans to fit with the BCERMS model. The positive feedback we receive from ESS teams who have had an opportunity to exercise or actually implement their new BCERMS plan is a clear indicator of the value and success of your efforts.

b) Provincial Integrated Recovery Council

The Firestorm 2003 Provincial Review, conducted by the Honourable Gary Filmon, identified the need for British Columbia to address post-emergency recovery:

“All well-developed emergency plans contain a post-emergency recovery component. This component should deal with the physical and social consequences of the emergency. Bringing together all social support agencies, both public and private, under one organizing group would help ensure those with unique needs do not fall between the cracks.”

The Province has adopted an integrated response and recovery model to improve effectiveness and efficiency in emergency management throughout BC. To facilitate a successful and effective transition from response to recovery, the Emergency Social Services (ESS) Program Office and the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) have formed a Provincial Integrated Recovery Council (PIRC). The Province, along with non-profit organizations and other non-governmental agencies, will provide an integrated approach to support the recovery efforts of local authorities.

The participation of the ESS Program Office in this council should **not** be construed to indicate an expectation from the province that ESS volunteers take on the additional role of recovery in their community. Individual ESS volunteers or staff may be invited by their local authority to participate in recovery planning, but the responsibility for that planning remains with the local authority, with the support of the PIRC, if required.

c) Personal Disaster Assistance Renamed

With the institution of the new BCERMS model for ESS, the ESS Program Office, in consultation with the Canadian Red Cross, has chosen a new, more descriptive name to replace Personal Disaster Assistance (or PDA). The new name – **Level One ESS** – is consistent with the first of four levels of ESS activation as described in the new ESS Program Field Guide.

This is a terminology change only and should not affect existing local operations. PDA has always been part of the ESS continuum, and that relationship has now been clarified with the new name.

d) Design for ESS Long Service Pins

One of our recognition initiatives for this fiscal is to design and produce a series of ESS long service pins. As a provincial program, ESS has been in existence for more than 20 years, so we are looking to design four pins -- for five, ten, fifteen and twenty years – but we need your help.

ESS volunteers or other stakeholders with a creative flair are invited to submit their design ideas, and in turn your name will be entered into a draw for a special prize! All participants will be acknowledged for their contributions. However, if a design is submitted that we want to use without modification, a special recognition gift will be presented to the designer.

So unless you want to leave it entirely up to the imagination of the Program Office staff, your input is needed by **4:30 pm July 31, 2005!**

e) Emergency Preparedness Conference Draw

The June ESS Watch included an attachment announcing this year's draw for volunteers to win an Emergency Preparedness Conference package, including travel costs and registration. The conference is being held in Vancouver from October 4-6, 2005.

Please remember to have your entries submitted by **noon on August 3rd, 2005** to be eligible for the draw. Details are on our web site: <http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/ess/whatnew.htm>.

f) Replacing Old ESS File Forms (HR2576)

The ESS File – Registration and Services Record was revised in February 2002, at which time we asked that you not replace your entire stock at the same time as quantities were limited. It was recommended that versions from 1995 and earlier be destroyed, however forms produced after that date were still considered adequate.

Following the Firestorm events of 2003, we received feedback regarding the difficulties of working with two different versions of the form. We now have sufficient stock of the new ESS File form that those teams who still have a supply of the older versions are advised to discard them and submit a replacement order to the Program Office.

In the lower left-hand corner of the card copy of the ESS File you will find a form number and date. Forms dated (02/02) are the latest version, and any older forms should be destroyed. As these are not what we call “controlled” documents, meaning they have no monetary value, teams may dispose of them as they see fit – shredding is not necessary.

**g) Use of Supplier Consent
(form #7530906049)**

Discussions with a number of different suppliers in recent months has left the impression that some may not fully understand the purpose of the Supplier Consent that they are asked to complete with their community ESS representatives. As a result, it appears some merchants are hesitant to commit to providing services in a disaster.

When meeting with potential suppliers, the local ESS volunteer should be sure to inform them that the Supplier Consent does not represent any sort of legal contract. The form is meant to introduce merchants to the ESS Referral form, ensure that they have the information they need for invoicing purposes, and to provide the ESS team with appropriate contact information.

The form includes a paragraph advising the supplier that reimbursement will be in accordance with current ESS Rates, a copy of which should be attached to the Supplier Consent. If they do not agree with this statement, they should not be signed on as an ESS supplier.

If a supplier requests more information regarding the payment process, or assurances of the role of provincial government in regards to reimbursing costs, there is also a Letter of Intent for reimbursement confirmation available through your local Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) office. If you are not aware of your local MHR contact, you may contact the ESS Program Office for assistance. Suppliers may also contact the Program Office directly with any questions the local ESS team cannot answer.

h) Supplier Reimbursements

Until very recently we were able to assure suppliers of a 30-day turn around for reimbursement. Given the current staffing situation, we are temporarily asking suppliers to allow up to 60 days for payment. This turn around time is based on accurate and complete information being submitted by the supplier to the local MHR office. If there are errors or omissions in the invoicing, reimbursement may take longer.

Community ESS teams can help streamline this process by ensuring that suppliers are following current invoicing procedures, as outlined in the cover page of the Supplier Consent, with additional "tips" provided on the back of the Referral form. Any questions should be referred to the Ministry staff contact in the local Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) office, or if they are not available, they may contact the ESS Program Office directly with Referral invoicing questions.

i) The Earthquake and Tsunami Smart Manual

PEP has recently introduced their new Earthquake and Tsunami Smart Manual..

The manual is available on their web site at:
http://www.pep.bc.ca/hazard_preparedness/Tsunami_Information.html

j) ESS Translation Guide

The New Westminster ESS Program, in partnership with the ESS Program Office and ESSA, has recently completed work on a Translation Guide for Emergency Social Services. The guide contains several basic questions or statements commonly used in the provision of ESS which have been translated from English into sixteen other languages.

The Guide will be available for download from our web site in the next few weeks. Thanks again to the New West team for sharing this valuable tool.

These are busy times for all, so we appreciate the time you take to read and absorb the messages in this update letter. We wish you all the best for a rejuvenating and disaster-free summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Cornell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jeff Cornell
Director
Emergency Social Services

pc: Rob Fraser, Executive Director