



December 7, 2004

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

**Re: ESS Program Office Update**

*Written/compiled by Maggie Grant*

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

- a) **ESS Support Organization Changes**
- b) **ESS Training Program Update**
- c) **Referral Form “Certification of Goods and Services Rendered”**
- d) **Protocol for Ministry of Human Resources Staff Assisting During an ESS Response**
- e) **Adoption of Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement**
- f) **Vision, Mission and Objectives for ESS Teams**
- g) **Duck, Cover and Hold**
- h) **Group Lodging Wristbands**

a) **ESS Support Organization Changes**

The *Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation Canada* has recently been welcomed into ESS as our newest Support Organization.

We became aware of the Tzu Chi and their desire to help people affected by disaster during the Squamish floods of 2003, when the organization assisted ESS volunteers in setting up a Group Lodging facility, as well as providing relief funds to hundreds of residents.

Tzu Chi has graciously accepted the role of maintaining the Mobile Feeding Units (MFU) assigned to the province from the National Emergency Stockpile System (NESS), and managing activation of the units in times of disaster.

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**Ministry of  
Human Resources**

Emergency Social  
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During a recent review of roles and responsibilities for ESS Support Organizations it also became apparent that the focus of two of our valued supporters had changed over the years. As a result, Mennonite Disaster Services (MDS) and Adventist Disaster Relief Agency (ADRA) have now stepped back from taking an active ESS role at the provincial level.

The ESS Program has been very fortunate to have been so well supported over the years by these two dedicated organizations. Both will continue their very valuable disaster relief and recovery work through their involvement with OVERBC (Organizations Volunteering for Emergency Recovery in British Columbia).

A document outlining the roles and responsibilities of all ESS Support Organizations will be available soon on our website [www.ess.bc.ca](http://www.ess.bc.ca).

**b) ESS Training Program Update**

*i. ESS Training Program Catalogue*

Work is underway to revise and update the former ESS Training Calendar, including the ESS training matrix. The annual calendar will now take the form of a catalogue instead, which will stay in effect from year to year with updates and reprints done only as needed.

In the meantime, the former calendar (2003-2004) continues to provide valuable information regarding the ESS training that is available to communities around the province and how it can be accessed. The ESS Training Calendar can be viewed from the Justice Institute (JI) website: <http://www.jibc.bc.ca/emergency/default.htm> .

*ii. Accessing ESS Training*

ESS training is provided by ESS Support Organizations under their agreements with the ESS Program Office. The majority of ESS training is available at no charge, and may be delivered in any community in BC.

There are a few courses that are only offered a limited number of times per year, so to ensure access for as many ESS teams as possible, these courses will normally be delivered in a central location within the region, depending on community and regional interest. Only the five-day ESS Directors' course is stationary, for logistical reasons, with travel costs provided to the JI in New Westminster. The few courses that do charge a fee to participants clearly state their fee structure in the calendar descriptions.

Please Note: In all cases, initial contact to request training is made with the organization responsible for the course, who will then advise you of any further steps in the process.

For more detailed course information and contacts for the various training organizations, please refer to the 2003-2004 ESS Training Calendar (see website address above).

*iii. ESS Director at MHR training*

When Colleen Vaughan from the JI is planning ESS training for Ministry of Human Resources staff, she generally invites the local ESSD and, if there is space, other representatives of the community ESS team to attend. The training focuses on policies and procedures applicable to the MHR role in authorizing and processing Referral forms, and also addresses the expectations around communicating and liaising with the local ESS team.

We encourage ESSDs to try and attend when invited, or send a team representative, as this training provides a valuable opportunity to build your relationship with those MHR staff in your area who will fill the role of Referrals Unit Supervisor in the local Reception Centre during a response.

*iv. Upcoming Changes to ESS training*

The JI and Red Cross are currently working together to combine the Registration training with Referrals training into a single 6 hour course. The new Registration and Referrals course will be delivered by JI Volunteer ESS Regional Trainers beginning in the spring of 2005.

The Inquiry component of the former Registration and Inquiry course will be added to the existing Search and Reply training, and Red Cross trainers will be prepared to deliver the new Inquiry, Search and Reply training in the Spring of 2005.

Until that time, both the JI and Red Cross will follow through with any community training that has already been booked.

There will be only minor updates to the actual course material, so teams that have recently taken this training do not need to repeat the courses at this time. Teams that wish to make arrangements for either of these courses should contact the applicable organization as soon as possible to allow them to plan for spring training needs.

**c) Referral Form “Certification of Goods and Services Rendered”**

In response to recent feedback regarding the Referral form, please pass on the following reminder to ESS team members or others responsible for completing Referral forms.

The greyed-out “Certification of Goods and Services Rendered” box on the front of the Referral is meant solely for the use of the local Ministry of Human Resources office AFTER the supplier has submitted their invoice for payment, and Ministry staff have reconciled the invoices with the Referral form. ESS volunteers or staff should not be entering anything in this box at the time of issuing the Referral.

The Referral form was designed with the intent that ESS workers completing the form would not need to spend their time calculating totals. The form provides the supplier with the numbers to work with (the number of family members, number of meals, etc.) along with the rates on the ESS Rates sheet, and the expectation is that the supplier would do the necessary calculations before providing services. We have received feedback that some evacuees would like to know in advance how much they may spend, and in those cases they should be provided with a copy of the ESS Rates sheet, possibly with the applicable amounts circled.

There are a few unusual situations where an amount should be entered and highlighted in the “Comments” box. An example would be when splitting the Incidental allowance of \$50 between two suppliers, as happens when an individual needs a few dollars for personal care items (perhaps \$10), with the remainder (\$40) going towards pet lodging. Each supplier in that case needs to know that they are not eligible to claim the full \$50 indicated on the ESS Rates sheet.

We always welcome feedback on our forms, particularly from those who work with these forms on a regular basis. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call our office.

**d) Protocol for Ministry of Human Resources Staff Assisting During an ESS Response**

In the ongoing effort to provide clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the many organizations involved with ESS, the ESS Program Office recently developed a protocol agreement outlining the expectations of MHR staff who have been identified to fill the various MHR ESS roles.

Some key points that should be brought to the attention of ESS Directors include:

- The regional MHR Executive Director will appoint MHR staff to fill the Referrals Unit Supervisor (RUS) position on each community ESS team in their region
- The RUS will liaise with the local ESS team prior to a disaster to clearly identify the ESS roles and responsibilities
- During a response, only MHR staff with ESS training will be assigned to assist in the Reception Centre
- MHR staff must have prior approval before proceeding with any ESS assignment
- MHR staff assigned to the RUS role by their Executive Director have standing **pre-approval** to respond in their MHR role to a local Reception Centre response (Activation level 3 or 4) if called out by the ESSD
- Up to two RUS's per 7 hour shift will be made available to each Reception Centre

The full protocol, activation levels, and position description for the MHR Referrals Unit Supervisor can be viewed on our website: <http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/ess/mhrstaff.htm>

e) **Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement**

The Program Office encourages ESS Directors to consider adopting this Code for their teams. This is a good starting point for those who have not yet formalized their volunteer management practices. Even teams that are already following the principles outlined can use this document as an aid to continue developing and strengthening existing practices.

The following excerpts describe the purpose of the Code, and are taken from the Volunteer Canada website, <http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteercanada/> (enter “Programs”, “Marketplace” and then “I work with volunteers”).

*“ The Code for Volunteer Involvement is designed to present a setting in which organizations can discuss how their volunteers are engaged and supported” by providing “a philosophical framework for involving volunteers at the governance, leadership and direct service levels.*

*The Code outlines the values, principles and standards for effective volunteer practices within organizations. It also includes the Organization Standards Checklist, which will assist organizations to evaluate and improve their volunteer programs.”*

f) **Vision, Mission and Objectives for ESS Teams**

The attached template was developed a few years ago by the ESS Team Support Committee, comprised of representatives of the ESS Support Organizations participating on the ESS Advisory Committee. It has recently been updated, and we encourage ESS Directors who have not yet created a similar document for their team to use this as a starting point for developing their team’s objectives, and to refer to the document regularly to confirm or refine your goals.

g) **Duck, Cover and Hold**

An e-mail blitz promoting an earthquake survival theory dubbed “The Triangle of Life” has been appearing in mailboxes everywhere in recent weeks. We would just like to issue this reminder and reconfirmation that the practice of Duck, Cover and Hold continues to be the most effective means of surviving an earthquake. Please see the attached notice regarding Duck, Cover and Hold which can be found on the PEP website at:

[http://www.pep.bc.ca/hazard\\_preparedness/Earthquake\\_Information.html](http://www.pep.bc.ca/hazard_preparedness/Earthquake_Information.html)

For the curious, a Google search for “triangle of life” will yield some very informative and educational responses to this theory.

**h) Group Lodging Wristbands**

The ESS Program Office has a limited supply of blue ESS Group Lodging wristbands to offer to community ESS teams. If your ESS plan includes a Group Lodging component, you may contact our office at 1-800-585-9559 to obtain your free wristbands.

The staff of the ESS Program Office extends our congratulations and gratitude for all the work your teams and organizations have done throughout 2004 to enhance and strengthen the ESS Program in British Columbia.

We hope you have an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season -- best wishes for 2005.

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

Attachments (2)

pc: Rob Fraser, Executive Director

# **VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES FOR EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES (ESS) TEAMS**



Note: The following Mission Statement, Vision and Objectives are provided to local ESS Teams as suggested messages. Teams are encouraged to adopt these or expand on the same theme, to keep the ESS message consistent throughout the province of British Columbia.

## **VISION (for local teams)**

“That individuals and communities can effectively meet immediate physical and emotional needs of people affected by emergencies or disasters.”

## **MISSION STATEMENT (for local teams)**

“To plan for and respond to the immediate physical and emotional needs of people affected by emergencies or disasters.”

## **OBJECTIVES (for local teams)**

1. To develop and maintain a local ESS Team of committed and trained individuals.
2. To build and maintain linkages with:
  - Local Emergency Management Program
  - ESS Support Organizations
  - Municipal, regional and provincial government agencies
  - Other ESS teams
  - Community agencies (e.g. non-profit agencies and suppliers)
3. To ensure training, support and coordination is available to all members of the team.
4. To identify and coordinate resources to support a response.
5. To develop, maintain and regularly exercise an ESS plan.
6. To increase private sector involvement to support and enhance emergency preparedness and response.
7. To promote public awareness and education.

# EARTHQUAKE

## Personal Safety

**“Duck, Cover and Hold”** is the most appropriate response to earthquake shaking in British Columbia.

In North America, only a small percentage of large structures are likely to collapse in moderate to strong – or even major earthquakes. There may well be a fair amount of non-structural damage such as windows popping, sprinkler system damage, HVAC system damage, even complete failure of non-structural walls – but most large structures are designed to remain standing.

Most injuries and deaths from earthquakes in North America are the result of moving, toppling, falling objects. The **“Duck, Cover and Hold”** drill, therefore, remains the best method of minimizing casualties for the most number of people effected by an earthquake.

In British Columbia, most of the building stock is made up of single family wood-frame homes. These buildings are not engineered (i.e. built to an earthquake code) and may be prone to collapse. They are however, small buildings, made of relatively flexible and light-weight materials and **“Duck, Cover and Hold”** drill remains the most effective means of protecting oneself within these lighter-weight structures.

One of the most persuasive photographs in support of **“Duck, Cover and Hold”** is a photo taken of an elementary school following its collapse in the 1985 Mexico earthquake. In the photo, the second and third floors of the school have lost all structural support and are “pancaked” down on one another. The collapsed floors are only supported by the school desks which provided about half a metre to a metre of crawl space for safe egress.

**“Duck, Cover and Hold”** is the best and most appropriate advice for minimizing casualties in the event of an earthquake in British Columbia.