



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 5
Halifax Regional Council
October 17, 2023

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: July 10, 2023

SUBJECT: Upper Tantallon Wildfire Lessons Learned

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Staff-initiated report reviewing the actions of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) response to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire that occurred May 28th, 2023.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Emergency Management Act, 1990, c. 8, s. 1; 2005, c. 48, s. 1 as amended)

Section 10(1)(e):

Within one year after the coming into force of this Act, each municipality shall
(e) prepare and approve emergency management plans.

Halifax Regional Municipality By-law E-100, the *Emergency Management By-law*

Section 3:

(1) The Council hereby establishes a Municipal Emergency Management Organization.

(2) The Municipal Emergency Management Organization shall consist of the following persons and committees:

- (a) the Executive Standing Committee;
- (b) a Municipal Emergency Management Co-ordinator; and
- (c) a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.

Section 5(3)(a):

(3) The Municipal Emergency Management Co-ordinator shall:

- (a) co-ordinate and prepare municipal emergency management plans, training and exercises;

BACKGROUND

This After-action report (AAR) is the preliminary lessons learned report to examine the Halifax Regional Municipality's response to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire to validate strengths and recommend corrective actions for the various business units within Halifax.

DISCUSSION

This After-Action Report (AAR) examines the Halifax Regional Municipality's response to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire event that occurred on May 28th, 2023, displacing over 16,000 residents, some for up to 12 days. This is being provided as per the Lessons Learned System of the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) of HRM.

This report aims to provide a preliminary evaluation of the response, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations for future emergency plans, mitigation, and responses in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). It includes an evaluation of the Emergency Operations Center's (EOC) effectiveness in coordinating and managing resources, communication and information sharing, decision-making processes, and overall response operations.

As the municipality has grown, the maturity of the Emergency Management function has not kept pace and has remained underfunded and under-resourced. When an emergency event of such magnitude and complexity occurs, it provides a rare opportunity to validate the current emergency management framework by identifying key success factors and highlighting gaps or deficiencies that require consideration for improvement. Lessons learned from such events will ensure emergency response systems keep pace with climate change's effects, which present increasing hazards in frequency and intensity.

The content of this report comes from submissions from HRM business units' insights and feedback regarding the response efforts by way of initial 'hotwash debrief,' employee surveys, and individual and BU submissions. Additional information was gathered from community meetings, citizen feedback, and third-party providers. The information collected spans from the initial incident onset to the demobilization phase.

This report does not include the results of Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency's (HRFE) post-incident assessment. HRFE's review of their emergency response to the fire and rescue activities, including unified command, emergency public information activities at the site, logistical support, and fire investigations are still underway. In addition, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables is conducting a similar review. These reports, when completed, will provide additional insight into the totality of the response and will likely create additional recommendations.

The ultimate purpose of emergency management is to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment. The protection of life is of paramount importance. In the broadest sense, emergency management elevates the understanding of risks. It contributes to a safer, prosperous, sustainable, disaster-resilient society through four interdependent components: Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At this time, the full financial implications are unknown. However, a financial impact assessment shall be completed upon direction from the CAO.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each participating business unit had the opportunity to contribute their insights and feedback regarding the response efforts. The information collected spans from the initial incident onset to the demobilization phase. The feedback that was provided allowed identification of strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for future emergency response and recovery efforts.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Upper Tantallon Wildfire After-Action Report.
- Appendix 1 Hammonds Plains Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2017
- Appendix 2 Community Evacuation Plan
- Appendix 3 Municipal Emergency Plan
- Appendix 4 Tantallon Wildfire Recovery Section Plan

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Kara Evans, Coordinator, Community Safety 902.478-1175

UPPER TANTALLON WILDFIRE

After-Action Report

Abstract

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Introduction

This After-Action Report (AAR) examines the Halifax Regional Municipality's response to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire event that occurred on May 28th, 2023, displacing over 16,000 residents, some for up to 12 days. This is being provided as per the Lessons Learned System of the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP)¹ of HRM.

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¹ [Municipal Emergency Plan 2017 - Aug 1/17 Regional Council | Halifax.ca](https://www.halifax.ca/city-services/municipal-emergency-plan)

² <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsracs/pblctns/2017-mrgnc-mngmnt-frmwrk/index-en.aspx>

Legislative Responsibility

Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act (S.N.S. 1990, c. 8, as amended)

The province of Nova Scotia is the governing body that oversees emergency management through the *Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act*. This Act reinforces collaboration and coordination of response to a crisis event.

Section 10(1)(e) of the Emergency Management Act requires HRM to prepare and approve emergency management plans.

Halifax Regional Municipality Emergency Management By-Law (E-100)

The *Emergency Management By-Law* is issued under the authority of Nova Scotia's *Municipal Government Act* (S.N.S. 1998, c. 18, as amended) and the *Emergency Management Act*. It details HRM's emergency organization and responsibilities.

Section 3 of the Emergency Management By-law establishes an emergency management organization.

Section 5(a) allows the municipal Emergency Management Coordinator to coordinate and prepare municipal emergency management plans.

Administrative Order Number One, the Procedures of the Council Administrative Order (AO-01)

Section 3(b) of the Terms of Reference of the Executive Standing Committee, found in AO-01, states that the Committee "shall advise the Council on the development of Emergency Management plans and present the Municipal Emergency Management Plans to the Council."

Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP)

The MEP was approved by Halifax Regional Council in August 2017. The MEP outlines the concept of operations roles and responsibilities operations of incident command, preparedness, and communications responsibilities.

Emergency Operation Centre – Incident Management

If individuals, businesses, or industries cannot cope, HRM business units will respond in accordance to their respective mandate.³

In emergency situations where it is determined that the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) should be activated, the typical function of the EOC is to provide "Incident Support". Due to co-location with federal and provincial counterparts, it is advantageous for HRM EOC to provide off-site support to site-specific Incident Command. In the Upper Tantallon Wildfire instance, the EOC was primarily comprised of HRM corporate staff: Community Safety, CAO, Legal & Legislative Services, Finance, Corporate Communications, Information Technology, Halifax

³ [Municipal Emergency Plan 2017 - Aug 1/17 Regional Council | Halifax.ca](#)

Regional Police (HRP), HRFE, RCMP, Corporate Safety, Parks & Recreation and Public Works. Other BU were utilized by way of contact with their staff.

HRM has adopted the Canadian Incident Command System (ICS)⁴, developed by ICS Canada and supported by the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office. ICS is designed to provide a unified response to various types of emergencies and events. It offers scalability to adapt to the specific requirements of any situation, whether it is ongoing or anticipated. Moreover, ICS can be effectively employed in multijurisdictional incidents involving multiple cooperating organizations. It operates on a management-by-objectives system, emphasizing a clear chain of command and maintaining a maximum span of control at all levels.

HRM's emergency planning, response, and recovery efforts are intended to follow ICS principles. ICS provides a standardized framework for planning, response, or recovery activities related to potential emergency events. This command-and-control structure enhances the management of emergency incidents and planned events, fostering improved interoperability between internal and external stakeholders.⁵

This report references the Incident Commander (IC), who oversees all operations at the incident. They:

- Typically are one of the first officers on scene
- assess the scene
- establish command as well as command centre
- request required resources
- initiates triage.

Upper Tantallon fire site-specific details under the ICS umbrella are part of the Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency's Post Incident Assessment (PIA), which is ongoing. The Incident Command (IC) structure at the scene of the fire operations was under a unified command with HRFE, the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR), and other agencies.

Prevention, Mitigation & Preparedness

In 2017, a Wildland Urban Interface Community Wildfire Protection Plan was prepared for Hammonds Plains Road, Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia, by Kara McCurdy, Wildfire Prevention Officer from the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables. (Appendix #1). The plan outlined the area's risk assessment and offered several mitigation options for homeowners and the surrounding area. This was followed with an Evacuation Plan, including maps and muster points. (Appendix #2)

The minutes of the Emergency Management Committee of June 18, 2018, has the following comment:

- g. Master Emergency Plan, Annex "C", Evacuation

Presenter: Erica Fleck

The first community evacuation of Westwood Hills was a success and now there is a list of 15 more communities who would like to do one. This will be an ongoing project for the next 5-10 years and going forward only semi-annual updates will be required.

⁴ <https://www.icscanada.ca/>

⁵ <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/by-law-e-100>

Erica’s team is encouraging businesses to create their own evacuation plan (Hatfield Farms for example), providing them with the tools and guidance to complete on their own.

Response

Incident Overview and Event Timeline

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency (HRFE) responded to a call for service on May 28th, 2023, at 15:28, regarding an out-of-control backyard fire in Westwood Hills, Upper Hammonds Plains. Due to the extensively dry weather conditions and brush on the ground, coupled with windy conditions, the fire spread rapidly toward Highland Park, Yankeetown, and Pockwock Road.⁶

The EOC Director received notification from the Director of the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NS EMO) advising that the RCMP was evacuating residents due to a wildfire in the Upper Tantallon area. This information was followed up by the Assistant Chief of HRFE, who provided additional information regarding the fire status and that comfort centers were required for the evacuated residents.

HRFE and RCMP recognized the rapidly deteriorating conditions and commenced evacuation by going door to door and requested the EOC to be activated (according to the municipal emergency plan⁷) on Sunday, May 28th, 2023, at 16:27. (Appendix # 3)

HRM declared a Local State of Emergencyⁱ on May 28th, 2023, at 23:00, which provided the municipality with a higher level of intergovernmental coordination, access to emergency funds, and the ability to mobilize additional support to assist the efforts of emergency personnel and evacuated residents. The state of emergency expanded into the closure of several schools in the area, along with Public Transit, Solid Waste, etc.

HRFE continued to work throughout the evening into the early morning on May 29th, 2023, when HRFE Incident Command turned the scene over to the DNRR;⁸ HRFE and DNRR established a Unified Command on May 31st. The incident command was turned over to the municipality on June 6, 2023.

The following is a chronology of the initial response activities. The source of this chronology is comprised of Computer Aid Dispatch times and phone records.

Date	Time	Action
May 28, 2023		
	15:28	Initial call was received as a “Fire in the wood, spreading quickly”
	15:31	The caller updated that “2 houses on fire now”
	15:32	DNRR Notified
	15:39	Upgraded to 3 rd alarm

⁶ Wildfire Weather Support – Weather Briefing #1

⁷ [Municipal Emergency Plan 2017 - Aug 1/17 Regional Council | Halifax.ca](#)

⁸ <https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20230529001>

Date	Time	Action
	15:39	EOC Director notified by Director of NS EMO with details on RCMP evacuating the area
	15:41	Air support from DNR requested by HRFE
	15:41	Mutual Aid requested
	15:42	RCMP began door-to-door evacuation of residents downwind in the path of fire
	15:44	Fire Senior Staff/On-call Notified Everbridge
	15:45	EOC Director Initial notification – Emerging event, Further details locations/scale to follow
	16:07	EOC Director in contact with HRFE Chief requesting additional details and any resources supplied by EOC
	16:12	Fire IC requested RCMP to attend the command site to discuss the mass evacuation of a neighbourhood
	16:15	Fire jumped the road
	16:15	EOC Director notified and requested evacuation of Westwood Subdivision and comfort center
	16:27	EOC Director notified, requested activation of EOC. Granted
	17:13	Emergency Alert – Evacuation ordered for Westwood Hills Subdivision, Upper Upper Tantallon, Nova Scotia
	17:15	Fire moved into woods beyond Westwood sub-division
	17:20	EOC Director notified and requested evacuation of Yankeetown and Stillwater sub-divisions
	18:07	5 th Alarm – Evacuate/Remove all units from Yankeetown sub-division
	18:09	Update to Emergency Alert – the fire has now spread, and an evacuation order is now issued for Yankeetown (Highland Park) subdivision, Hammonds Plains
	18:12	Fire jump the road hwy103 – Established East Sector and Staging at HRFE Station 50
	18:53	Crews responding to North/East Pockwock
	18:53	EOC/EHS notified to request evacuation of Pockwock Seniors complex
	18:56	Evacuation of Pockwock community requested
	19:41	Update to Emergency Alert – Evacuation order extended to Haliburton Hills, Glen Arbour, Pockwock Rd, White Hills subdivision, Lucasville Rd all the way to Sackville Dr. This is in addition to the earlier evacuation, etc.
	22:19	Emergency Alert – Due to the current wildfire situation and weather conditions in Nova Scotia all burning including campfires is prohibited until June 25 or until conditions improve, etc.

Resource Deployment

HRFE mobilized fire suppression, logistical, rehabilitation, inspection, and investigative resources while receiving valuable assistance from the RCMP for roadblocks, evacuation operations, and provincial support from the DNRR. By May 29th, there were 170 HRFE firefighters, 40 DNRR staff, three (3) helicopters, and one (1) waterbomber from Newfoundland

and Labrador. The following fire departments provided additional aid: Windsor, Truro, Hubbards, Brooklyn, Hants, Elmsdale, Enfield, Mount Uniacke, Cape Breton, and New London, PEI.

Fire operations continued for multiple weeks.

Perimeter security was maintained by police, GSAR, and municipal and private security resources. Security was provided by way of checkpoints and roving patrols. As evacuation orders were lifted, the perimeter and security model were adjusted based on geography and staffing availability.

Communication

EOC to Incident Command Post

Communication between the Incident Command Post (ICP) and the EOC was conducted through radio transmission, email traffic, situational reports (SitReps), and daily briefings.

EOC to External Service Providers

Communications with external stakeholders, such as Nova Scotia Power and Halifax Water, occurred as required to ensure situational awareness and collaborative planning processes during the response, and this communication stayed current while transitioning to recovery. Communication with external stakeholders was conducted in a combination of their presence in the EOC as required, requests through the provincial EMO, email, and phone.

The HRM activated a Halifax.ca webpage dedicated to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire response, including service disruptions, evacuation orders, maps, PSAs, and an extensive list of frequently asked questions.

311 Municipal Services and Information

As the response unfolded, it was identified that the municipality did not have the required contact information, phone, and email for displaced individuals. To facilitate accessing this information, requests were made for affected residents to contact 311 to register and provide contact information for future communication. 311 is a direct connection to critical municipal services and information for non-emergency municipal government services. As a result of this request, 311 received over 5,000 calls and inquiries from citizens in the first 24 hours. With the large volume of calls, 311 requested an online registry be activated to provide displaced citizens in the evacuation zones a location to register their contact information without wait times.

CAO Business Unit

The Councillor Support Office initiated direct briefings with the Council via Microsoft (MS) Teams and email updates to the Council during the period of most activity; this provided consistent communications to and from elected officials through a single point of contact to the EOC.

Internal Staff Communication

The CAO issued end-of-day messages to all HRM staff that provided updates regarding the fire status, evacuation zones, and evacuation services available to staff residing in impacted zones. Operational Business Units such as Transit, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation were

engaged where practicable to evaluate what services required rescheduling/reroutes or were likely impacted by service disruption.

Sheltering and Relief Efforts

Evacuation/Comfort Centers

Upon activation of the EOC, the following Evacuation/Comfort centers were opened to support displaced residents. The Joint Emergency Management (JEM) program, a volunteer-driven humanitarian function within HRM's emergency response, was engaged in operating comfort centres.

Black Point and Area Community Centre | 8579 St Margarets Bay Road. Black Point and Area Community Centre was the first Comfort/Reception center that had opened. This Comfort Centre was activated and operated by the Western Region Joint Emergency Management Team for the entirety of the event. Three (3) meals per day were provided, and the Insurance Bureau of Canada was also present to support residents.

Beaver Bank Kinsac Community Centre | 1583 Beaver Bank Road. Beaverbank Kinsac Community Centre was opened to support community members from the Lucasville Area. This Comfort Centre was the first to deactivate as it was not required, as the Lucasville area residents were able to return to their homes when conditions improved.

Canada Games Center at 26 Thomas Raddall Drive was opened as an Evacuation Centre by the Red Cross at the request of HRM to support displaced residents. The Salvation Army provided food, and the EOC collaborated with the Public Health Mobile Health Unit to meet the acute medical needs of the evacuees. The Red Cross mobilized the Disaster Animal Response Team to operate the sheltering component for displaced pets. Insurance companies were present at the site to provide initial assistance to the communities. Victim Services played a critical role in providing psychological first aid to evacuees who were receiving support.

Community Recovery

Community Re-entry

Community re-entry into the evacuation zones was permitted in many circumstances for a variety of reasons during the event and prior to the lifting of the evacuation orders. The decision to allow re-entry was based upon the safety recommendations of IC and completed on a case-by-case basis. There was no clarity on the process or approval, resulting in an inconsistent approach, frustrations, and confusion on behalf of the impacted citizens, businesses, and responders.

The data collected from the online form and 311 intakes allowed staff to identify impacted citizens. This data and Geographic Information System (GIS) data from HRFE allowed staff to identify property owners who suffered a total loss. This approach allowed staff to establish direct communication with some property owners. While contacting these property owners, IC indicated there was a potential opportunity for these individuals who suffered a total or significant loss to their structures to visit the site and view their properties. Due to time constraints, a decision was undertaken to email individuals who had not been previously contacted by phone to offer them an opportunity to attend the site visits before allowing any media entry.

The Fire Chief, as per the Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act (FSA), maintains overall responsibility and authority over all structural fire scenes. As fire scenes are often hazardous, the FSA includes provisions for the fire official to render a property safe (s.28(2)) before returning the property back to the owner. In the days following this fire, the number of people impacted by the evacuation was significant. Considering the impact on residents and in consultation with the Insurance Bureau of Canada, it was concluded that temporary fencing would suffice as a temporary safeguard so that residents could return to their homes as early as possible. Property release forms were subsequently provided to all property owners who had a building destroyed by the fire.

This allowed for Community re-entry to be completed in a phased approach that aligned with NS Power infrastructure repair and line re-energizing. In addition, HRM Public Works and various utility companies (gas and telecommunications) did assessments of infrastructure and on-property assets to action/remedy for safety, and existing hazards were mitigated prior to the return of the community.

Resident re-entry initially required the production of identification at checkpoints. Feedback from the field indicated that this process was slow, caused traffic backups, and was modified during the remainder of the re-entry process.

Upon re-entry and at the province's request, the EOC coordinated well water testing with support from Property, Fleet and Environment BU to community members in the significantly impacted area. During this time, Halifax Water, in Partnership with HRM, provided temporary water stations on Pockwock Rd to provide access to potable water supply.

HRM provided Red Cross Smoke Kits and Cleanup Kits to impacted residents to aid in the general cleanup of their homes. These kits were distributed at the Saint Margarets Bay Centre, Upper Hammonds Plains Community Centre, the Community Hub, and through door-to-door delivery.

HRM provided both organic and solid waste disposal locations to assist in food waste and debris cleanup.

Housing and Homelessness

The Housing and Homelessness team within the Community Safety Business Unit provided ongoing assistance to those who had moved away from the evacuated zones and continued to visit people who were unhoused in all regions of the municipality, providing wildfire updates, education about fire safety, and other information. The team provided additional food security resources to help reduce their need for open fires or cooking stoves.

Community Communications/Meetings

The staff prepared meeting spaces at both Captain William Spry Community Centre and the Canada Games Center to engage property owners in informative face-to-face sessions about the condition of their properties. The meetings commenced with those who had experienced a total loss, gradually expanding to encompass all evacuees. On site were Victim Service staff from RCMP and HRP to provide comfort and support to citizens who wish to share; the Insurance Bureau of Canada was on site to provide guidance on claims.

A more significant community meeting was coordinated and held on June 12, 2023, at Bayview High School to provide information to residents whose homes had been destroyed or severely damaged. Mental health support, Team Rubicon representatives, and the HRM Recovery Team were present to support the community's questions.

Another community meeting was held on July 20, 2023, facilitated by the HRM District Councillor with representatives from HRM and other stakeholders. Citizens were provided an opportunity to provide feedback on HRM's response and recovery efforts and ask questions regarding the same.

Volunteer-Based Humanitarian Groups

HRM participated in weekly meetings alongside the Red Cross and the United Way. The purpose of these meetings was to exchange information regarding community needs.

HRM engaged Team Rubicon to assist with the initial site-level recovery efforts from June 7 to July 7. Their primary task involved providing sifting services and sorting debris on 97 properties belonging to residents.

Community Mobilization Teams (CMT) collaborate to support families and communities during critical incidents. They act as a bridge between residents and service providers. CMTs were staffed at Comfort Centre services during the evacuations to support evacuated persons. Additionally, CMTs staffed the Community Hub and various community stakeholders, including the Red Cross, United Way, Provincial Mental Health Supports, NS Power, and IWK Mental Health Supports. The Community Hub was established directly within the Upper Tantallon community. This hub served as a resource center for residents seeking wildfire-related support during recovery. It remained open from June 20, 2023, to September 13, 2023, offering sustained assistance to the community.

Community Feedback

The information that has been collected within this section of the document has been obtained from Community meetings and Community Recovery Liaisons who worked with the public through the recovery process. Community Liaisons received common feedback on the following issues throughout the response and recovery phases.

Public Communications

Considerable confusion arose regarding the allocation of responsibilities among various government entities and HRM business units for providing different types of support.

Community meetings, while held, suffered from a lack of effective follow-up, leaving representatives unable to address questions raised during the meetings. The official website failed to keep pace with community demands, as frequently asked questions (FAQs) were not updated, leaving vital information unaddressed.

Emergency alerts were not disseminated promptly, and the hfxALERT system was underutilized.

Proactive communication from HRM was notably absent, leading to untimely responses to inquiries from concerned residents.

Maps provided were often ambiguous, and evacuation orders inadvertently restricted residents outside the designated areas from leaving their homes.

Many residents expressed feelings of frustration and insensitivity when notified via email about the destruction of their homes.

Programs, Processes, and Community Support

The fencing of properties lacked clear communication, and property owners were not engaged at the outset of installation. Some property owners opposed the fencing due to concerns about the cost being passed on to them and their insurance companies.

During the initial stages of water testing, there was considerable confusion regarding what was being tested and how the distribution was being handled. No agency seemed to possess accurate information. It appeared that proper processes were not established beforehand, resulting in disorganization and inadequate communication.

Residents felt unsupported during the evacuation, but those who utilized the evacuation centers found the Recreation Van to be a valuable community asset. External support provided at the Comfort Centers and Evacuation Centers was seen as beneficial.

Monetary support from both the community and the Red Cross was slow to arrive and poorly communicated. Determining eligibility for support from community organizations was confusing, with multiple registration processes in place. This led to missed opportunities for residents who were unaware of how to access these resources.

Evacuation Areas

The scarcity of evacuation routes out of affected communities, including egress routes, has been a significant and ongoing concern for residents impacted by the situation. Many found themselves trapped behind fire lines or caught in traffic congestion while attempting to flee their neighborhoods.

The unnecessarily prolonged power outage in certain subdivisions during the evacuation added to the residents' distress.

The absence of fire mitigation measures and dry hydrants may have exacerbated the crisis.

The breakdown in communication and unclear accountability between HRM and the province had a noticeable and detrimental impact on the situation, further compounding the challenges faced by residents.

Recovery

The community lacked sufficient information regarding the re-entry process and its progression.

Property owners expressed concerns about media presence and curious onlookers. Many felt that access was not adequately controlled.

Residents raised concerns about the Risk Assessments, highlighting the lack of clarity in accessing information and support for land-related issues.

Strengths and Areas for Improvement

An after-action report provides a platform for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of HRM's response to the wildfire. By recognizing and leveraging our strengths, we can replicate success while an honest appraisal of weaknesses guides enhancements. In this report, we received lessons and feedback from internal and external stakeholders. Community Safety staff conducted an internal employee survey, hotwash debriefs session, and overall general feedback on how the municipality responded to the wildfire. The following section provides an understanding from various perspectives and will allow HRM to create a more informed and prosperous path ahead for emergency management.

Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness

Prevention, mitigation, and preparedness work was initially undertaken for the affected area in 2018. The work identified risks, potential mitigation strategies, emergency evacuation routes, muster points, and roles and responsibilities. The plan suggested a three-year review cycle. The plan was shared publicly; however, the exact nature of the process is still being reviewed as well as any additional discussions since that time. The Wildfire Interface Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan with maps are not presently available to the public.

EOC Command Structure/Center

HRM has adopted the Canadian Incident Command System (ICS)⁹, developed by ICS Canada and supported by the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office, to ensure a coordinated response to major emergencies. ICS is designed to provide a unified response to various emergencies and events. It offers scalability to adapt to the specific requirements of any situation, whether it is ongoing or anticipated. Moreover, ICS can be effectively employed in multijurisdictional incidents involving multiple cooperating organizations. It operates on a management-by-objectives system, emphasizing a clear chain of command and maintaining a maximum span of control at all levels.¹⁰

HRM's MEP specifies ICS training is available to staff through accredited ICS courses; however, as the municipality has grown, the maturity of the MEP has not kept pace and has remained underfunded and under-resourced. The MEP was approved by the council in 2017. The plan requires an annual review and validation every 3 years by training and appropriate exercises. The plan was last reviewed on June 18, 2018.

Throughout the wildfire incident, HRM staff were deployed to the EOC. These staff members represented essential services related to the wildfire response, with roles shifting as the response transitioned into the recovery phase. Coordination of staff and resources did not operate in a pure ICS. Components of the ICS structure were utilized; however, the system was not fully adhered to. This led to inconsistent lines of communication, responsibilities, quality assurance, and approval processes, which caused lengthened timelines for responding to tasks, duplicate or contradicting directions, and confusion.

⁹ [Municipal Emergency Plan 2017 - Aug 1/17 Regional Council | Halifax.ca](#)

¹⁰ <https://www.icscanada.ca/>

Early in the response, the information flow between the IC and the EOC was inconsistent. The relationship of site command to the EOC was improved with the staffing of a liaison role in IC that facilitated timely and consistent information to the EOC.

On activation of the EOC, responding staff experienced difficulties with their equipment being compatible with the systems with the EOC. For example, the ability to connect with the municipal networks, incorrectly marked network jacks, connections to printers, and radio equipment and accessories. Sufficient workarounds and repairs were conducted in the first few days. Operations were able to be maintained; however, it could have been more streamlined.

Procurement Process

As noted previously, the coordination of staff and resources did not operate in a pure ICS structure, which resulted in a lack of clarity around the procurement process early in the response. Once in place, Procurement staff assisted in leveraging several standing offers to provide goods and services. The magnitude and urgency of the response were more significant and challenged the ability of some vendors in the standing offers to deliver; however, all goods were delivered.

Internal/Public Communication

The magnitude of this event created an environment in which the demand for information across a number of issues and programs from both the community and political representatives overwhelmed operations. To meet the demand and the level of urgency, some information was provided quickly and from multiple sources without verification. The lack of quality assurance and verification caused greater confusion and contributed to frustration for staff, community, and elected officials.

The early involvement of 311 in supporting the EOC proved crucial for HRM's ability to provide and collect information. In the first 24 hours, 311 received over 5,000 calls and inquiries from concerned citizens. The information gathered through online forms and 311 interactions allowed to identify affected citizens. It was noted there were discrepancies in the timing and frequency of communication between 311 agents and the release of PSAs, media briefings, and instructions to front-line staff. The lack of streamlined processes led to different sources conveying conflicting messages, which caused confusion among residents.

HRM activated a Halifax.ca webpage dedicated to the Upper Tantallon Wildfire response, including service disruptions, evacuation orders, maps, PSAs, and an extensive list of frequently asked questions. It was recognized that during the event, the quality assurance process of information was inconsistent, which impacted the timeliness of the information sharing. It was also noted that there was no set schedule for updates, which created uncertainty about when new information will be provided. The uncertainty contributed to increased incoming requests, which added more pressure.

Recovery

A comprehensive report was completed in August 2023 regarding recovery actions. (Appendix #4)

GIS Mapping and IT Support

GIS Mapping support serves as the municipality's situational awareness tool and is accessible to all business units. This GIS/spatial tool contains data for informing emergency response operations. Its layers encompass critical infrastructure locations, special populations, daytime and nighttime community populations, current road closures, and evacuation areas.

Throughout the response, the absence of a clear ICS structure led to staff receiving directives from multiple sources. This confusion contributed to delays in updating maps with new orders and sending out critical alerts and Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

As the evacuation zones were lifted, staff noted that in some cases, evacuation polygons failed to consider access and exit routes, rendering certain areas accessible only through evacuation zones.

Diversity and Inclusion

Emergency alerts in multiple languages were not possible due to limitations in the provincial alerting system. This posed challenges in ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for our diverse community.

Records Management and Documentation

Effective records management and documentation are pivotal in maintaining organizational integrity, transparency, and efficiency. These practices ensure that crucial information, decisions, and actions are accurately captured, organized, and preserved.

There was no standardized methodology for creating, labelling, storing, and formatting records during this event.

Debriefs

Throughout the event, staff were reminded of the Employee Family Assistance Programs, and there were various support agencies involved and available.

Interagency Operations

One of the most consistent themes from the feedback was the impact of confusion on how non-HRM organizations, governments, and agency programs were delivered. Whether it was water testing, disaster relief, soil testing, access to water, power issues, or financial assistance, HRM provided information about those services to the community; however, when the service did not match the initial messaging, confusion ensued, which led to frustration.

Recommendations

The recommendations from this after-action review are meant to strengthen and build upon existing processes and efforts. In many cases, activity on some recommendations may already be underway and would benefit from acceleration and consideration of wider application. Some of the recommendations can be acted upon and implemented quickly. Other recommendations will require additional time and analysis. Ultimately, the recommendations are intended to ensure that HRM is better prepared to deal with future fires/emergencies.

HRM Emergency Management Plan

- a. Update HRM Emergency Management Legislation to reflect structure changes and Emergency Management best practices and programs.
- b. Review the current emergency plan and take steps towards preplanning a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan framework with current best practices and lessons learned.
- c. Place all risk assessments, protection plans, and evacuation plans on the Emergency Management website to allow for public examination and review.
- d. Develop an internal working group to examine the current protocols for the Alert Ready System and propose recommendations to increase this program's effectiveness through expanded usership and access.
- e. Conduct risk assessments in communities within the Wildland-Urban Interface for vulnerabilities.
- f. Develop a crisis communications plan incorporating hfxALERT and Alert Ready usage and content.
- g. Develop operational resources to support Wildland Urban interface response activities to support the Emergency Plan.
- h. Assign scene security in major events to the Police Force of Jurisdiction to coordinate access, blockades, private security, and patrol.
- i. Review Business Unit participation in the EOC and mandate the appropriate level of ICS training for the role. All personnel with potential deployment in operations, coordination, and support centres will be trained in ICS 200.
- j. Track all ICS training to ensure appropriate staff are available at each level corporately.
- k. Ensure ICS is implemented upon EOC activation and scaled accordingly.

Business Unit (BU) Emergency Planning

- a. Review each Business Unit's Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plans. In the absence of both, BUs are responsible for creating and implementing plans.
- b. Review internal BU interoperability around planning and development of communities near or in the Wildland-Urban Interface.
- c. Create emergency procurement practices and procedures and tailor them to the unique demands of emergency situations.

Staffing

- a. Ensure staff are rotated out regularly for appropriate breaks in the EOC and on a more frequent basis if the EOC operating hours are extended, as they were in the initial stages of this activation.
- b. HRM should enhance staff EOC training for all BUs to ensure a three-deep contingency of trained personnel that can be called upon to staff a regional EOC when activated.
- c. Debriefing and support counseling for all staff and volunteers involved in the event should be considered and accessed early during any EOC activation. This is especially important when personnel staffing the EOC are also potential victims of the emergency.
- d. All personnel involved in an emergency of this nature should be offered and encouraged to access post-incident support services. This opportunity should be offered to support staff from external authorities and agencies to ensure they are given appropriate follow-up post-event.
- e. Explore third-party options to assist in creating surge capacity in an emergency. These options could assist with managing phone intake, providing program management support, resident support, recovery operations, etc.

Increased Coordination with outside partners

- a. Document the capabilities of outside partners to understand their role, activation method, capacity, and operational durations in a public safety emergency. This should be reviewed annually, and any updates should be documented.
- b. Debrief with the Province on access to their programs to understand their role, activation method, capacity, and operational durations in a public safety emergency. This should be reviewed annually, and any updates should be documented.

Procurement

- a. Create an emergency response procurement list. This central repository would contain details about the operational point of contact, the company providing the service, and other relevant information to ensure that invoices, payments, and approvals are processed without confusion.
- b. Following ICS, staff the Finance position early in the activation process.

Technology

- a. Develop and retain in the EOC a series of maps that show the respective jurisdictions and various potential support agencies to build muster points and/or emergency centers that can be used in the early phases of an emergency.
- b. Develop an internal working group to examine the current protocols for the Alert Ready System and propose recommendations to increase this program's effectiveness and timeliness.
- c. Ensure a network drive is allocated specifically for the Emergency Operations Centre.
- d. Develop an interactive public-facing map for public use when an area impacted is so large that static maps make it too difficult to read.
- e. Investigate the procurement of situational awareness and emergency management software that will enhance record-keeping related to position logs and decisions made in the EOC using electronic forms and establish a common operating platform for information sharing between the EOC and stakeholder representatives. This

- would allow a more effective approach to collecting and sharing important information, thereby enhancing collaborative decision-making efforts.
- f. Explore the broader usage of hfxALERT to assist in information sharing to more targeted groups, i. e., evacuees.

Elected Officials

- a. Provide all Halifax Regional Council Members with emergency management orientation training, including a guide on their roles during emergencies. This training should be reinforced with tabletop exercises every year. Where possible Councillors should be included in regional emergency exercises to gain practice within their scope of responsibility during emergencies.

Evacuations

- a. HRM should consider applying a more national Hazard Notification labeling process for labeling evacuation notices. For example, evacuation alerts, and evacuation orders are both clearly defined on maps for easy readability.
- b. HRM should consider further discussions around the process for evacuation route planning from an operational process, including emergency routes, utilization of directional change of highways, etc.
- c. Update the Evacuation webpage and provide public access to evacuation routes and pre-planning materials.
- d. Explore the broader usage of hfxALERT to assist in information sharing to more targeted groups.
- e. Recommend HRM proactively collect residents' email and cell phone information to use if required in an emergency.
- f. Create an evacuation management tool to track the status of displaced residents better and if they had evacuated safely.
- g. Identify communities with single or limited egress options and prioritize mitigation efforts.

Communications

- a. All parties involved in the emergency response must follow the ICS structure and the crisis communication plan protocol to avoid confusion and reputational damage. This includes the need for simple and clear language.
- b. Create emergency management materials in various languages that reflect the community and explore the ability to utilize translation tools during the response and recovery.
- c. Establish a protocol with key stakeholders on how the EOC will communicate with evacuees to ensure that displaced persons have ready access to the status of their situations.
- d. Establish a communications tool kit for 311 to improve communication among citizens and ensure that 311 is available and involved prior to an emergency to ensure consistency of messaging across all municipal channels of communication.
- e. Enhance public education with respect to necessary preparations and processes to improve response to evacuation alerts and orders and to enhance community preparedness and resiliency.
- f. Ensure staff who work within a decision-making capacity and support capacity are certified as information officers through an accredited institution.

- g. Clearly state the frequency and timing of updates so that the community can anticipate when information will be provided.

Mitigation

- a. Enhance and promote Fire Smart activities in areas that are at the greatest risk of interface fire. This activity should include encouraging the public to adhere to Fire Smart guidelines for personal property.
- b. Recommend HRM not develop communities unless there is sufficient access and egress options.
- c. HRM continue with the Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment to identify and prioritize risks within HRM and create mitigation strategies with those communities.
- d. Consider implementing mandatory access to water supply for communities.
- e. Increase staffing capacity in Emergency Management to ensure that all pillars of emergency management intended to prioritize life safety and mitigate risks and consequences of emergency events can be fulfilled.

Conclusion

Over recent years, Halifax has prioritized investment in an hfxALERT and upgrading EOC Technology to support emergency response capacity. To ensure public safety, these priorities have become critical during emergencies like hurricanes, wildfires, and floods. However, to continue to meet public expectations and consequence management strategies, Emergency Management requires substantially more support in planning for and being prepared for emergencies. Business Units must prioritize business continuity and plans for their role in emergencies in supporting the community, as Emergency Management does not solely sit with one department to plan and augment; it's the collective responsibility of all business units.

The response to the wildfire regarding alerting, evacuations, and comfort centers performed as planned with no loss of human life. However, there were clearly areas of operations that need to be reviewed and processes updated. The location of the evacuation was complicated with the issue of minimal egress and congestion on the exit routes. The long duration of the event and the magnitude did identify vulnerabilities in the mitigation, response, and recovery operations.

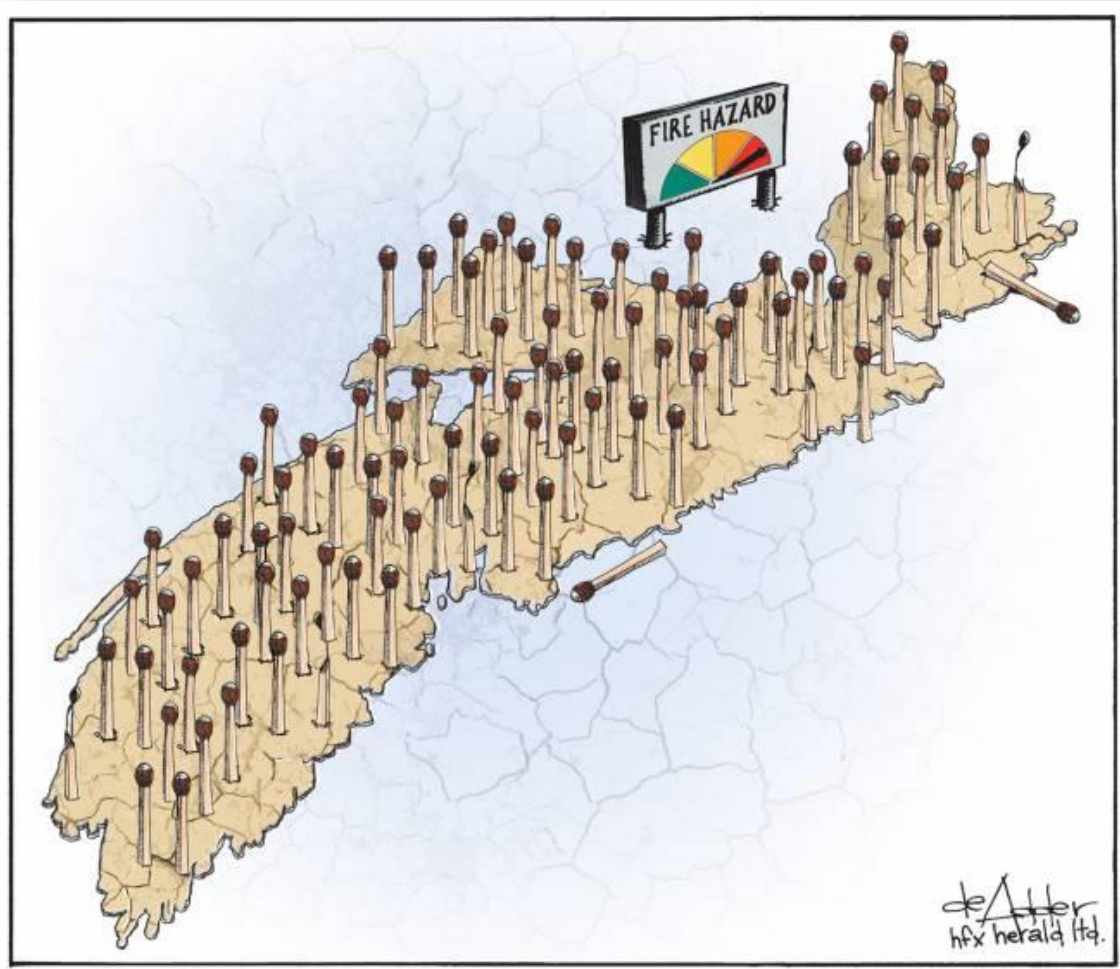
This After-Action Report should be reviewed as an initial review within a limited scope. The HRFES PIA and provincial reviews will continue to provide greater detail and may increase or modify the recommendations stated here.

ⁱ Governance to declare a local statement of emergency falls under Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act, 1990, c. 8, s. 1; 2005, c. 48, s. 1. Halifax Regional Municipality, By-law E-100, Respecting a Prompt and Coordinated Response to an Emergency

Wildland Urban Interface Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Prepared for: Hammonds Plains Road, Halifax Regional Municipality,
Nova Scotia

(Parks of West Bedford, Kingswood, Uplands, Lucasville, Timber
Trails, Glen Arbour, Maplewood on the Lakes, White Hills, Highland
Park, Haliburton)



By: Kara McCurdy – Wildfire Prevention Officer

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Wildfire hazard rating is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the wildfire hazards and risks within the Hammonds Plains Road within Halifax Regional Municipality. The assessment estimates the risks, likelihood of occurrence of a significant wildfire events and hazards, the potential for undesirable effects resulting from an advancing wildfire, associated with wildland fire in proximity to communities. This information in conjunction with values at risk information defines the areas of concern and mitigations are offered that will aid land owners, managers and other stakeholders in developing short term and long term fuel and fire management plans.

Goals

- Enhance the life safety for residents and responders.
- Lessen undesirable Fire outcomes to Property and Infrastructure
- Lessen undesirable fire outcomes to the environment and quality of life.

Objectives

- Identify level of risk in the community
- Identify fire behavior potential
- Group values at risk based on subdivisions with similar hazards
- Identify factors that limit mitigation efforts
- Recommend actions that will reduce hazards to values at risk.

Other outcomes

- Promote community awareness
- Improve wildfire prevention through education
- Promote appropriate hazardous fuel reduction
- Promote improved levels of response

Study Area Profile

The Hammonds Plains Road and area is in Halifax Regional Municipality located along [Highway 213](#) (Hammonds Plains Road) approximately midway between [Bedford](#) in the east and [Upper Tantallon](#) in the west. The subdivision was built around 1995. Highway 103 Exit 5 is another access for the subdivision. Hammonds Plains was established as a settlement area for [United Empire Loyalists](#) in 1786 along a road running from Birch Cove on [Bedford Basin](#) to [St. Margaret's Bay](#). Landowners voted to name the road after the popular outgoing Lt. Governor [Andrew Snape Hamond](#).^[2] Further settlers arrived with disbanded soldiers from the [Napoleonic Wars](#) and [Black Refugees](#) from the [War of 1812](#). The settlement was also the eastern end of the [Old Annapolis Road](#) intended to create a settled corridor and transportation link between Halifax and [Annapolis Royal](#). While the Annapolis Road never developed, settlement opened up a modest amount of viable farmland and more significantly developed many saw mills.

Hammonds Plains Subdivision consists of hummock hills with elevations range from 262-495ft. The predominant soils are well drained sandy loams that have developed on granitic till and are very like soils found in the South Mountain Eco district. For the most part the soils are shallow and stony and the landscape is dotted with large granite boulders. Soils on this parent material tend to be coarse to moderately coarse, well drained and commonly gravelly with surface stones limiting both machine operability and stocking levels to trees. Dispersed throughout this chaotic topography are small streams and rivers, bogs and swamps and several large lakes. The largest river, the Gold River, drains the western portion of the Eco district. The Pockwock Lake watershed is a significant water supply source for the municipality of Halifax and is within the Eco district. Approximately 7.4 % or 13,657 hectares of the Eco district is comprised of lakes and rivers. The predominant feature of this Eco district is the red spruce forest which occupies all slope positions throughout the area. Hemlock will be found on the lower and toe slopes near watercourses. White pine and black spruce with a heavy cover of ericaceous shrubs will be found on the shallow and drier soils of the ridges. Black spruce will occupy the poorly drained soils associated with the lower level ecosites. Occasionally stands of tolerant hardwood will be found on the deeper well drained soils of larger hills. Hurricanes have played a significant role in shaping the forests of this Eco district. Most likely due to its geographic position near the Atlantic Coast and at the end of two major coastal bays this area is impacted more frequently. The added moisture from rains and fog during the spring and summer seasons may also reduce the possibility of fires as compared to the drier South Mountain Eco district where red and white pine, white birch and red oak, indicators of a fire history, are more prevalent.

Hammonds Plains Road was chosen based on its:

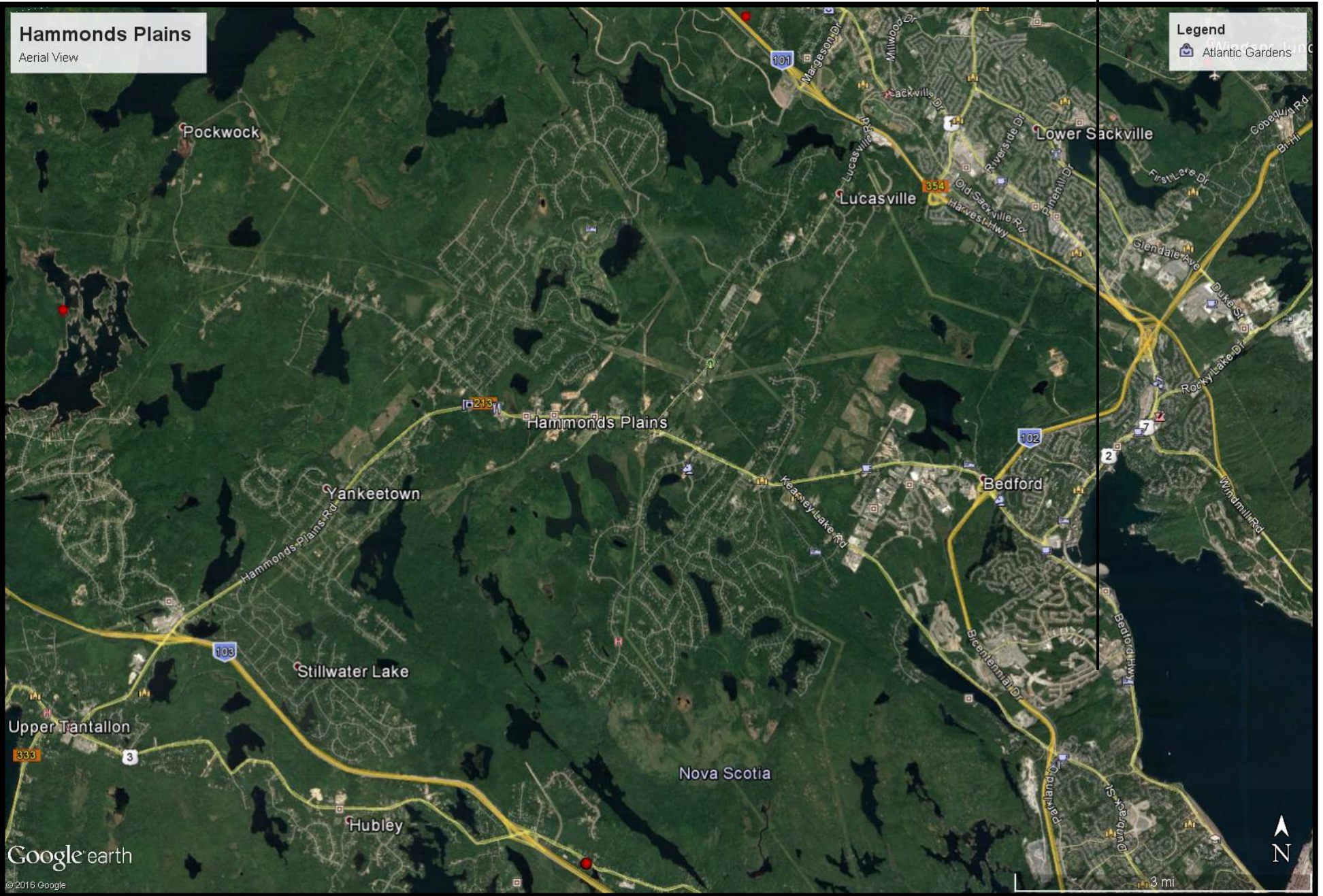
- It is experiencing ongoing suburban development into the wildland urban interface
- Its risk based on fuel types, past fire occurrences
- Values that are at risk that affect communications and critical infrastructure
- Interest from the Association and residents in doing Fire Smart initiatives with the community

Hammonds Plains

Aerial View

Legend

Atlantic Gardens



Google earth

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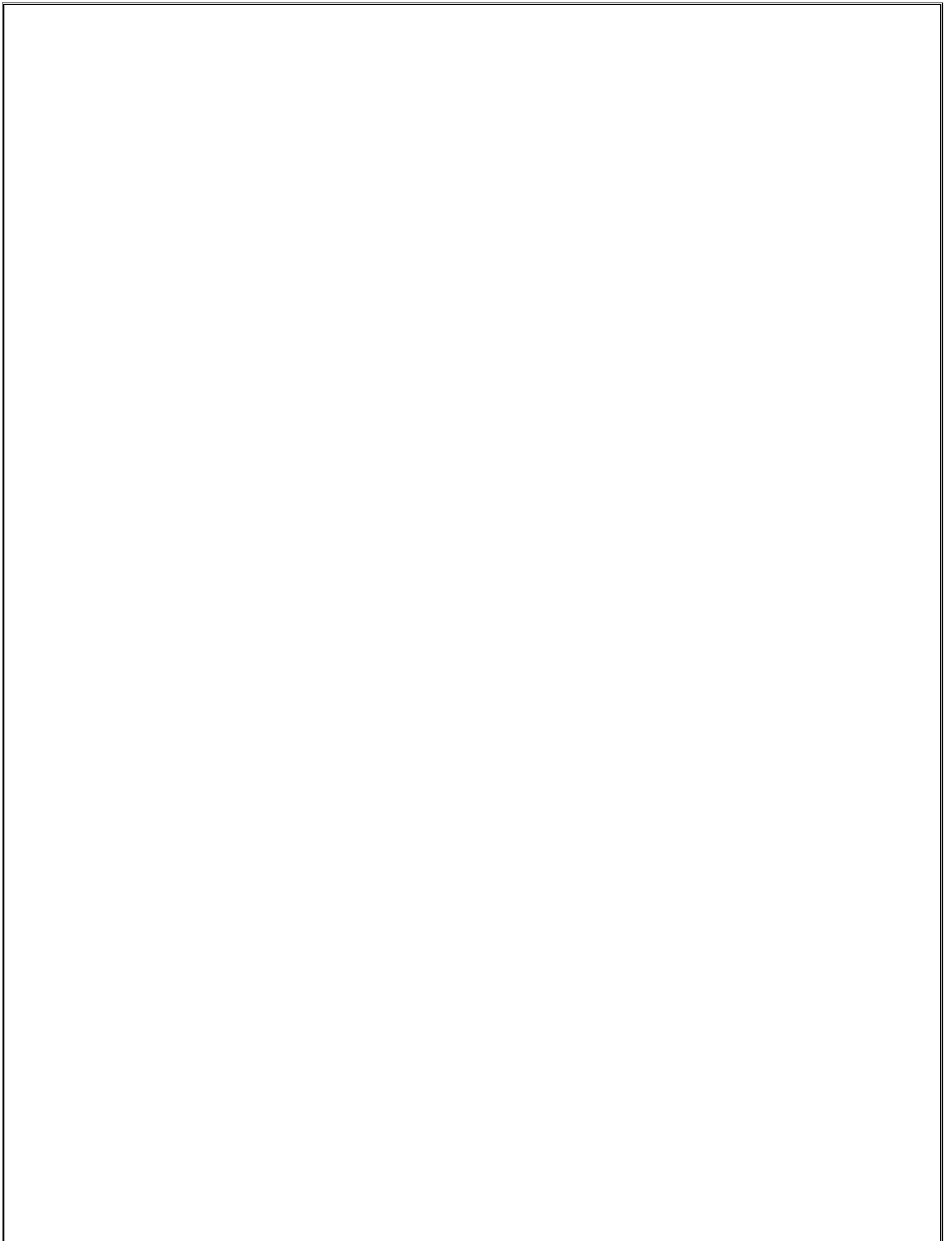
Forest Fuels Types in Nova Scotia:

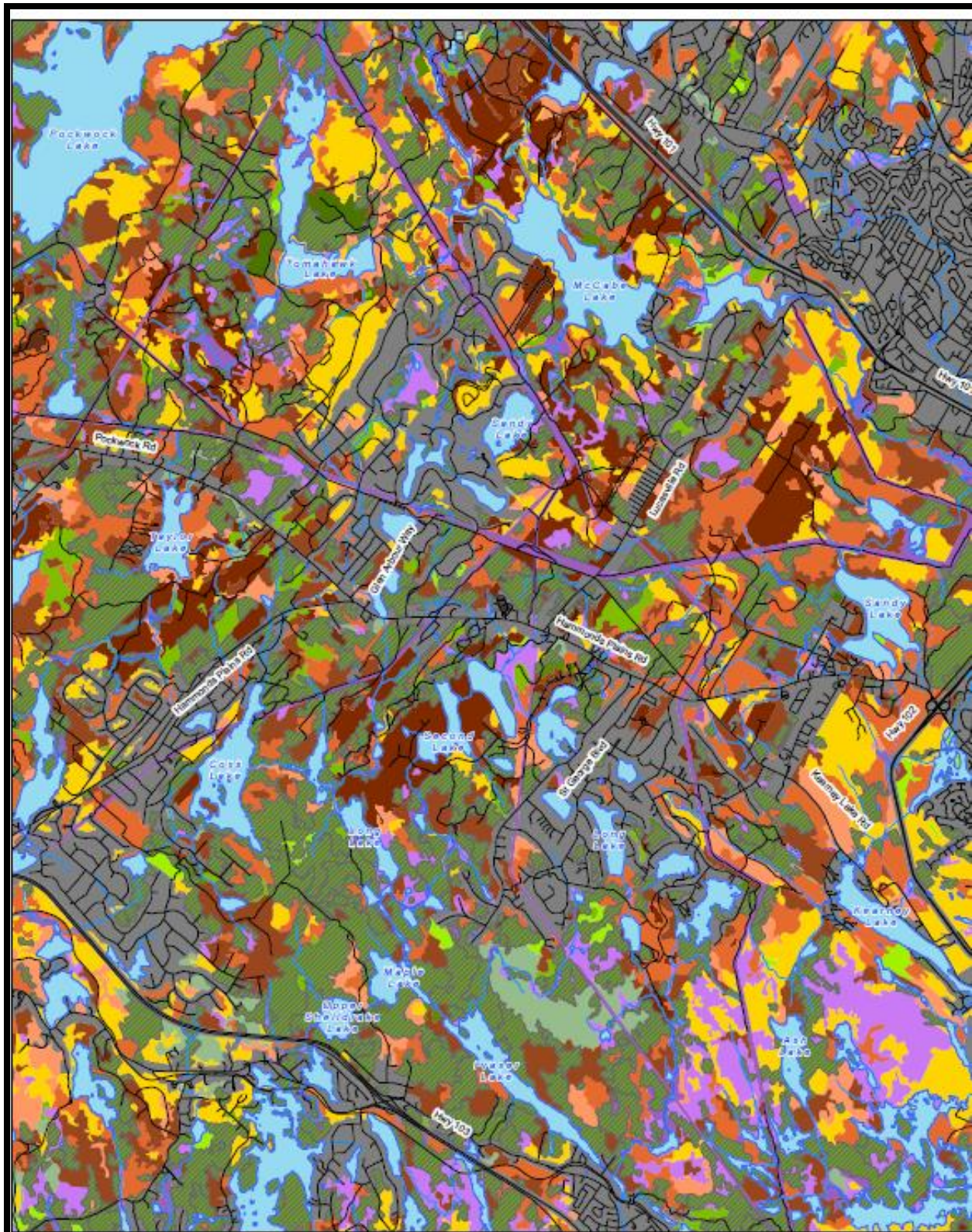
Coniferous (Needled)	C1	Spruce-Lichen Woodland
	C2	Boreal Spruce
	C3	Mature Softwoods with understory
	C4	Immature Pine (Dense stands similar to fir)
	C5	Red & White Pine Mature
	C6	Conifer Plantation
	C7	Pine/Fir mix grassy understory/shrubs
Deciduous(Leafed)	D1	Leafless Aspen
Mixedwood	M1	Boreal Mixedwood – leafless
	M2	Boreal Mixedwood – Green
	M3	Dead Balsam Fir/Mixedwood – Leafless
	M4	Dead Balsam Fir/Mixedwood – Green
Slash	S1	Slash – 1-2 seasons old/thin
	S2	Slash White Spruce/Balsam – 1-2 seasons old
	S3	Hemlock/Fir Slash – 1 season old
Open	O1A	Matted Grass
	O1B	Standing Grass
Nova Scotia Special	NS1	Spruce/Fir with shrubs/bog like plants

Forest Fuels of Concern in Hammonds Plains (Mostly Kingswood/Uplands and Pockwock):

C2 – Softwood Fuels - Spruce and Fir mixed with Hemlock, some stands contain white pine (mature), areas that were once classed as clear cuts would be considered a S3 which can be immature softwoods and wind fall. There are patches of mixed wood stands with a 30-50% softwood component. The primary forest structure is of softwoods. One of the more volatile fuel types in a wildfire situation due to their resin, structure, ability to shed and water content in dry conditions.

Mixedwood stands and softwood stands with a high component of dead/dying softwoods are heavy along Second Lake behind Hatfield Farms, Pockwock and Lucasville area.





Fuel Types

C2 - Fuels of Concern	M3/M4-80 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 51-75% Dead
C5 Red/White Pine	M3/M4-100 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 76%+ Dead
C1 Conifer	CC10 Clearcut
C3 Mature Softwoods	N91 Nova Scotia Special (Ericaceous heath)
C2 Sorel Spruce	O1/O2 Cured/Green Grass
C4 Immature Dense Softwoods	S1 Slash
C8 Conifer Plantation 2-4m crown base HT	S2 Spruce/Fir Slash
D1/O2 Leafless/Green Hardwood, D2	S3 Heavy Slash/Windthrow
M1/M2-25 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 21-39% Conifer	SF Seasonal Fuel
M1/M2-50 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 40-59% Conifer	Nonn/UR Nonfuel/Urban
M1/M2-75 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 60-79% Conifer	XX Not Classed
M3/M4-30 Leafless/Green Mixedwood 30-50% Dead	WAT Water

**Hammonds Plains
Fuel Types**



1:50,000



Hammonds Plains

Kingswood, Uplands, Lucasville, Timber Trails, Glen Arbour, Maplewood, White Hills, Highland, Haliburton, Perry Pond, Parks of West Bedford



Subdivision/Road	Risk Level	Reason
Kingswood, Pockwood, Lucasville, Uplands Park, Gatehouse	EXTREME	<p>Access: Access is good in these areas in and out, congestion still possible with amount of homes</p> <p>Fuels: Softwoods with little to no hardwoods of varying ages with a component of Deadwood.</p> <p>Buildings: Under 20 years of age. Single family dwellings, split entry, side split and two story, some larger. Vinyl/Wood siding, asphalt roofing, largely landscaped with softwood shrubs and bark mulch</p> <p>Risk: Past fires north of area, expansive amounts of trees, homes are well spaced which aids in reduction of fire spread from home to home, transmission lines, extensive recreational use</p>
Glen Arbour, White Hills	HIGH	<p>Access: White Hills, Glen Arbour, etc, access is good, still congestion possible</p> <p>Fuels: Softwoods with little to no hardwoods except white hills western side, varying ages, lower amount of deadwood.</p> <p>Buildings: Under 20 years of age. Single family dwellings, split entry, side split and two story, some larger. Vinyl/Wood siding, asphalt roofing, largely landscaped with softwood shrubs and bark mulch</p> <p>Risk: Expansive amounts of trees, recreational use, homes are well spaced which aids in reduction of fire spread from home to home</p>
Along the Hammonds Plains Rd	MODERATE	<p>Access: Extensive exits along highways and Hammonds Plains Rd.</p> <p>Fuels: Mixedwood, 60% softwood, urban areas paved</p> <p>Buildings: Concrete, metal, brick, asphalt or metal roofing, no landscaping/pavement/rock</p> <p>Risk: Is moderate still though with the proximity to forested area adjacent to Glen Arbour and Uplands</p>

VALUES

Prioritized Values to Be Protected

Protection of residents life and firefighters safety are always the highest priority in fire mitigation and suppression. The following resources should also be prioritized in fire planning.

- **Watershed** – Water is an important resource for many reasons. Fire has the potential to cause soil erosion and sedimentation of water resources. Foam has it's applications but be used cautiously around well systems and waterhsed areas that feed municipal water facilities.
- **Utilities** – Such as Power, radio towers, phone/roads and rail need be protected. Communications in a wildfire situation is vital to fire suppression and ordering fire resources for wildfires. Especially in the evacuation of residents in the community.
- **Private property and infastructure** – Destruction of private property or infastructure in the community would have a significant economic and social impact on local residents and businesses. It also leaves owners with the possibility of being homeless and losing valuable personal items and pets.
- **Aesthetics** – Residents and visitors of Hammonds Plains live where they live based on the landscape, views and availability to occupations. Wildland fires can affect all of this and take decades to re-grow the forests.
- **Recreation** – Residents and visitors use the forests for walking, ATV activities, and biking. Wildfires can destroy and prevent access to these recreational areas.

Local Businesses and Facilities

Convenience stores –Valufoods, Circle K, Hammonds, Plains Service Center, Fast Fuel, Esso, Needs Convenience, Hammonds Plains Pharmacy, Kingswood Pharmacy

Restaurants –Edible Matters, Alexandras Pizza, Acadian Fish and Chips, Baileys Meat Market

Facilities – Atlantic Playland, Hatfield farms, Woodhaven Camping, Upper Hammonds Plains Community Center, Glen Arbour Golfing, farmers Dairy, Pampered Paws Inn, Atmosphere Day Spa, Cape Cod Wood Siding, Veinot Fabrication, Wilson Titanium, Rhynos Landscaping, UPS

Emergency facilities – Station 65 Upper Tantallon, Station 50 Hammonds Plains & substation

Camps and day care facilities – Kids Academy, Willowbrae, Creative Kids

Churches – Emmanuel Baptist Church, Catholic Church, St. Johns Anglican, Cornerstone Westeyan Church

Heritage Buildings – None Noted

Schools – Kingswood Elementary, Madeleine Symonds Middle School, Charles P Allen High School, Hammonds Plains Consolidated School,

Trails – ATV and foot trails surrounding community but non-designated by a group/municipality

Groups –

Current Risk Situation

For the purposes of this report, risk will be the likelihood of ignition occurrence. This is primarily determined by fire history, fuel hazard, and hazard rating for the urban interface communities within. The hazard rating for the community is based on fuel types, proximity and density, fire weather, topography and building construction.

Much of the Hammonds Plains Road area is either in the High to Extreme category for wildfire risk in the urban interface. Subdivisions are tucked into the forest stands in this community and the type of fuel (softwood) age and load of fuel (mixed age/ladder fuels dead/dying and dense) and the proximity of the forest to the homes is very close.

Because of this the structure type is redundant and any conditions such as clogged gutters, open decking, debris on roof, and wood structures would have an even higher risk of being impacted by wildfire.

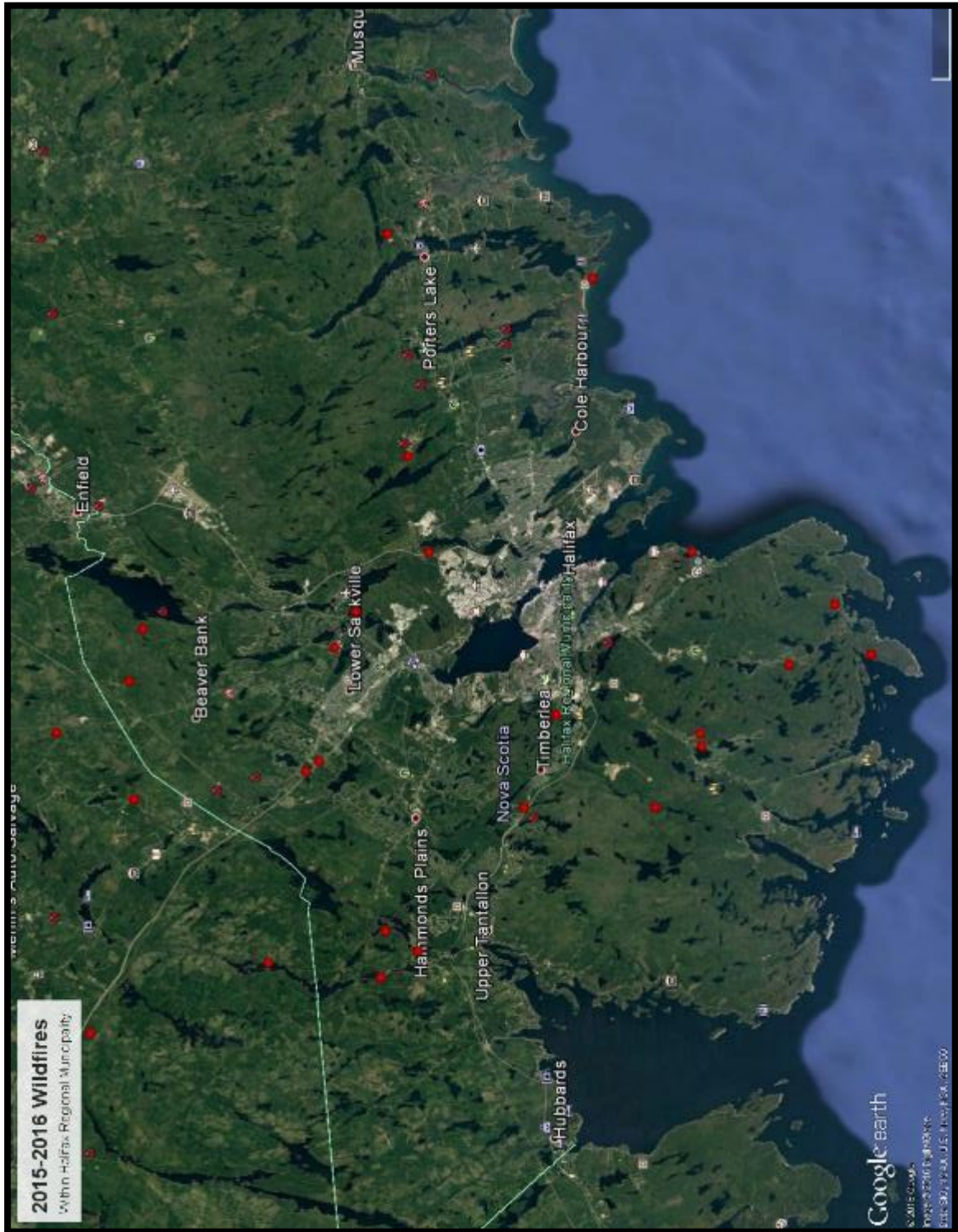
- These subdivisions have adequate entrance and egress which can be an issue when it comes to evacuations
- Water access seems to be accessible in most areas of Kingswood, St. George Blvd, Uplands Park and White Hills, Highland Park has a dry hydrant, Haliburton Hills a cistern and pump station.

Most of the homes I visited in the area have more than one of the following:

- Wooden construction – vinyl or wooden siding
- Bark mulch abutted against home foundation
- Combustible landscaping species against structures
- Open decking and lawn furniture on structure
- Fuelwood or lumber piled next to structures
- Forest stand comprising of softwoods within 10m of the home
- Laneways of significant length

Critical infrastructure also is a part of this community, major transmission power lines run throughout the entire community. Two communications towers that support Halifax Regional Fire Dispatch, Natural Resources (radios), Bell and Rogers cell service are near Stillwater Lake. North of Wright Lake are wind turbines and south of this is a major hydro dam and power facility. Any one of these is key to communications on a wildfire, communicating evacuations and should be reinforced/mitigated to reduce the impact of wildfire impingement.

In 2016 the community and proximity had 3 wildfires north of Wright Lake, all campfire related by either teenagers hanging out a one location to ATV drivers passing through having campfires, 2 on Sackville Drive, 1 Bayer's Lake along the Transmission line, and 1 along Hwy 3/Hwy103. Based on this and past wildfires within 40km of the subdivision the risk is high based on recreational users.



Recommended Actions

Educate Residents on Wildfire Mitigation

- Clean gutters twice yearly
- Screen in Soffits, Chimneys, decking to reduce fire embers from entering home during wildfire
- Store outside furniture and combustibles in storage during high risk days
- Keep yard well-manicured, grass mowed, leaves raked and removed, trees/bushes trimmed
- Use fire resistive building materials when renovating, Asphalt/metal roofing, wood, brick, concrete siding, double pane windows, composite decking
- Use alternatives to bark mulch around the foundation of home and out buildings
- Use fire resistive plant species when landscaping
- Make sure Civic sign is visible to first responders
- Have a fire emergency plan in place (72hr preparedness kit) and fire suppression (sprinklers)
- Educate children about fire prevention and campfire safety
- An evacuation plan/kit for your pets

Community Protection

- Have a community evacuation plan in place:
 - a. Evacuation Routes
 - b. Muster Station – Meeting Area/Comfort Center
 - c. Accountability – Fire Warden who ensures everything is secure, everyone is evacuated and any information is communicated to the incident commander on fire scene
 - d. Pets have an evacuation station
 - e. Helipad – Ballfield
 - f. Communications Plan – To keep residents informed on wildfire status and losses
- Educate local ATV Association on wildfire mitigation and impact
- Educate local Daycare/Schools on Wildfire prevention and evacuation

Optimal Recommendations

- Future building of homes be constructed with a minimal 10m buffer around with fire resistive tree species, thinned, or no trees
- Future home building be made of Fire Resistive materials and homes are well spaced from one another to avoid the effect of the Fort McMurray incident.
- Create an entire community buffer around outside edge of all subdivisions that is thinned and fire smart.
- School visits and education on wildfires

Some other useful resources

www.firesmartcanada.ca – Fire Smart Resources -Manuals/videos

IBHS – (Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety) - You Tube videos on Ember Storm Test on Wildfires

www.smokeybear.com – Children resources on Wildfires (www.smokeybear.ca)

www.northeastwildfire.org – Shared Prevention site with USA/Canada

Community Evacuation Plan

Community	Westwood Hills
JEM Team	Western Region
Evacuation Sectors	407
Version	D2.0

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Introduction

Purpose:

The purpose of this plan is to establish a safe, efficient evacuation process for the residents of Westwood Hills subdivision.

Authority

This plan is written under the authority of the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act, 1990, chapter 08, section 10 subsection (1): “Within one year after coming into force of this act, each municipality shall” paragraph (e): “prepare and approve emergency measures plans”

and;

under the authority of the Halifax Regional Municipality Emergency Management By-law E-100, 1996 (revised 2009), section 5; duties of the Emergency Management Coordinator, subsection (3): “The Emergency Management Coordinator shall”, paragraph (a): “co-ordinate and prepare municipal emergency management plans.”

The plan is written in cooperation with the Westwood Hills Residents Association.

Definitions

Evacuation specific definitions below are taken from the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP). For a full listing of all definitions and terms see, MEP Appendix “B”: Glossary

<i>Comfort Centre</i>	Facility that is primarily used for residents who are remaining in their homes but do not have full services such as electricity, heat, water, etc. Comfort centres are normally run by the municipality. (MEP)
<i>Drop-Off Areas</i>	Place designated for disembarking passengers of a motor vehicle, boat, train, etc. (Termium)
<i>Emergency</i>	A present or imminent event in respect of which the Regional Municipality believes prompt co-ordination of action or regulation of persons or property must be undertaken to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of people in Nova Scotia. (By-Law E-100 Respecting of a Prompt and Coordinated Response to an Emergency)
<i>Evacuation</i>	The planned and supervised movement of people, animals and/or materials from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to a safe place. (Termium) May be voluntary or ordered.

<i>Evacuation Area</i>	The area designated in an evacuation tactical plan as the area to be evacuated during an emergency situation. (MEP)
<i>Evacuation Centre</i>	A location where evacuees are received, documented, personal needs are identified, and overnight shelter is provided. A type of emergency facility. In HRM, evacuation centres are operated by the Canadian Red Cross, under the direction of the provincial Department of Community Services. (MEP)
<i>Evacuation District</i>	A smaller territorial area contained within a sector used to subdivide sector during the evacuation process. (MEP)
<i>Evacuation Order</i>	Population at risk is ordered to evacuate the area specified in a formal written order. It is an order and as such does not allow for any discretionary action on the part of the population at risk – they must leave the area immediately. A statement must be included in all bulletins, pamphlets, warnings and orders that makes it very clear to all that, while the evacuation order is in effect, the area in question will have controlled access and a pass may be required to regain access to the area. (Termium) An official communication authorized by the Incident Commander, or Emergency Operations Centre if activated, instructing the public to evacuate their homes and businesses. The contents of an evacuation order are listed in Section 3 of the <i>Emergency Evacuation Plan</i> . (MEP)
<i>Evacuation Perimeter</i>	The defined border of an evacuation area. (MEP)
<i>Evacuation Routes</i>	The routes authorized in an evacuation tactical plan for use in evacuating the population from an evacuation area. (MEP)
<i>JEM</i>	Joint Emergency Management Team
<i>JEM Team</i>	A Halifax Emergency Management community-based and focused organization that prepares for and responds in support of a wide range of emergencies. (MEP)
<i>Muster Points</i>	Locations designated for the gathering of evacuees for processing and transport out of an evacuation zone. (MEP)
<i>Reception Centre</i>	A service facility where disaster or emergency evacuees are sent to receive basic health care, assistance for basic needs and information. (Termium) Operated by Canadian Red Cross where evacuees or otherwise displaced persons can go to register and receive advice on the provision of the five emergency social services. (MEP)
<i>Re-Entry</i>	The operations directed toward the return of evacuees to the evacuation zone. Re-entry begins with the re-entry decision, and ends when all evacuees have been returned to their homes and businesses, and all resources used during the evacuation have been returned to their pre-evacuation state. (MEP)
<i>Sector</i>	A territorial unit corresponding to part of a municipality, identified for the purposes of emergency or evacuation planning and recognized for its urban [and rural] planning, demographic and environmental characteristics. (MEP)

<i>Warning Order</i>	Preliminary notice of an order or action which is to follow. (Termium) An official communication authorized by the Incident Commander, or EOC if activated, warning the public of the possibility of an impending evacuation. (MEP)
<i>Westwood Hills Residents Association</i>	The Westwood Hills Residents Association (WWHRA) is a volunteer community organization located in Westwood Hills, HRM.

Scope

The scope of this document is for the subdivision of Westwood Hills and includes, notification/communications, shelter in place, evacuation, emergency sheltering, re-entry and recovery.

Concept of Operations

General

This document is for evacuation planning and execution for the Westwood Hills subdivision only and is to be used in conjunction with the HRM Emergency Evacuation Plan (MEP Annex “C”). Both plans are Incident Command System (ICS) compliant documents and ICS will be utilized during the execution of any part of this plan.

The Incident Commander has overall control of all aspects during an evacuation condition in all or part of the subdivision. Under ICS, the Incident Commander may delegate authority to complete an evacuation objective to the Operations Chief who may also delegate the responsibility to an Evacuation Branch Director or Group Supervisor as needed.

The subdivision has been divided into six (6) smaller areas called Evacuation Districts and each district has had muster points identified.

Operations

Westwood Hills has two roads that can be used to evacuate however they each terminate on to the Hammonds Plains Road within 200 Metres of each other, which can cause traffic issues during an evacuation. RCMP will provide access control points at the intersections of Westwood Boulevard and Winslow Drive. All traffic exiting Westwood Boulevard will turn right and proceed to the designated reception centre to register. All traffic exiting Winslow Drive will turn left and proceed to the designated reception centre to register.

There are two potential westerly pre-determined evacuation centres for the residents exiting Westwood Boulevard and two potential easterly pre-determined registration centres for the residents exiting Winslow Dr. The Evacuation Branch Director will determine which one on each side will be opened based on need, conditions and

availability. The St Margaret's Bay Arena may be considered as a fifth registration centre as long as it itself is not under threat of evacuation.

During a total subdivision evacuation condition, residents living in Evacuation District 407-01, 407-03, 407-05 will normally evacuate down Westwood Blvd. Residents living in Districts 407-02, 407-04, 407-06 will evacuate via Winslow Drive. See appendix "A" for Evacuation Districts, associated streets and muster points.

Residents who are not able to travel in private vehicles should proceed to their closest muster point. Halifax Transit will be tasked to provide bus service collection at the designated muster points as needed and will take residents who are travelling on-foot to the appropriate evacuation centre.

It is critical for everyone to register at one of the two registration centres to ensure public safety personnel that the area has been evacuated and every family has been accounted for. At the registration centres, the Canadian Red Cross will also be available to conduct a needs analysis for families and once it is determined how many people have no place to go, an appropriately sized evacuation centre may be established.

The city will be able to provide information updates at these locations as well as at any established evacuation centre and through its mass notification system (currently CityWatch).

Special Populations

There are two day cares operating in Westwood Hills, both are operated by the same company. It may be determined that they need to be evacuated beforehand. If so, the Transportation Unit Leader will arrange to have the children picked up by bus and taken to a dispersal location.

Emergency Shelters

Two initial emergency reception centres have been identified, one to the west of Westwood Hills and one to the east. The Evacuation Branch Director working with the Canadian Red Cross will determine which centres need to be established. An overnight sheltering assessment will be performed by the Red Cross.

Re-Entry

The re-entry decision will be made by the Incident Commander and a re-entry plan will be developed by the Incident Management Team. The plan will ensure that the re-entry will be done in a safe and efficient manner and that appropriate traffic controls are in place.

Recovery

Services will be restored as appropriate under the direction of the Incident Commander until the incident is terminated and at that point service requests will resume to appropriate agencies.

Halifax Emergency Management, or another HRM agency will conduct an operational debriefing for the residents within 30 days to allow the lessons learned process to move forward. A report of this debriefing will be filed with the main incident debriefing file.

Evacuation Specific Emergency Roles and Responsibilities

Police

- Police will develop and implement a notification process to alert residents in the subdivision of the need to evacuate. During evacuation process, police will develop and implement a traffic control plan to allow safe traffic movement from within the subdivision as well as along the Hammonds Plains Road as necessary. All traffic in the subdivision will be outbound with only public safety vehicles and transit vehicles being allowed inbound. All traffic travelling down Westwood Blvd, will normally turn right at the intersection of Westwood Blvd and Hammonds Plains Rd. All traffic travelling down Winslow Drive will normally turn left at the intersection of Winslow Drive and Hammonds Plains Rd. This is to reduce traffic congestion on Hammonds Plains Rd.
- While the subdivision is under evacuation, Police will ensure security within the perimeter, provided it is safe to do so. Entry will be restricted to public safety and service vehicles only.
- Police will develop and execute a traffic plan for re-entry that will allow safe and controlled return to the affected areas at the termination of the evacuation.

Fire

- If the evacuation is mandatory and if there has not been a State of Local Emergency declaration made by the municipality, Fire service has the authority under the Halifax Charter and will need to prepare and sign the evacuation order.
- Fire may be asked to assist with medical assessments. Note: Fire service will have other roles and responsibilities under the Operations Section.

EMS

- EHS may be tasked to conduct medical assessments as required and to assist in the medical evacuation of non-ambulatory persons.
- Whenever possible, one paramedic vehicle will be on stand-by at the evacuation site, should a medical need arise.

Transit

- Halifax Transit will normally perform role of Transportation Group Leader and will develop and execute evacuation transportation to the emergency registration centre(s) as needed.
- Transit will also develop a transportation re-entry plan in required.

Public Works

- Working with the Evacuation Branch, Public Works will provide barricades as required.

Halifax Emergency Management

- Halifax Emergency Management will provide support as needed under the discretion of the Incident Commander, Operations Chief and/or Evacuation Branch Director.
- Will ensure local JEM team is provided situational awareness.
- Will ensure local Councillor is updated on the evacuation portion of the incident.

Red Cross

- Establish a Shelter Group under the direction of the Evacuation Branch Director.
- Conduct an initial assessment at the incident site
- Establish emergency reception centre(s) and/or evacuation shelter(s) as required.
- Liaise with Evacuation Branch Director and/or EOC.

Department of Community Services

- Will work with the Canadian Red Cross to determine the number and type of emergency facilities are needed to support the evacuation.
- Will support the Red Cross as required.

JEM Team

- Will provide support as required through Halifax Emergency Management or the JEM Liaison Officer and/or JEM team Duty Officer.

Communications

Residential Information

Coordinated through the incident's Information Officer, evacuee briefings will be done prior to media briefings or other forms of public information. Evacuee briefings will normally be conducted at established emergency shelters, reception centres and comfort centres and without media present. Maps showing impacted areas will be produced as soon as practicable and posted at all emergency centres.

Public Information

Conducted as part of the overall incident communications plan as developed by the Information Officer. Public information will not interfere with resident information sessions.

Training and Exercising

All agencies mentioned in this plan will be part of a distribution list and will receive updates to the plan as they become available. Agencies and persons named in the plan

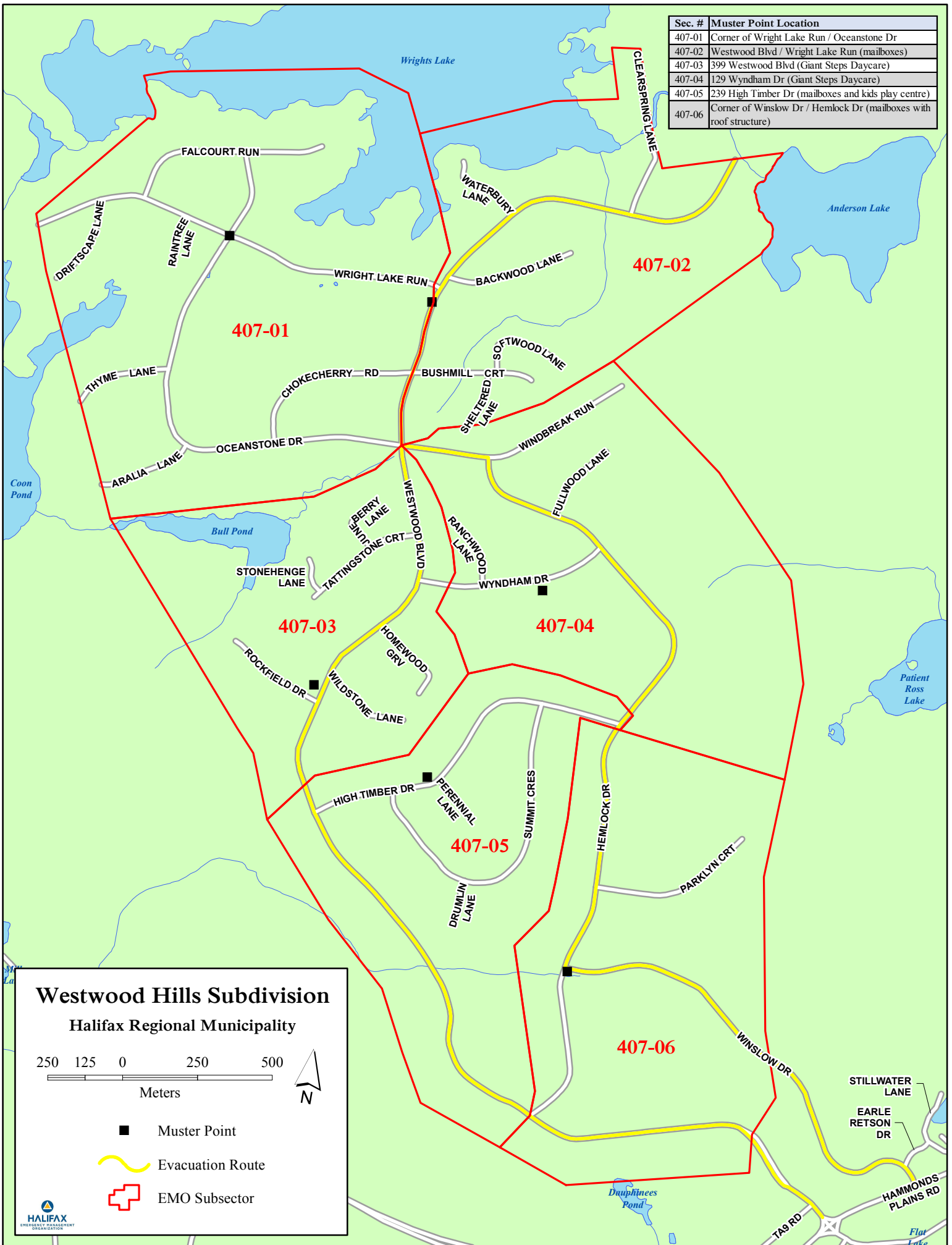
will receive training in the plan as arranged by Halifax Emergency Management. The local JEM Team may be asked to coordinate some of this training.

The plan will be reviewed in whole or in part by the Association once every three years.

Suggested updates to the plan will be forwarded to Halifax Emergency Management for action.

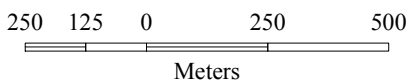
Appendix “A” – Evacuation Districts

Sec. #	Muster Point Location
407-01	Corner of Wright Lake Run / Oceanstone Dr
407-02	Westwood Blvd / Wright Lake Run (mailboxes)
407-03	399 Westwood Blvd (Giant Steps Daycare)
407-04	129 Wyndham Dr (Giant Steps Daycare)
407-05	239 High Timber Dr (mailboxes and kids play centre)
407-06	Corner of Winslow Dr / Hemlock Dr (mailboxes with roof structure)



Westwood Hills Subdivision

Halifax Regional Municipality



■ Muster Point

~ Evacuation Route

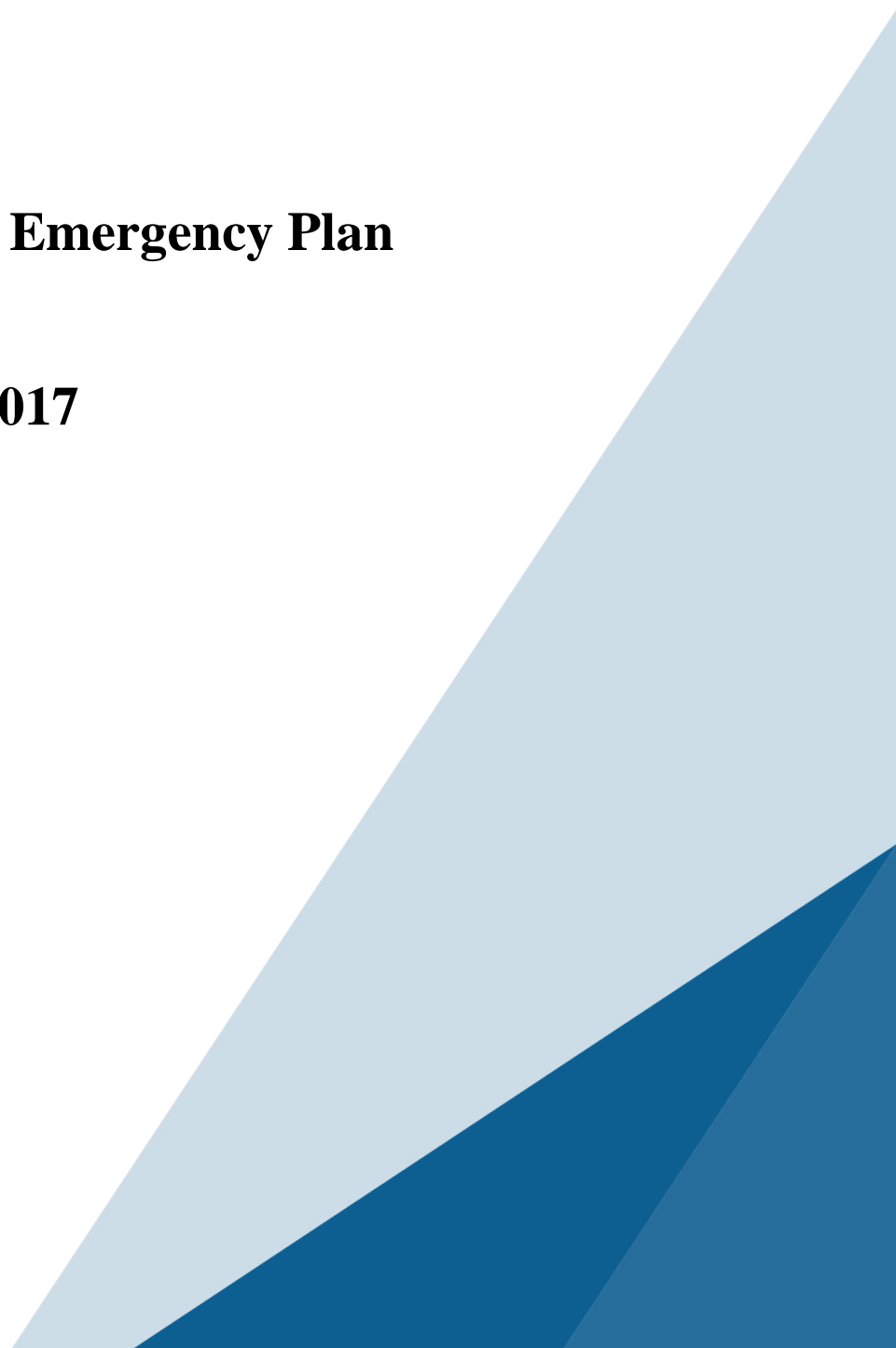
⊕ EMO Subsector



HALIFAX

Municipal Emergency Plan

Revision 2017



HALIFAX

Forward

This Municipal Emergency Plan is part of a series of documents that have been created by the Halifax Regional Municipality to allow it to respond and recover effectively from potentially catastrophic events that may befall the municipality from time to time. This document, through its various chapters, appendices and annexes will allow operational personnel and strategic planners the opportunity to develop and implement a coordinated “best-practices” approach that can be utilized to mitigate any potential or actual event occurring within municipal borders.

The plan has been written to allow all municipal business units, agencies and partners to work together under one common goal and following one emergency management command system that will allow it to manage by objectives. The plan may be executed in whole or in part under the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer with various parts of the plan only being utilized if and when needed. The plan details the overall management style of the municipality during a time of potential or actual crises.

To ensure that the plan remains current and functionally efficient for the municipality, it will be reviewed annually and as well within sixty days following a high level activation. Deficiencies will be recorded and amendments to the plan will be developed.

Municipal Emergency Plan

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Municipal Emergency Plan

1 Introduction

1.1 Aim

The aim of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) is to prescribe the organization and measures required to protect human health, property and the environment given an imminent or actual emergency affecting the municipality.

1.2 Authority

This plan is written under the authority of the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act, 1990, chapter 08, section 10 subsection (1): “Within one year after coming into force of this act, each municipality shall” paragraph (e): “prepare and approve emergency measures plans”

and;

under the authority of the Halifax Regional Municipality Emergency Management By-law E-100, 1996 (revised 2009), section 5; duties of the Emergency Management Coordinator, subsection (3): “The Emergency Management Coordinator shall”, paragraph (a): “co-ordinate and prepare municipal emergency management plans.”

1.3 Requirement to Validate

In addition to an annual review, this plan will be validated every three years by training and appropriate exercises.

1.4 Planning Basis

The HRM MEP (the plan) is an all-hazards plan. It addresses the risk and impact concerns that any number of hazards could create for the municipality. Furthermore, it is based on applicable legislation, local hazards, and available resources.

1.5 Legislation

The plan is primarily based on the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act (1990) and HRM By-law E-100 to Provide for a Prompt and Coordinated Response to an Emergency (1996), (revised 2009). Other applicable legislation is summarized in appendix “A”.

1.6 Hazards

The municipality is vulnerable to hazards in each of the following categories:

natural hazards: those relating to naturally occurring conditions or events, such as severe weather (e.g., hurricane, blizzard), tectonic plate movement (e.g., earthquake, volcano, tsunامي), unstable geographical features (e.g., landslide and coastal erosion) and wildfire ;

human hazards: those relating to accidental or deliberate acts that have the potential to cause harm to people, property and/or the environment. Accidental activities (e.g. a toxic chemical spill) are typically the result of carelessness or lack of attention, where there is no malicious intent to cause harm. Deliberate acts are malicious in nature and cover the full spectrum of criminal activity from graffiti through to and including an overt terrorist attack.

Hazards in each of the above categories have affected the HRM in the past. See annex “H” for the current Hazards, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA).

Municipal Emergency Plan

1.7 Resources

The demand for resources (personnel, facilities, supplies and equipment) during an emergency will vary depending on the situation. In the event of an accident or disaster, with few exceptions, the municipality has appropriate and sufficient resources to mount an initial response. In the event of a catastrophe or a protracted response to a lesser event, additional resources will be required from the private sector and other levels and/or units of government.

1.8 Definitions and Scope

For the purposes of this plan, an emergency is defined as:

“A present or imminent event in respect of which the Regional Municipality believes prompt co-ordination of action or regulation of persons or property must be undertaken to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of people in Nova Scotia.”

Definitions are listed in the glossary to this plan. The HRM Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) will maintain the glossary without need to refer amendments to higher authority.

The scope of this plan includes actions by the Halifax Emergency Management Organization (EMO), which includes the Executive Standing Committee and the EMO Planning Committee, in response to an emergency affecting the municipality.

The scope also includes guidelines for all Planning Committee members to develop emergency plans for their respective business units.

2 Concept of Emergency Operations

2.1 General

Any individual, worker, business or industry in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) which is responsible for the activity which is the source of an emergency should take initial responding actions to protect life, property, and the environment. Any individual, worker, business or industry which is affected by an emergency should also take steps to protect life, property and the environment. HRM should only be contacted if an expanded response is required.

Planning for, responding to and recovering from emergencies will use the Incident Command System (ICS). Events which could experience an emergency will use ICS for planning (for both emergency and non-emergency activities), responding and recovering.

As much as possible, potential for an emergency to occur and develop will be avoided by mitigation and preparation activities, including critical analysis of situations, and identifying and hypothesising potential occurrences, even unlikely ones.

Until the extent of an emergency has been identified with confidence, staff are to be ready to assume a readiness position prior to actually being necessary. It is preferable and easier to determine availability of resources beforehand, rather than to seek and apply after they become required. However, once an emergency situation has been assessed, care shall be taken to carefully utilize all resources in the event they are required elsewhere.

The confidence of the public in the municipality's response to an emergency situation is considered to be critical. Attention is to be paid to situation reporting to ensure higher levels of government are aware of the situation and can prepare appropriate assistance.

2.2 Incident Command System

To ensure a coordinated response to a major emergency, the HRM has adopted the Canadian Incident Command System (ICS) as developed by ICS Canada and supported by the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office. ICS is designed to provide a coordinated response to emergencies and events of all types. The system is scalable allowing it to be expanded to meet the requirements of the situation, occurring or anticipated. ICS also may be utilized during multi-jurisdictional incidents between cooperating organizations. ICS is a system of management by objectives using a clear chain of command and within a maximum span of control at all levels.

ICS will be used by the city for all incidents recognized as an ICS Type 3 event or more serious (Type 2 or Type 1). As well it may be used by any municipal business unit to respond to any incident regardless of size, including planned events. ICS principles will be employed during activation of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) as appropriate. After the establishment of priorities, measurable and attainable incident objectives will be defined for all incidents. The Incident Commander for an HRM-led incident will come from an HRM business unit.

Every business unit that may be expected to respond to an ICS Type 3 incident, or higher will have appropriate training made available in the use and application of ICS within the incident. All

Municipal Emergency Plan

ICS training will conform to the standards set out by ICS Canada (See Chapter 4 for more discussion on the use of ICS).

2.2.1 ICS Incident Typing

Type 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Handled by one or two single resources and/or up to six personnel - No other Command or general staff positions other than the Incident Commander are staffed - Verbal Incident Action Plan (IAP) - Contained to one operational period - No EOC activation
Type 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than one agency may become involved and/or the formation of a task force - Some of the command and general staff positions are activated if needed - Contained to one operational period - Verbal IAP/ briefing form (ICS201) may be used - Unlikely to result in an EOC activation
Type 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-agency response and likely a multi-site response affecting all or a large part of the municipality - Some or all of the command and general staff positions activated - Multiple operational periods - Written IAP required for each operational period - EOC likely activated - Examples: large weather events resulting in multiple damage areas; large evacuations of affected populations
Type 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex incident involving multiple sites and is extending beyond capabilities of various sites, requiring overall coordination of all municipal and external resources - Most or all of the command and general staff positions are staffed - Multiple operational periods with operational personnel not exceeding 500 - Written IAP - EOC activated - Examples: large events like hurricanes and protracted snow storms with large damages and/or protracted recovery times over a large part of the municipality
Type 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly complex incident involving the entire municipality - High impact on municipality - Multi-agency and likely multi-jurisdictional - All command and general staff positions are filled - Operations personnel can exceed 500 per operational period - Joint activation of EOC with provincial and federal centres - Business continuity plans implemented across all business units - Examples: large events with severe damages, loss of municipal services for an extended period of time

2.3 Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis

The HRM, as part of an ongoing commitment to public safety and to the protection of the environment as well as public and private property, routinely updates its Hazard, Risk and

Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA). The purpose of the HRVA is to identify gaps and weaknesses in emergency management planning, training, organization and resources. A HRVA is a fundamental step in emergency planning to help an organization make risk based decisions to address vulnerabilities, mitigate hazards and prepare for the response to, and recovery from, an emergency.

The HRM HRVA will be used in event and emergency management planning. During incidents, the ICS Planning Section is responsible for ensuring the HRVA is integrated into planning for the response. The HRM Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) is responsible for ensuring the HRVA is integrated into routine emergency management such as mitigation and preparedness planning.

2.3.1 Risk Categories

The Public Safety Canada All-Hazards Risk Events Categories are:

- a. intentional;
- b. unintentional;
- c. natural;
- d. health; and
- e. emerging phenomena and technologies.

The current HRVA follows these risk categories and is located in Annex H.

2.4 Business Unit Emergency Plans

All public safety business units as well as every business unit within the municipality that provides an identified mission critical or essential service as defined in the HRM Business Continuity Management plan will have a business unit emergency plan that discusses how those services are to be provided during an incident. This plan may be contained within the business unit's business continuity plan or it may be a separate plan.

Business unit emergency plans are to be designed to support the overall response to the emergency and are to be developed to work within the current emergency framework of the municipality including complementing the MEP. Business unit emergency plans will be written with triggers for implementation/de-implementation.

See appendix "E" for guidelines on the development of business unit emergency plans.

2.5 Business Continuity Management

Business continuity management (BCM) will be done at two levels in HRM: Corporate-wide and at the Business Unit level.

HRM will develop and maintain a corporate business continuity management plan that is based on all of the services that the municipality provides. The services in the corporate plan are categorized by their level of priority, based in part on the need of the services, down-time allowances and the requirement under legislation to provide that service. The corporate plan will be developed and maintained by the EMO Office as a separate annex to the municipal emergency plan.

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Each HRM business unit will also prioritize its services and will develop a business unit emergency plan to provide these services in times of crisis for the business unit. This plan may be contained in but will remain distinct from the business unit emergency plan, if applicable.

The business unit emergency plan, if needed, details how the business unit supports the overall emergency responses contained in the Municipal Emergency Plan and as well, the business unit BCM plan details how the business unit will provide its own services to its clients in times of crisis. Therefore, the plan developed by the business unit must be able to be implemented independently from the Municipal Emergency Plan. The business unit BCM plan will be developed and maintained by the business unit in conjunction with the corporate BCM plan.

See appendix “F” for details

2.6 Infectious Disease

Infectious disease is one of many elements that may fall within an all-hazards risk inventory. The main impacts that may affect the municipality during an infectious disease outbreak are occupational health and safety concerns for municipal staff as well as impacts to the provision of municipal services (which directly relate to business continuity).

As the municipality does not provide services related to the provision of health care (short of an occupational health and safety nature), the municipality would take direction and guidance from the Nova Scotia Health Authority on matters of a health nature including but not limited to infection, prevention and control, and the like.

In an outbreak where loss of labour is experienced within HRM, the various business units’ BCM plans would speak to the strategies to mitigate the potential impact(s).

It is acknowledged that should HRM be faced with an outbreak situation, such things as loss of life and illness to friends, family members, and co-workers may create increased stress and hardship to HRM employees. HRM will make all municipal CISM services available to staff to mitigate such effects and pressures.

It is acknowledged that HRM will maintain a stockpile of infection prevention and control materials (including but not limited to surgical masks and gloves). HRM EMO will continue to be the point of contact for matters related to this stockpile and will also maintain and working group (made up of business unit representatives) to provide guidance and oversight.

2.7 State of Local Emergency

2.7.1 Legislation Enabling a State of Local Emergency Declaration

- a. Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act. 1990, c. 8, s. 1; 2005, c. 48, s. 1.
- b. Halifax Regional Municipality, By-law E-100, Respecting of a Prompt and Coordinated Response to an Emergency

A state of local emergency (SOLE) declaration should be made when an emergency situation exceeds the routine authority of the HRM and/or any or all of the powers that the declaration would enable are required. In particular, declaration of a state of local emergency should be considered when the situation requires the municipal emergency plan or any part thereof to be implemented. There is a requirement to notify the public in the affected area as well as the Minister whenever a declaration of a SOLE.

The declaration of a SOLE enables certain powers to the municipality that may be used as needed to lessen the impact of the emergency.

See Appendix “C” for instructions on the declaration of a State of Local Emergency

2.8 Implementation and De-Implementation of the Municipal Emergency Plan

2.8.1 Implementation Criteria

The MEP shall be implemented when the emergency has exceeded, or has the potential to exceed, the normal emergency response capabilities of the municipality, and/or if the municipality requires substantial assistance coordinating response resources; and/or if multiple jurisdictions are involved requiring coordination. The following occurrences shall be automatic “triggers” for implementation;

- a. ICS Type 3 event or higher (1 or 2), or
- b. The EOC has been activated.

If implementation of the plan is required, the EMC (or designate) will make a recommendation to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or designate. A recommendation should be provided within 30 minutes of the initial report from the Incident Commander (IC). The CAO approves implementation of the MEP.

2.8.2 Implementation Sequence

The IC will type the incident and will notify the EMC (or in the absence of the EMC, the IC’s BU Director) who may make a recommendation to the CAO that the MEP be implemented.

When the CAO approves implementation of the MEP, the following occurs;

- a. CAO informs the Mayor
- b. Mayor informs Council
- c. EMC informs the EMO Planning Committee
- d. EMO Planning Committee / Business Unit Directors members inform their organizations
- e. EMC informs non-HRM partners as appropriate
- f. EMC notifies EMO NS as required (e.g. 10/25)¹

All persons should be informed within 30 minutes of the approval to implement the plan. Planning Committee members are responsible to implement their respective departmental emergency plans, as appropriate.

2.8.3 De-implementation of the Municipal Emergency Plan

Having conferred, the IC, or the EOC Manager, or the EMC (or designate) recommends to the CAO de-implementation of the MEP. Reasonable notification of de-implementation is given to the EOC, all personnel engaged in the event/incident and the general public. The EMC will

¹ 10/25 generally the term “10/25” refers to 10 family units or 25 individuals that are impacted by a single emergency event.

Municipal Emergency Plan

inform the EMO Planning Committee that the plan is being de-implemented.

2.9 The Emergency Operation Centre

Activation of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) be considered when the situation meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. there is/may be an abnormal threat of significance risk to human health, property and/or the environment within HRM's jurisdiction;
- b. evacuation of all or part of the HRM (including federal properties, provincial facilities, or First Nations communities) is/may be required;
- c. HRM has abnormal requirements for volunteer, provincial or federal resources/services for emergency response;
- d. there is a need to activate any agreement(s) under the HRM Emergency Management By-law;
- e. additional resources are needed to answer public/media inquiries;
- f. any provincial or federal emergency response plan(s) affecting the HRM has been implemented; and/or
- g. an emergency Management plan developed in conjunction with HRM has been implemented.

2.9.1 EOC Activation Levels

Activation Level	Staff Requirements	Space Requirements
Inactive	None	None
Partial Activation	EMC EOC Manager Some Command and General Staff positions EOC Admin Support	EOC Planning Room
Full Activation	Most or all EOC Command and General Staff positions All Business Unit Reps	EOC Planning Room All Adjacent Offices

2.9.2 EOC Activation / De-activation Procedure

Having conferred with the CAO, the IC, or the EOC Manager, or the EMC (or designate) recommends the activation / de-activation of the EOC. Reasonable notification of activation / de-activation (and respective level) is given to the EMO Planning Committee Members / Business Unit Directors, personnel engaged in the event/incident.

2.10 Evacuation

The evacuation of persons and animals from an area will be conducted when the risk of sheltering in place becomes or is expected to become higher than the risk of evacuating. Life safety of the resident population as well as responders is always paramount. Evacuations can be voluntary or

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mandatory. The municipality has the legal authority under section 308, (1) (e) of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to order the evacuation of an area due to a fire, rescue or emergency. The municipality may also order an evacuation while under a State of Local Emergency declaration.

The evacuation of an affected population will fall into three primary phases:

- a. Evacuation from a hot or danger zone to a safe area;
- b. Transportation from the safe area to a reception centre where associated housing needs may be determined and met; and
- c. Re-entry into the affected area once an all-clear has been established.

An emergency evacuation protocol will be established by the on-scene command for phases 1 and 3 and part of phase 2. In addition to providing transportation to emergency centres, when needed, the municipality will also coordinate the provision of the locations for reception centres and temporary shelters. The provision of humanitarian services is a provincial Department of Community Services responsibility. Generally, the Department of Community Services will designate the operation of reception centres and shelters to the Canadian Red Cross.

The evacuation component will be coordinated and conducted within the on-scene command structure of an emergency site. When multiple, unrelated emergency sites exist that require evacuation, the overall coordination of the evacuation process outside of each emergency site will be coordinated by the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) , if established, or by the Emergency Management Office if no EOC has been established.

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Evacuation Phase	Activity	Lead
1	Evacuation condition exists requiring evacuation typing	On-scene command
1	Evacuation decision	On-scene command
1	Evacuation from danger area to safe area	On-scene command
1	Initial needs assessment for evacuees when done on site	On-scene command (using assisting agencies like the Red Cross)
1	Transportation from safe area to reception centre(s)	On-scene command
2	Security within the evacuated areas	On-scene command
2	Establishment of reception and evacuation centres outside of the emergency site	EOC/EMC
2	Provision of Emergency Social Services (ESS) outside of the emergency site	Department of Community Services working with the Canadian Red Cross
2	Support to the reception and evacuation centres	EOC/EMC
3	Lifting of evacuation orders	On-scene command
3	Re-entry back into the evacuated areas	Emergency site in coordination with the EOC/EMC.

Not every emergency will require an evacuation. Sometimes a community population's needs may be met at the local level with residents returning home each night. While not an evacuation condition, in these cases the municipality may establish or support community comfort centres whereby a resident population may visit to receive essential needs like meals, hygiene facilities, electronic device charging capabilities, etc., as well as information and social interaction. Emergency comfort centres as described here, are not normally provided by the Department of Community Services.

Emergency evacuation objectives, procedures, organizational structure, along with accompanying roles and responsibilities can be found in Annex "C".

2.11 HRM EMO Volunteers

HRM EMO has developed a wide-ranging volunteer program that may be utilized before, during and after an emergency response. During response to an emergency, registered EMO volunteers are covered by insurance. EMO volunteers will also receive appropriate training for the area in which they are volunteering and will be included in EMO exercises as appropriate.

See appendix “G” for more information on HRM EMO Volunteer programs.

2.12 Donation Management

Management of donations in support of disaster relief is not a normal supported HRM service and HRM does not assume lead for donations management. However, spontaneous donations, including the shipment of goods to an affected area are a distinct possibility. HRM should be prepared to assist the lead organization or support the management of this process until an organization assumes the lead.

2.13 Recovery Operations

The aim of the Recovery phase of an emergency is to restore the affected area to its previous state. It differs from the Response phase in its focus: recovery efforts are concerned with issues and decisions that must be made after immediate needs are addressed. Recovery efforts are primarily concerned with actions that involve rebuilding destroyed property, re-employment, the repair of other essential infrastructure, as well as the re-opening of essential services.

Although community recovery requires the cooperation of several government agencies and non-government organizations, only the municipality has the legislated responsibility for community-wide recovery under the NS *Emergency Management Act*.

A delegate of the municipality will be authorized as the Recovery Manager to lead the management and coordination of all recovery activities within our jurisdiction.

Recovery Assumptions

- a. Members of the group tasked with recovery will not normally be from public safety agencies, as these agencies will be tasked with resumption of routine responsibilities within the community(s) and preparation for routine calls for service.
- b. The Recovery Manager will utilize an ICS structure in order to support the recovery process.

Recovery Considerations

- a. The EOC Manager, upon approval from the CAO, will determine when recovery operations will be commenced.
- b. Prior to the commencement of recovery operations, a formal transition of responsibilities between the EOC Manager / Incident Commander and the Recovery Manager will take place upon implementation of the Municipal Recovery Plan.
- c. A separate municipal Business Continuity Plan addresses the restoration and recovery of critical infrastructure, such as electrical power, gas service, potable water, sewer and wastewater services, and roadways. Each municipal business unit will have a business continuity plan of their own.

3 Emergency Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for emergency preparedness and response rests with individuals, businesses and industries, community organizations, and all levels of government, as outlined below.

3.1 Individuals

Responsibility for initial response to an emergency lies with the individuals most affected. As a minimum, all individuals should prepare and implement initial emergency measures to protect life, property, and the environment. For example, if a hurricane is imminent, heads of households and individual business operators are responsible to ensure adequate food and water supplies are available; take steps to mitigate the impact of loss of essential services such as telephone and power; and protect property from potential damage.

3.2 Businesses and Industries

Businesses and industries are responsible for contingency plans for any emergency which may result from their activities. They are also responsible for initial response to those emergencies. Businesses and industries will be used to augment Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) resources according to arranged agreements and plans, or as required.

3.3 Community Organizations

Community groups and organizations, such as services clubs and volunteer organizations are a valuable resource for emergency response. They will be used to augment HRM's resources. This will be according to arranged agreements and plans, or as required.

3.4 Halifax Regional Municipality

If individuals, businesses, or industries cannot cope, HRM business units will respond in accordance to their respective mandate.

3.4.1 HRM Business Units

Business unit staff with emergency management functions implement instructions from the EMO Planning Committee. To do that they task employees, volunteer fire fighters, and other volunteers as required and in accordance with their department emergency plans and the Municipal Emergency Plan. In every case, business unit emergency managers ensure all employees, volunteer fire fighters, and other volunteers are trained/qualified and properly equipped for assigned tasks. They also ensure all employees, volunteer fire fighters, and other volunteers have adequate supervision; equipment, support (e.g. feeding and breaks); instructions and access to information.

If tasks exceed available business unit resources/equipment, business unit staff with emergency management functions will obtain permission from their EMO Planning Committee counterparts to request additional resources from any of the following: volunteer organizations, businesses,

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industries, special purpose bodies (e.g., school boards). Business unit emergency managers also advise their EMO Planning Committee counterparts when provincial or federal resources are required.

3.4.2 Chief Administrative Officer

The CAO is responsible for the implementation of the municipal emergency plan to protect the population, property, and environment in HRM.

During an activation of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC), the CAO will act as the agency administrator and takes matters as appropriate to council.

The CAO may at times serve as the EOC Manager, however, the roles of CAO and EOC Manager are distinct and different.

While acting as the agency authority, the CAO shall;

- a. keep the EMO Planning Committee informed;
- b. keep the Executive Standing Committee informed;
- c. make policy decisions in the absence of an executive authority; and
- d. ensure major decisions regarding the municipality are made.

3.4.3 EMO Planning Committee

The membership of the EMO Planning Committee is defined in HRM bylaw E-100.

In addition to those responsibilities, the responsibilities of the EMO Planning Committee include but are not limited to:

- a. assess the short, medium and long-term emergency operating requirements for HRM;
- b. advise the CAO as to a declaration, renewal or termination of a state of local emergency;
- c. make recommendations to the Standing Executive Committee;
- d. resolve municipal inter-organizational issues; and
- e. ensure communications with all other levels of government, external agencies, and the public are coordinated.

3.4.4 HRM Emergency Management Coordinator

In addition to the to the functions in Bylaw E-100, the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) is responsible;

- a. as the primary contact for the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office should assistance from a provincial department(s) be required;
- b. as the primary contact for neighboring municipalities should assistance be required; and
- c. in the absence of an activated EOC, to ensure all incident site activities are coordinated in accordance within accepted HRM emergency procedures; and
- d. during activation of the EOC, the EMC should be considered as the preferred initial Planning Section Chief. The EMC should always be considered for assistance and advice to the EOC Manager.

3.4.5 HRM Corporate Communications

Corporate Communications is responsible for coordinating internal and external communications on behalf of the municipality and the Incident Command/EOC team. This includes but may not be limited to the Public Information Officer (PIO) and Information Officer (IO)

3.4.6 Incident Commander

Taking direction from the agency administrator and keeping the EOC Manager informed, the IC is responsible for the overall management of the emergency and assigned resources within the site. Other functions include:

- a. Ensuring delegated authority;
- b. Knowing agency policies;
- c. Ensuring incident safety;
- d. Setting priorities, and approving incident objectives and strategies to be followed;
- e. Establishing the ICS organization needed to manage the incident;
- f. Approving the Incident Action Plan (IAP);
- g. Authorizing information release to the media;
- h. Coordinating command and general staff activities;
- i. Approving transition plans to recovery operations;
- j. Approving resource requests;
- k. Ordering demobilization; and
- l. Ensuring after-action reports are completed by the Planning Section

3.4.7 Emergency Operation Centre Manager

The Emergency Operations Centre is activated in support of an emergency site or to coordinate support between multiple emergency sites. Taking direction from the CAO while acting in support of the Incident Commander, the EOC Manager is responsible for the overall management of the EOC including incident support and provision of municipal services to the unaffected parts of the municipality. Other functions include:

- a. Ensuring delegated authority;
- b. Knowing agency policies;
- c. Ensuring incident safety;

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- d. Setting priorities, and determining incident objectives and strategies to be followed;
- e. Establishing the ICS organization needed to manage the incident;
- f. Approving the EOC IAP;
- g. Authorizing information release to the media;
- h. Coordinating command and general staff activities;
- i. Plan for transition to recovery operations;
- j. Approving resource requests;
- k. Ordering demobilization of the EOC; and
- l. Ensuring after-action reports are completed

3.4.8 EMO Volunteers

EMO volunteers will be activated or requested by HRM EMO. They do not self-deploy. EMO volunteers will be provided duties, tasks and responsibilities in keeping with their respective mandates and training.

3.5 Province of Nova Scotia

In the event support and/or resources are required from the province, the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office facilitates these requests.

The provincial departments of Health and Wellness and Community Services are responsible for routine health and social services throughout the province. Therefore, during an emergency, those departments are responsible for emergency health and social services.

3.6 Government of Canada

The Government of Canada is responsible for providing federal resources requested by Nova Scotia on behalf of HRM. The Government of Canada is also responsible to arrange for resources not available in the province. Requests for such resources are made through the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office.

4 Emergency Organization

4.1 Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a modular command and control system that functions as a “bottom up” system, using only the modules needed to mitigate an incident. When fully deployed, there are eight Command and General Staff positions that can be activated in support of a response. All incident Type 3, Type 2 and Type 1 responses occurring within HRM jurisdiction will be managed under a single ICS command system. There are times when the municipality does not have jurisdictional lead over the entire incident and a Unified Command system, still following ICS will be set up between cooperating agencies. ICS can be used at multiple emergency sites as well as in the Emergency Operation Centre.

4.1.1 Command and General Staff Positions

Incident Commander

The individual responsible for the overall management of the response is called the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority.

The IC is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations. The IC sets priorities and defines the ICS organization for the particular response. Even if other positions are not assigned, the IC position will always be designated and will be responsible for the duties of any of the other Command and General Staff positions not assigned.

Operations Chief

The Operations Chief - activates and supervises tactical organization elements in accordance with the Incident Action Plan (IAP) and directs its execution. The Operations Chief also directs the preparation of unit operational plans; requests or releases resources; makes expedient changes to the IAP, as necessary; and reports such to the Incident Command.

Planning Chief

The Planning Chief is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources. The Planning Chief is responsible to lead the development of an Incident Action Plan (IAP) for approval by the Incident Commander.

Logistics Chief

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The Logistics Chief is responsible for providing facilities, services, and material in support of the incident. The Logistics Chief participates in the development and implementation of the IAP and activates and supervises the branches and units within the logistics section.

Finance / Admin Chief

The Finance/Administration Chief is responsible for all financial, administrative, and cost analysis aspects of the incident and for supervising members of the finance/administration section.

Information Officer

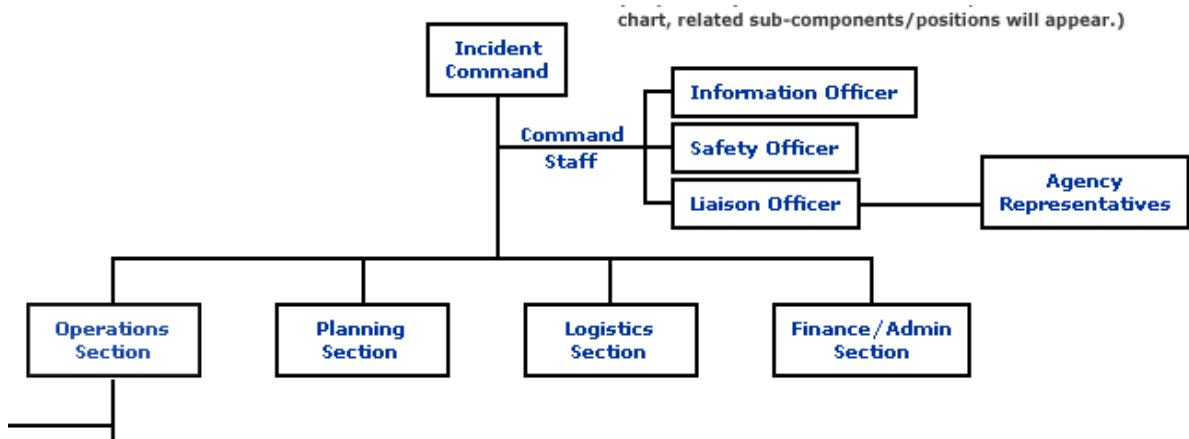
The Information Officer develops and releases information about the incident to the news media, to incident personnel, and to other appropriate agencies and organizations.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer assists and/or cooperates with Agency Representatives, is a contact point for Agency Representatives, and assists in establishing and coordinating interagency contacts.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer develops and recommends measures for assuring personnel safety, and to monitor and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. Only one Safety Officer will be assigned for each incident, although there may be Assistant Safety Officers.



4.2 Incident Site

An incident site includes the hot and warm zones which contain the active part of the incident. Hot and warm zones may together also be referred to as the inner perimeter. The cold zone, or outer perimeter forms the outer boundary of the incident site that is under the control of the incident commander and include all of any exclusion zone or evacuation zone.

There may be more than one separate and distinct incident site with some or all of the areas mentioned above and each one will have its own incident commander and incident command team.

If several incidents are grouped geographically close to each other an Area Command may be formed under ICS with an appropriately trained Area Commander in charge.

The Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority. The individual responsible for the overall management of the response is called the Incident Commander.

The IC is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations. The IC sets priorities and defines the ICS organization for the particular response. Even if other positions are not assigned, the IC will always be designated. The Incident Commander, after doing an initial assessment will activate as much of the ICS framework as is felt needed that that time. The ICS structure will be monitored and adjusted as necessary, ensuring that changes in structure are reflected in the Incident Action Plan (IAP).

4.3 Emergency Operation Centre Overview

The Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) is normally activated in an 'incident support' role, providing off-site support to a site-specific Incident/Unified Command or Area Command. This support usually includes the provision of strategic direction, guidance and resources.

Nevertheless, the EOC should also be prepared to assume a more direct incident management role, such as assuming Area Command or, in rare occurrences, performing Incident Command roles. In such instances, the EOC is the logical facility to exercise command, due to its functionality and convenience.

When activating and staffing an EOC (whether for Incident Support, Area Command, or Incident Command), one should place the focus on what needs to be done, and who has the expertise/knowledge and authority to carry out required tasks. Though normal administrative roles found in many organizations may not be routinely aligned with ICS functions, the HRM EOC will endeavor to employ ICS principles where possible.

As a reminder, an EOC facility should have appropriate technological and telecommunications systems to ensure effective communication during an emergency. When establishing an EOC, it is important to consider the nature of the hazards for which a response may have to be coordinated and ensure that the facility is capable of sustaining operations without itself being made ineffective by those very hazards.

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HRM uses ICS as the incident management system for multi-agency responses; this also applies to the EOC. Principles of ICS include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Documenting results to measure performance and facilitate corrective actions;
- b. Establishing overarching incident objectives;
- c. Developing strategies based on incident objectives;
- d. Developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols; and
- e. Establishing specific, measurable tactics or tasks for various incident management functional activities, and directing efforts to accomplish them, in support of defined strategies.

Roles

Roles of the EOC are:

1. **Incident Support** - The provision of resources and/or strategic guidance, authorizations, and specific decision-making support. This support may be provided to an Incident Management Team at a site or in limited circumstances, to another coordination centre.
2. **Essential Services and Continuity of Operations** - Ensuring that essential services are maintained off-site.

EOC Activation Criteria

Activation of the EOC should be considered when the situation meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. there is/may be an abnormal threat of significance risk to human health, property and/or the environment within Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) jurisdiction;
- b. evacuation of all or part of the Halifax Regional Municipality (including federal properties, provincial facilities, or First Nations communities) is/may be required;
- c. HRM has abnormal requirements for municipal, provincial or federal resources/services for emergency response;
- d. there is a need to activate any agreement(s) under the HRM Emergency Management By-law;
- e. additional resources are needed to support public information efforts;
- f. any provincial or federal emergency response plan(s), affecting the HRM, has been implemented; and/or
- g. the municipal emergency plan for HRM has been activated.

EOC Levels

Levels	Activation of the EOC / EOC Team
Level 4 (Routine)	All business units are conducting routine and normal operations. No events or incidents require focussed attention.
Level 3 (Heightened)	An event or incident has become apparent and a heightened sense of awareness or planning is required.
Level 2 (Partial Activation)	An event or incident has occurred and a partial activation (select or targeted representatives) of the EOC is required.
Level 1 (Full Activation)	An event or incident has occurred and a full activation of the EOC is required.

Activation Authorities

When at least one of the activation criteria has been met, activation of the EOC can be recommended. A recommendation must be made to the **CAO**, or designate prior to the authorization for activation.

The HRM staff who are authorized to make a recommendations to the CAO for an EOC activation represents those business unit directors (including their alternates) who comprise the EMO Planning Committee.

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4.4 Departmental Coordination Centres

When a situation occurs and when business unit tactical support is more than can be accomplished from the EOC, or when a EOC has not been activated, a business unit may activate its own coordination centre. Details of the coordination centre's operation including activation triggers, roles and responsibilities, its relationship to the EOC and concept of operations can be found in the business unit's emergency plan.

4.5 Council Support Centre

The Council Support Centre will act as a conduit for elected officials when activated. It will collect information from Councillors and ensure it is passed along to the Emergency Operation Centre, Area Command or Incident Management Team as appropriate and collect and pass along information to councillors from these groups. The Council Support Centre will be headquartered in City Hall and run by the Council Support office and may provide both virtual and face-to-face briefings to Councillors.

5 Emergency Preparedness

5.1 Procedures

The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) is responsible for identifying procedures to support the Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) and the municipality's emergency management program. The EMC is also responsible for oversight of the development and format of procedures, though their actual development may be done by various business units. The EMC will review procedures periodically, arrange for deficiencies to be corrected expeditiously, and arrange for persons affected by corrections to be notified.

As a minimum, the EMC will prepare and maintain a MEP alert procedure. The procedure is to contain the names and contact information for persons to be alerted. At least one alternate is to be named for each person. The procedure will be updated periodically or whenever significant changes take place. Persons named in the procedure are responsible for notifying the EMC of any changes to information contained in the procedure. The alert procedure is included in the MEP as Annex "L".

Business unit procedures shall not conflict with MEP procedures.

5.2 Business Unit Emergency Plans and Procedures

Business unit emergency plans and procedures will be reviewed periodically by business unit directors and the EMC. Business unit directors will report results of the review to the (CAO). Critical deficiencies must be corrected expeditiously and other deficiencies will be corrected within a reasonable time, as directed by the CAO.

Business unit procedures shall not conflict with MEP procedures.

5.3 Agreements

Mutual aid agreements and memoranda of understanding (agreements) may be developed in support of the MEP. The EMC is responsible for identifying required agreements to the Emergency Management Organization Planning Committee (EMOPC). Agreements will be developed as directed by the Committee. All negotiated agreements must be approved by the Standing Executive Committee before going to Council for ratification.

The EMC will review agreements periodically, make recommendations for revision to the EMOPC, and arrange for persons affected by revisions to be notified.

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5.4 External Emergency Plans

The EMC is responsible for periodically reviewing emergency plans of external organizations which involve or affect the municipality. The appropriate organizations are to be notified of deficiencies, and deficiencies are to be reported to the EMOPC.

5.5 Training

Business units are responsible for the training of people in their units to standards where they are able to perform individually and collectively at emergency functions of the unit, and at general emergency management functions for employment outside the unit. Units will develop and maintain training programs for emergency functions, and submit their programs, including status on training of staff, annually for review to the EMOPC.

All Halifax personnel with the potential for involvement in emergencies and major events will be trained to Incident Command System (ICS) level 100. All personnel with the potential for employment in operations, coordination and support centres will be trained to ICS 200. All personnel with the potential for employment in emergency leadership positions will be trained to at least ICS 300. The EMC will provide basic information (“ICS for executives”) for the EMOPC. The EMC will arrange training for elected officials every election cycle and as needed.

The EMC will develop and maintain a program of section specific training in order to generate trained staff to fill positions in the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC). All business units will provide personnel to take EOC section specific training per the program. The EMC will submit the program annually for review to the EMOPC.

All personnel are to be prepared to identify their current training qualifications and deficiencies when joining staff engaged in an emergency or event.

5.6 Exercising

The EMC will manage a program of emergency exercises with a focus on inter-agency coordination. The program should include at least one exercise a month September to June. Responsibility for exercise planning and conduct is to rotate through business units and the Emergency Management Organization. Unit exercises are to include an objective of validating their unit emergency plans. Two exercises annually are to focus on EOC operations. Organizations with which Halifax may expect to operate routinely are to be invited to participate. Results of the program are to be reported annually by the EMC to the EMOPC.

Exercises may be discussion, table top, functional or full. Exercise planners are to consider the current Halifax hazards, risk and vulnerability analysis when developing exercise objectives. Telecommunications activation is to be exercised twice a year. A full telecommunications exercise is to be conducted every two years. A full exercise including the mayor and Chief Administrative Officer will be conducted every three years, with an objective of validating the municipal emergency plan.

5.7 Lessons-Learned System

A lessons-learned system is a knowledge management process intended to enhance capabilities through discovery, knowledge development, sharing, and implementation of lessons from operations, events, exercises, training and other activities.

The aim of the Halifax lessons-learned system is to institutionalize and reinforce matters that should be retained and to identify those needing improvement, and that affect agencies in emergency incidents and exercises, and major events. Matters can include but are not limited to the areas of policy, procedures, training, and equipment.

A lessons-learned system will be used in Halifax emergency incidents and exercises, and for major events. The system complements and does not replace lessons-learned systems internal to business units and participating agencies. Observations will be collected on type 3 and above incidents, exercises and events; on type 4 and below collection will be at the discretion of the EMC.

Lessons-learned is a line responsibility. Business units are to appoint a point of contact for lessons-learned matters; normally this will be the senior unit representative engaged in the incident, exercise or event. On site and within the EOC, the Incident/EOC Manager is overall responsible for lessons-learned, and the Planning Section Chief is responsible for managing lessons-learned. After an incident or event, the lead business unit for that incident or event is responsible to the EMOPC for the management of lessons-learned for that incident or event.

Details of the process of the Halifax lessons-learned system are located in Appendix “D”.

6 Information and Communications Management

6.1 Emergency Information

Emergency information (and event information when an event is being managed) includes all information that allows authorities to make assessments and decisions, develop plans, assign tasks, and allocate resources. Responders and staff should frequently review what information is being reported and recorded in order to ensure that important matters are not being missed.

The Public Information Officer is responsible of the generation of emergency public information approved by the incident management team.

6.2 Communications

The Communications Unit is responsible for the dispatch and receipt of emergency information. The Communications Unit will be prepared to communicate with other stations by whatever means is expedient and assured. Means are to include voice and data over radio, computer networks and runners.

Communications will be made in a format as promulgated in a procedure maintained by the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC). All communications will be logged, time stamped and endorsed.

Ensuring common understanding of a situation is greatly enhanced through use of a computer-based chat service. In planning for events, and early in responding to incidents, the Communications Unit will confirm interoperability of chat capabilities between participating agencies. Chat communications are to be time stamped and logged.

6.3 Telecommunications

The aim of telecommunications planning is to prescribe the organization and measures required to establish and maintain emergency and event telecommunications between any location in the municipality and, when required, beyond. Planning is to be based upon using existing private and public telecommunications infrastructure, when available, and to assume that some or all of the existing standard telecommunications networks have been, or has the potential to be compromised.

The Communications Unit is responsible for telecommunications planning during incidents. Event planners are responsible for telecommunications planning for events. The EMC is responsible for routine telecommunications planning, taking advantage of expertise such as provided by the HRM EMO Auxiliary Telecommunications Service (ATS). Details of telecommunications are included in annex A. The EMC is to maintain the currency of this annex without need to submit changes for higher approval.

6.4 Geospatial Information

Exchange of information during incidents and events is enhanced using geospatial information systems (GIS), whether computer or paper based. Early in responding to incidents, the Situation Unit will confirm interoperability between GIS in use by participating agencies, which maps are to be used when exchanging information, and

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what units of geospatial measurement are to be considered as standard. In planning for events, planners will do the same. The EMC will maintain a procedure listing geospatial standards. All business units are to be prepared to conform to those standards and to conduct geospatial-based planning and information exchange.

The Situation Unit will establish a common operating picture (COP), a visual representation of operational information shared between participating agencies, during events and incidents. It is preferable that the COP be computer-based to be shared broadly between participating agencies. All business units are to be prepared to contribute and draw from the COP.

6.5 Reporting

Reports must be accurate, clear and expedient. When appropriate, a level of confidence should be indicated about incident information. Reports should be limited to information considered appropriate to the agency to whom the report is being made in order to avoid information overload and over-reporting. Fatalities and casualties are not to be reported without the authority of the Incident Commander/EOC Manager. It is preferable to communicate quickly what information is known rather than wait for more details, with follow up reports later. Acronyms and specialized/technical jargon are to be avoided. In addition to situational information, managers should communicate assessments and intentions.

Reports will be made in a format as promulgated in a procedure maintained by the EMC.

The Situation Unit is to promulgate periodic situation reports to external responders and to internal audiences. Reports to Council members will be sent via the Council Support Office. Reports to assisting and cooperating agencies with representation at the incident site or in the EOC will be via their representatives. Reports to assisting and cooperating agencies without representation at the site or EOC will be via the Liaison Officer. All staff at the incident site or in the EOC should be recipients of periodic reports.

The HRM Public Information Officer is responsible to release information to the media and public.

Releases by the Situation Unit and HRM Public Information Officer are to be cross-checked with each other prior to release.

6.6 Recording

Detailed information about the following is to be recorded:

- a. receipt of information about an actual or potential emergency;
- b. implementation of the Municipal Emergency Plan;
- c. notification to the general public and other emergency organizations;
- d. incident site operations;
- e. health and safety assessments;
- f. public inquiries;
- g. media announcements;
- h. declaration/renewal/termination of a state of local emergency;

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- i. orders issued by HRM under state of local emergency;
- j. requests for assistance;
- k. acquisition of materials/services; and
- l. warnings/orders issued by/to HRM

Detailed information includes:

- a. times (origin of all information should be time stamped);
- b. information received/sent;
- c. critical decisions;
- d. instructions received/sent;
- e. actions planned/implemented;
- f. authorities.

In addition, a central registry of the names, tasks, hours worked, operating locations, and injuries of every person who responds to the emergency under the authority of the HRM is to be maintained.

Appendix

Appendix “A” Summary of Legislation

Summary of Legislation Affecting Emergency Preparedness and Response

Basic Canadian and provincial laws remain in effect before, during and after an emergency. For example, the Criminal Code of Canada would remain in effect regardless of the situation in the Municipality. However, the following legislation is of particular relevance to the Halifax Regional Municipality's emergency preparedness program and response actions.

MUNICIPAL

The Halifax Regional Municipality Emergency Management By-Law E-100

This by-law is issued under the authority of the Nova Scotia Municipality Act, and the Emergency Measures Act. It details H.R.M.'s emergency organization and responsibilities.

PROVINCIAL

Emergency Measures Act 1990, c.8,s. 1

This act and supporting regulations details the statutory emergency duties and powers of the Regional Municipality. The Director Emergency Management Organization, is of the opinion that this Act supersedes all other provincial emergency legislation in the event of an emergency.

The Environment Act 1994-95, c. 1, s. 1.

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This act prescribes provincial duties and powers that parallel municipal duties and powers at an emergency site involving environmentally damaging substances. It requires municipal actions for mystery spills or instances when the responsible person is incapacitated.

The Fire Prevention Act R.S., c. 171, s. 1

This Act extends the emergency powers of the provincial Fire Marshall to the H.R.M. Chief of Fire & Emergency Services.

Halifax Charter

This act authorizes H.R.M. to maintain a fire service and enter into agreements with other jurisdictions for giving or receiving emergency assistance.

Nova Scotia Health Act R.S., c. 195, s. 1

This act allows the Minister of Health to make regulations with respect to food handling and mass feeding, potable water and, public health and safety of dwellings.

Human Rights Act R.S., c. 124, s. 1

Emergency plans, programs and procedures of H.R.M. must not discriminate on the basis of any prohibited grounds under the act.

Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985, c.3

The employee rights granted in this act apply to H.R.M. employees before, during, and after an emergency.

FEDERAL

Emergencies Preparedness Act 1988

Appendix “A”: Summary of Legislation

This act charges federal Ministers with the responsibility to develop emergency plans for hazards within their jurisdictions. Therefore, this applies to federal facilities and properties within Halifax Regional Municipality.

Transportation of Dangerous Goods 1992

This act is binding on federal, provincial and municipal governments and private citizens. It prescribes federal duties and powers that parallel provincial and municipal duties and powers at an emergency site involving dangerous goods.

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Appendix “B” Glossary

References:

Government of Canada Translation, Terminology and Interpretation (Termium)

<http://www.bt-tb.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca>

Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office Incident Command System Glossary of Terms (NS EMO) <http://www.novascotia.ca/dma/emo/resources/docs/Annex-1/Appendix3ICSGlossaryofTerms.pdf>

The Emergency Management Coordinator is to maintain this glossary without need to submit changes for higher approval.

#	term	meaning
1	<i>Activation Level</i>	The extent of staffing and equipment of the Halifax Emergency Operation Centre in support of a response. (MEP)
2	<i>Affiliated Volunteer</i>	A volunteer who is affiliated with either a governmental agency or NGO and who has been trained for a specific role or function in disaster relief or response during the preparedness phase. (MEP) A volunteer who serves an organization or program for a specific, continuous engagement and has been trained for disaster response activities. (Termium)
3	<i>Agency Representative</i>	An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident. Agency Representatives report to the Incident Liaison Officer. (NS EMO)
4	<i>Alert</i>	Distributed information which requires action to be taken. See also ‘Notification.’ (MEP)
5	<i>Assisting Agency</i>	An agency directly contributing tactical or service resources to another agency. (NS EMO)
6	<i>ATS</i>	HRM EMO Auxiliary Telecommunications Service
7	<i>BCM</i>	Business Continuity Management

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8	<i>Business Continuity Management (BCM)</i>	An integrated management process involving the development and implementation of activities that provides for the continuity and/or recovery of critical service delivery and business operations in the event of a disruption. (Termium)
9	<i>CAO</i>	Chief Administrative Officer. The CAO will also be referred to as the Agency Administrator under the Incident Command System.
10	<i>Change Authority</i>	Someone with the authority to endorse a lesson for action. Part of the LL system.
11	<i>CISM</i>	see Critical Incident Stress Management
12	<i>Comfort Centre</i>	Facility that is primarily used for residents who are remaining in their homes but do not have full services such as electricity, heat, water, etc. Comfort centres are normally run by the municipality. (MEP)
13	<i>Comfort Centre Manager</i>	The person, appointed by the municipality (when Halifax is lead) who coordinates all activities occurring inside the area of a facility that has been assigned to the municipality as a comfort centre. (MEP)
14	<i>Common Operating Picture (COP)</i>	An interactive and shared visual representation of operational information gathered from various sources that provides a common understanding of an incident and a response situation. (Termium)
15	<i>Cooperating Agency</i>	An agency supplying assistance other than direct tactical or support functions or resources to the incident control effort (e.g., Red Cross, telephone company, etc.). (NS EMO)
16	<i>COP</i>	Common Operating Picture
17	<i>Critical Incident Stress Management</i>	A comprehensive, integrated, systematic and multi-component crisis intervention program developed to help both individuals and groups manage traumatic experiences due to critical incidents within organizations and communities. (Termium)
18	<i>Crisis</i>	A situation that threatens public safety and security, the public's sense of tradition and values or the integrity of the government. The terms "crisis" and "emergency" are not interchangeable. (Termium)

19	<i>Crowd Control</i>	Activities to physically alter the action and behaviour of a crowd. (Termium)
20	<i>Designate</i>	An individual to whom responsibility and authority for a particular function, normally performed by another individual, has been officially delegated. (MEP)
21	<i>Disaster</i>	An event that results when a hazard impacts a vulnerable community in a way that exceeds or overwhelms the community's ability to cope and may cause serious harm to the safety, health or welfare of people, or damage to property or the environment. (Termium)
22	<i>Drop-Off Areas</i>	Place designated for disembarking passengers of a motor vehicle, boat, train, etc. (Termium)
23	<i>EPI</i>	Emergency Public Information
24	<i>EPI Alert List</i>	The recall list that activates the Emergency Public Information Team. (MEP)
25	<i>EMC</i>	Emergency Management Coordinator
26	<i>Emergency</i>	A present or imminent event in respect of which the Regional Municipality believes prompt co-ordination of action or regulation of persons or property must be undertaken to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of people in Nova Scotia. (By-Law E-100 Respecting of a Prompt and Coordinated Response to an Emergency)
27	<i>Emergency Facility</i>	Usable space that has been allocated for use by the municipality during an emergency as a comfort centre, reception centre, evacuation centre or other emergency-related use as determined by the EMO (e.g., rest and feeding areas for responders, command areas, etc.). (MEP)
28	<i>Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC)</i>	The person appointed by Council. Generally, co-ordinates and prepares municipal emergency plans, training and exercises; is responsible for public emergency preparedness education programs; and during a state of local emergency, prescribes duties to be fulfilled by employees, agents, and volunteer fire fighters of the Regional Municipality. (By-Law

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		E-100 Respecting Of A Prompt And Coordinated Response To An Emergency)
29	<i>Emergency Management Organization (EMO)</i>	Consists of an Executive Standing Committee, a Municipal Emergency Management Organization Planning Committee, and a Municipal Emergency Management Co-ordinator. (MEP)
30	<i>Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)</i>	A designated facility established by an agency or jurisdiction to coordinate its overall response and support to an emergency. (NS EMO)
31	<i>Emergency Plan</i>	A plan that describes assigned responsibilities, actions and procedures required in the event of an emergency. (Termium)
32	<i>Emergency Public Information Manager (EPIM)</i>	An Emergency Public Information Officer in the Emergency Operation Centre who has overall control of the Emergency Public Information Team. (MEP)
33	<i>Emergency Public Information Officer (EPIO)</i>	The individual responsible for all official communication with the public and the media on behalf of the municipality. (MEP)
34	<i>Emergency Volunteer Centre (EVC)</i>	A centralized clearinghouse established to increase the capacity of communities to coordinate spontaneous volunteers during disaster response and recovery activities. An EVC can function in any of the following ways: walk-in center (sometimes referred to as a volunteer reception centre), a phone bank, an online process or a combination of two or more of these. (MEP)
35	<i>Emergent Volunteer</i>	see Spontaneous Volunteer
36	<i>EOC</i>	Emergency Operations Centre
37	<i>EPIM</i>	Emergency Public Information Manager
38	<i>EPIO</i>	Emergency Public Information Officer
39	<i>Essential Service</i>	A service or activity supplied to a mission critical service provider that is in support of the provision of a mission critical service. (MEP)
40	<i>Evacuation</i>	The planned and supervised movement of people, animals and/or materials from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to a safe place. (Termium) May be voluntary or ordered.

41	<i>Evacuation Area</i>	The area designated in an evacuation tactical plan as the area to be evacuated during an emergency situation. (MEP)
42	<i>Evacuation Centre</i>	A location where evacuees are received, documented, personal needs are identified, and overnight shelter is provided. A type of emergency facility. In HRM, evacuation centres are operated by the Canadian Red Cross, under the direction of the provincial Department of Community Services. (MEP)
43	<i>Evacuation Order</i>	Population at risk is ordered to evacuate the area specified in a formal written order. It is an order and as such does not allow for any discretionary action on the part of the population at risk – they must leave the area immediately. A statement must be included in all bulletins, pamphlets, warnings and orders that makes it very clear to all that, while the evacuation order is in effect, the area in question will have controlled access and a pass may be required to regain access to the area. (Termium) An official communication authorized by the IC, or EOC if activated, instructing the public to evacuate their homes and businesses. The contents of an evacuation order are listed in Section 3 of the <i>Emergency Evacuation Plan</i> . (MEP)
44	<i>Evacuation Perimeter</i>	The defined border of an evacuation area. (MEP)
45	<i>Evacuation Personnel</i>	All personnel acting on behalf of the municipality to effect evacuation or recovery operations, whether municipal employees, members of external organizations or volunteers. (MEP)
46	<i>Evacuation Plan</i>	A supporting document for the emergency measures plan that is used to identify and organize the various responses aimed at evacuating persons exposed to a threat from an evacuation sector to a reception sector, while ensuring them a minimum of essential services on an emergency basis. (MEP)
47	<i>Evacuation Routes</i>	The routes authorized in an evacuation tactical plan for use in evacuating the population from an evacuation area. (MEP)
48	<i>EVC</i>	Emergency Volunteer Centre

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49	<i>Executive Authority</i>	The branch of government responsible for the implementation of policies and rules made by the legislature. This includes as its members the leader of the government and colleagues, the political bureaucracy, whether permanent or politically appointed, and the enforcement agencies such as the police and armed forces. (Termium) It is this authority under which a State of Local Emergency, among other measures, may be declared.
50	<i>Executive Standing Committee</i>	The principle role of the Executive Standing Committee is to fulfil the self-governance functions of Regional Council including but not limited to Emergency Management. Composition is the Mayor and up to eight members of Regional Council. It acts as the Emergency Management Advisory Committee of Council. (MEP)
51	<i>Exercise</i>	A simulated scenario in which an organization practices its response activities to test its emergency plan. (Termium)
52	<i>General Service</i>	Any municipal service that is not mission critical or essential. (MEP)
53	<i>Geospatial Information System (GIS)</i>	(A system to manage information) of or related to any entity whose position is referenced to the Earth. (Termium)
54	<i>GIS</i>	Geospatial Information System
55	<i>HRM</i>	Halifax Regional Municipality
56	<i>Hazard</i>	A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. (Termium)
57	<i>Hazardous Materials</i>	A product, substance or organism that is classified under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992 and that is considered to be dangerous to life, health, property or the environment when handled or transported. (Termium)
58	<i>IC</i>	Incident Commander
59	<i>ICP</i>	Incident Command Post
60	<i>Incident Command Post (ICP)</i>	The location at which the primary command functions are executed. The ICP may be collocated

		with the incident base or other incident facilities. (NS EMO)
61	<i>Incident Commander (IC)</i>	The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site. (NS EMO)
62	<i>Incident Site</i>	The location where an incident or other emergency situation occurs and where emergency response operations are conducted. (Termium)
63	<i>Information Centre</i>	Organization, independent or dependent of an institution, whose task is to collect, manage and make available to users information related to a given area. (Termium) A location where members of the affected public can congregate and where major announcements are made, before notifications to media have occurred. (MEP)
64	<i>Issue</i>	One or more observations that have been collected and collated. Part of the LL system.
65	<i>JEM Team</i>	A Halifax EMO community-based and focused organization that prepares for and responds in support of a wide range of emergencies. (MEP)
66	<i>JEM</i>	Joint Emergency Management Team
67	<i>JEM Support Centre (JSC)</i>	Facility for a Joint Emergency Management Team to carry out planning and coordination functions. (MEP)
68	<i>JSC</i>	JEM Support Centre
69	<i>Lesson</i>	Lessons-identified which have been prioritized and been endorsed by the change authority. Part of the LL system.
70	<i>Lesson Identified</i>	Issues for which action has been developed and an action body to carry out the action has been proposed. Part of the LL system.
71	<i>Lesson Learned (LL)</i>	Lessons for which action has been taken, and which have been confirmed and validated. Results from the implementation of action that produced an improved performance or increased capability. Part of the LL system.
72	<i>Lessons Learned (LL) System</i>	A knowledge management process intended to enhance capabilities through discovery, knowledge development, sharing, and implementation of lessons

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		from operations, events, exercises, training and other activities.
73	<i>LL</i>	Lessons-Learned
74	<i>Media Centre</i>	A designated location or facility that serves as the focal point for media relations activities surrounding an emergency. (Termium)
75	<i>Media Centre Supervisor</i>	The person in charge of a media centre. (MEP)
76	<i>Media Monitor</i>	Person who monitors all formats of media information to determine the accuracy of the information being reported and how the information is being received. (MEP)
77	<i>MEP</i>	Municipal Emergency Plan
78	<i>Mission Critical Service</i>	A service provided by a municipal business unit whose disruption would result in life-threatening danger or extreme hardship to the citizens of HRM or to the corporation itself. (MEP)
79	<i>Mission Critical Service Provider</i>	A municipal business unit that has been charged with the responsibility of providing a mission critical service. (MEP)
80	<i>Multi-Agency Incident</i>	An incident where one or more agencies assist a jurisdictional agency or agencies. May be single or unified command. (NS EMO)
81	<i>Muster Points</i>	Locations designated for the gathering of evacuees for processing and transport out of an evacuation zone. (MEP)
82	<i>NGO</i>	Non-Government Organization
83	<i>Non-Ambulatory Persons</i>	Persons incapable of transporting themselves out of a property or evacuation zone due to illness, infirmity or injury. (MEP)
84	<i>Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)</i>	A non-profit organization that serves a public purpose, that is based on the interests of its members and that may work cooperatively with a government but is not created by one. (Termium)
85	<i>Notification</i>	Distributed information which requires no action. See also 'Alert.' (MEP)
86	<i>Observation</i>	A statement based on something someone has seen, heard, or noticed, during an incident, event or routine

		activity, which may need attention for remedial action or institution as a good/best practice. Part of the LL system.
87	<i>Post-Evacuation Reporting</i>	The series of reports filed after each evacuation for the purpose of keeping accurate records of evacuation operations, and continually improving the evacuation procedures. (MEP)
88	<i>Public Alert</i>	A time-sensitive notification informing recipients that an event possibly causing significant harm or damage is imminent or likely to occur. (Termium)
89	<i>Public Inquiry Centre Supervisor</i>	The person in charge of a public inquiry centre. (MEP)
90	<i>Public Inquiry Centre</i>	A public call centre which provides information and advice to those affected in any way by the emergency event. (MEP)
91	<i>Re-Entry</i>	The operations directed toward the return of evacuees to the evacuation zone. Re-entry begins with the re-entry decision, and ends when all evacuees have been returned to their homes and businesses, and all resources used during the evacuation have been returned to their pre-evacuation state. (MEP)
92	<i>Re-Entry Routes</i>	The routes suggested in the sector profile binders accompanying this plan, and subsequently authorized in a re-entry Tactical Plan for use in returning the population to an evacuation zone. Re-entry routes may or may not be the same as the evacuation routes used to remove the population. (MEP)
93	<i>Reception Centre</i>	A service facility where disaster or emergency evacuees are sent to receive basic health care, assistance for basic needs and information. (Termium) Operated by Canadian Red Cross where evacuees or otherwise displaced persons can go to register and receive advice on the provision of the five emergency social services. (MEP)
94	<i>Re-Entry Order</i>	An official communication authorized by the Incident Commander, or EOC if activated, instructing the public to return to their homes and businesses. (MEP)

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95	<i>Responders</i>	Persons responsible for actions during an emergency. Actions are generally intended to reduce risk, minimize losses and damage, and relieve suffering. Responders include employees or agents of the municipality; volunteer fire fighters in the municipal fire service; and employees or volunteers from other governments, the private sector, or community organizations. (MEP)
96	<i>Sector</i>	A territorial unit corresponding to part of a municipality, identified for the purposes of emergency or evacuation planning and recognized for its urban [and rural] planning, demographic and environmental characteristics. (MEP)
97	<i>Sector Profile</i>	Sector profiles provide the details concerning the population, resources and hazards in a sector that allow evacuation personnel to make effective decisions regarding the conduct of evacuation operations. (MEP)
98	<i>Shelter-In-Place</i>	A protective measure whereby a population is instructed to stay inside their homes or the building where they are, and to take various other precautions, while waiting for the end of a threat. (MEP) (colloquial: confinement)
99	<i>Spokesperson</i>	One who speaks as the representative of another. (Termium) Person who is authorized by the municipality to speak on its behalf. (MEP)
100	<i>Spontaneous Volunteer</i>	<p>An individual who comes forward following a disaster to assist a governmental agency or NGO with disaster-related activities during the response or recovery phase without pay or other compensation. Spontaneous volunteers are not initially affiliated with a response or relief agency or registered prior with any other organization. (MEP)</p> <p>A volunteer who is not officially invited to become involved but is motivated by a sudden desire to help others in times of trouble. Such volunteers may come from within the affected area, from outside the area or even from another organization with the intentions of helping for a short period. (Also known as unaffiliated, convergent, emergent, drop-in or walk-in volunteers.) (Termium)</p>

101	<i>State of Emergency</i>	A temporary state declared, in accordance with the legislation, by the appropriate authorities when an emergency exists or is imminent, and during which these authorities have extraordinary powers in the implementation of emergency response measures. (Termium) "State of emergency" means a state of emergency declared by the Minister or renewed by the Minister pursuant to this Act (Nova Scotia: An Act to Provide for a Prompt and Co-ordinated Response to a State of Emergency)
102	<i>State of Local Emergency</i>	A temporary state declared, in accordance with the legislation, by the appropriate authorities when an emergency exists or is imminent, and during which these authorities have extraordinary powers in the implementation of emergency response measures. (Termium) "State of local emergency" means a state of local emergency declared by a municipality or renewed by it pursuant to this Act. (Nova Scotia: An Act to Provide for a Prompt and Co-ordinated Response to a State of Emergency)
103	<i>Volunteer</i>	Someone who willingly provides his/her services without receiving financial compensation. (MEP) A person who willingly carries out unpaid activities for an organization or a community group by giving of his or her time, service or skills. (Termium)
104	<i>Volunteer Reception Centre</i>	see Emergency Volunteer Centre
105	<i>Warning Order</i>	Preliminary notice of an order or action which is to follow. (Termium) An official communication authorized by the Incident Commander, or EOC if activated, warning the public of the possibility of an impending evacuation. (MEP)

Appendix “C” State of Local Emergency

AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURES

Authority

Halifax Regional Council / Mayor: when satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist in all or any area of the Halifax Regional Municipality, declare a state of local emergency in respect of the Halifax Regional Municipality or area thereof.

Procedures

Council:

1. Complete and sign form 4 “DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY”
2. Forward a copy to the Minister responsible for the Emergency Measures Act.
3. Issue a media announcement on the declaration.
4. Issue an advisory to all groups in the Halifax Regional Municipality emergency organization on the declaration, and specifying the persons or committees authorized to exercise the associated powers.
5. Terminate or renew the state of local emergency, as required, in accordance with the Emergency Measures Act and the State of Emergency Regulations. *See forms 6 and 7.*

Mayor:

If the Council is unable to act promptly, the Mayor may exercise the above authority of the Council after consulting and completing form 5 “DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY”, if it is practical to do so, with a majority of the members of the Emergency Measures Advisory Committee.

Renewal of STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY:

With the approval of the Minister, the Council may renew a state of local emergency by completing Form 6 attached to the State of Emergency Regulations.

Termination of STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY:

The Council may terminate a state of local emergency by completing Form 7 attached to the State of Emergency Regulations.

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Confirmation of Declarations:

A copy of a declaration signed under this Section shall immediately be delivered or faxed to the Minister and the Director.

Communication of Declaration:

Following the signature of a declaration under Section 9 of bylaw E100, the Council shall immediately cause the details of the declaration or termination to be communicated or published by such means as the Council considers the most likely to make the contents of the declaration or termination known to the people of the area affected.

Form 4

Declaration of a State of Local Emergency by Council of Municipality

(Subsection 12(2) of the *Emergency Management Act*)

The following area is or may soon be encountering an emergency that requires prompt action to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of persons therein:

Emergency area:

The area of Nova Scotia generally described as:

Nature of the emergency:

I am satisfied that an emergency, as defined in clause 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, exists or may exist in the emergency area.

I hereby declare a state of local emergency in the emergency area stated in this declaration on and after _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20__.

If this declaration is not renewed or terminated, the state of emergency remains in effect until 7 days after the date and time it is declared, or the earlier date and time set out below:

Date of termination: _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20__.

Dated at _____, Nova Scotia, _____, 20__.

Council of Municipality

Name

Position

(Authorized by Resolution No. _____
dated _____, 20__)

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Form 5

Declaration of a State of Local Emergency by the Mayor or Warden

(Subsection 12(3) of the *Emergency Management Act*)

The following area is or may soon be encountering an emergency that requires prompt action to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of persons therein:

Emergency area:

The area of Nova Scotia generally described as:

Nature of the emergency:

I am satisfied that an emergency, as defined in clause 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, exists or may exist in the emergency area.

The Council of the Municipality is unable to act.

(Check applicable box)

I have consulted with a majority of the members of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee, as required by subsection 12(1) of the *Emergency Management Act*.

OR

It is impractical to consult with the persons listed above.

I hereby declare a state of local emergency in the emergency area stated in this declaration on and after _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20__.

If this declaration is not renewed or terminated, the state of emergency remains in effect until 7 days after the date and time it is declared, or the earlier date and time set out below:

Date of termination: _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20__.

Dated at _____, Nova Scotia, _____, 20__.

Mayor/Warden
Municipality of _____

Form 6

Renewal of a State of Local Emergency by Council of Municipality,

Mayor or Warden

(Subsection 20(2) of the Emergency Management Act)

On _____, 20____, a state of local emergency was declared for the following area:

Emergency area:

The area of Nova Scotia generally described as:

Nature of the emergency:

I am satisfied that an emergency, as defined in clause 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, continues to exist or may exist in the emergency area.

I hereby renew the state of local emergency in the emergency area on and after _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20____.

If this declaration is not renewed or terminated, the state of emergency remains in effect until 7 days after the date and time it is declared, or the earlier date and time set out below:

Date of termination: _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20____.

Dated at, Nova Scotia, _____, 20____.

If Council is unable to act:

Council of Municipality

Name Mayor/Warden

Position

(Authorized by Resolution No.

dated _____, 20____)

Minister's approval:

This renewal was approved by the Minister of Justice in accordance with subsection 20(2) of the *Emergency Management Act* on _____, 20____.

Form 7

Termination of a State of Local Emergency by Council of Municipality

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(Subsection 18(2) of the *Emergency Management Act*)

On _____, 20____, a state of emergency was declared for the following area:

Emergency area:

The area of Nova Scotia generally described as:

Nature of the emergency:

I am satisfied that an emergency, as defined in clause 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, no longer exists in the emergency area.

I hereby terminate the state of local emergency on and after _____ (time - specify a.m./p.m.) on _____, 20____.

Dated at _____, Nova Scotia, _____, 20____.

Council of Municipality

Name: _____

Position: _____

(Authorized by Resolution No. ____ dated _____, 20____)

Appendix "D" Lessons Learned

Lessons-Learned System Process

"What is characteristic of a perfect lessons-learned system? A perfect lessons-learned system is empty. It is empty because every lesson has been taken from the system and applied to reinforcement or changes in policy, doctrine, procedures, training, equipment, etc."

The lessons-learned process consists of five steps:

1. observations are collected and collated into issues;
2. issues are analyzed to confirm validity and possible action, and become lessons-identified;
3. lessons-identified are prioritized, endorsed by the change authority, and become lessons;
4. lessons are tasked to the appropriate unit for action; and
5. when confirmed and validated, lessons become lessons-learned.

There is a large number of topics to which observations can be made. To assist with the submission of observations by focusing observers' attention, a "critical topic list" will be developed by the Planning Section Chief early in an incident response, and prior to an event. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) will also maintain a standing critical topics list as the basis for incident and event lists.

Observation collection can be passive or active. Passive collection involves observers independently originating observations and submitting them to someone assigned to collect them. Active collection involves interviews of, questionnaires to, etc., potential observers. The advantage of passive collection is that it allows for topics unforeseen by collectors. The advantage of active collection is that resources can be focused on important topics. Both methods cost effort and time, though at different points in the process. In either case, collection should be planned before being carried out. That planning is to be done by the lessons-learned contact of the lead business unit, or the Planning Section Chief, as appropriate. As a best practice, previous lessons-learned should be called forward as early as possible when planning for an incident or event.

Collection of observations will be initiated by the Incident Commander normally prior to the end of the incident or event. Usually, completion of collection will be the responsibility of the lead business unit for the incident or event. That unit is responsible to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee for managing matters through to becoming lessons-learned.

The format for observations is three paragraphs:

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- a. title - short description identifying the observed matter;
- b. comments - background and the who/when/where/why of the occurrence that led to the observation; and
- c. recommendation(s) - which organization should do what by when.

During collation, an observation will be returned to the observer if it is considered solely within the purview of the observer's organization, or as insignificant or not relevant. An observation is deemed relevant when it is logically connected and tending to prove or support a matter.

During collation, similar observations are grouped with the intent of identifying systemic or wide ranging issues. However, a single significant observation can be an issue.

During analysis, issues are checked for accuracy of facts and assessments, possible further actions are identified, and the organization to take action is identified.

Lessons-identified are prioritized as:

- a. high - affects safety-of-life, or is required by law or regulation;
- b. medium - has a significant effect on operating effectiveness; or
- c. routine - to be actioned when resources allow.

The change authority for action is the chair of the Halifax Emergency Management Planning Committee. Regular reports listing new lessons and progress on validating lessons-learned are to be submitted to the committee by business units.

Indications that lessons have been learned include when they have been institutionalized in doctrine, plans, training, equipment holdings, or procedures, and have been proven through incidents, events, trials, or exercises.

Appendix “E” Business Unit Emergency Plans

All municipal business units will require a business continuity management plan and some business units will require also require a supporting emergency plan. Generally, business units that provide a public safety service as well as business units that provide essential services to public safety units in support of an emergency event would require a business unit emergency plan in addition to their business continuity plan.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, business continuity planning is a separate function from the business unit emergency plan. The emergency plan is set up to define the emergency response structure for the business unit during a major incident affecting the municipality. Business unit emergency plans are written and formatted to support the Municipal Emergency Plan and will generally contain the following:

- a. business unit emergency management structure and organization, including internal authorities and responsibilities;
- b. statement of departmental emergency responsibilities as prescribed in the Municipal Emergency Plan, including support to the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) ;
- c. procedures to describe and ensure the effective and efficient implementation of departmental responsibilities;
- d. alerting, recall and notification procedures as well as associated triggers for activation of all or part of the emergency plan;
- e. internal and external information management procedures;
- f. notification of next of kin procedures (may refer to the Line of Duty Death plan, if contained therein);
- g. emergency public information procedures;
- h. procedures to provide mission critical and/or essential services to the non-affected areas of H.R.M.;
- i. specialized skills and expertise available from among departmental staff, including but not limited to: languages, certified skills not used in regular position (e.g., scuba diving) or persons certified in first aid and/or CPR;
- j. critical incident stress management procedures; and
- k. an emergency plan and general exercise program.

All business unit emergency plans are to be formatted with accurate page numbering with an up to date table of contents.

Business unit emergency plans will be validated every three years by training and appropriate exercises.

Municipal Emergency Plan

Appendix “F” Business Continuity Management

Purpose and Scope

A Business Continuity Management (BCM) Program establishes the basic principles and framework necessary to ensure emergency response, resumption and recovery, restoration and permanent recovery of the Halifax Regional Municipality’s (HRM) operations and business activities during a business interruption event.

Combined, corporate and individual strategies provide HRM priorities, guidance, and direction regarding how the department mitigates, prepares for, responds to and recovers from adverse events that threaten to disrupt normal business.

This program applies to all HRM staff, facilities and IT systems at all locations. The MEP is written as an “all-hazards” plan which means that the HRM shall be prepared for scenarios including, but not limited to, natural disaster, power outage, hardware/telecommunications failures, data corruption, explosives and chemical, biological and nuclear hazards. These events may be local in nature, rendering only a single municipal facility inaccessible, or could have regional impact, with multiple municipal facilities in a geographic region becoming inaccessible.

This program provides guidance for the resumption and recovery of time sensitive business operations in accordance with established timeframes as well as ensuring that adequate plans are in place for the less time sensitive business operations.

Business Unit Requirements

All business units in HRM are required to have a BCM plan. Similarly, each business unit is required to have a BCM lead.

All public safety business units are also required to have emergency plans. These are separate and distinct from their respective BCM plan.

BCM Service Levels

The requirement for a department and the municipality to resume clearly defined service levels in a timely manner should drive the business continuity planning and management process. These service levels are as follows;

1. Mission Critical Service:

A service provided by a municipal business unit whose disruption would result in life-threatening danger or extreme hardship to the citizens of HRM or to the corporation itself, or one that is legislated via the HRM Charter(restored within 24 hrs).

2. Essential Service:

A service or activity supplied to a mission critical service provider that is in support of the provision of a mission critical service (restored within 1-7 days).

3. General Service:

Municipal Emergency Plan

Any municipal service that is not Mission Critical or Essential (ETR greater than 7 days).

Dependencies:

The reliance upon, directly or indirectly of an external agency(s) or service(s) upon a municipal activity or process (example: a telco services and the resulting dependency on them by a call center).

Interruption Impact Planning Factors

This list represents the potential organizational impact as a result of the interruption of municipal services. It is not intended to be exhaustive and should be amended and prioritized by each department to reflect the specific nature of their responsibilities.

- Loss of Power
- Loss of Water
- Loss of Telephony
- Loss of Information Technology
- Loss of Labour
- Loss of Facilities
- Loss of Vendors
- Loss of Transportation Routes

HRM Business Unit Offices that provide Mission Critical Services

According to the HRM BCM plan, the following business units / offices are determined to provide mission critical services;

- Governance
- HRM Police
- HRM Fire
- Integrated Emergency Services (IES)
- EMO (Planning and Response)
- HR Health Services
- Internal and External Communications
- Transportation and Public Works
- Transit
- Solid Waste Management
- Water / Waste Water

Roles and Responsibilities

Corporate Responsibilities

Halifax EMO is responsible to develop and maintain the municipal BCM Program to ensure a reasonable state of readiness to maintain mission critical and essential services. This program will allow the municipality to recover quickly from adverse incidents that impact its ability to provide these services.

Specifically Halifax is responsible to maintain the continuity of government in times of emergencies. This is by:

1. Develop a BCM Program to act as a planning tool during a response;
2. Provide awareness and education within HRM on the program’s content and activation procedures;
3. Periodically test the BCM program and practice the participants in the activation and use of the Program;
4. Revise the Program based upon changes within the municipality, business unit, services or the lessons learned from the program’s testing;
5. Coordinate BCM Program activities all the various municipal business units; and
6. Identify and communicate details of the BCM plan.

Business Unit Responsibilities

Each business unit has several responsibilities to ensure that the BCM Program at its level is maintained and ready for implementation. These include:

1. A listing of activities (including dependencies) specific to the unit mission critical and essential services that need to be restored as identified by the business unit;
2. Business resumption strategies for each of the identified mission critical and essential services;
3. A listing of business unit services by geographical location (geographical footprint) both within the municipality;
4. A contact list for business unit employees to provide for information and ongoing communication during an adverse event that impacts HRM during regular and after hour timeframes. As required, the business unit will develop a means of disseminating information to aid in the distribution of information among many employees in a timely manner;
5. Information and documentation to support the implementation of the municipality’s BCM plan. This includes the dissemination of information and documentation among the business unit’s management team with the expectation that it can be retrieved or accessed during the off hours and outside the office;
6. The appointment of a BCM representative to work with the BCM Working Group to represent and communicate the business unit BCM plan; and

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7. to post copies and updates of the BCM documents on the business unit's internal website.

Appendix “G” HRM EMO Volunteers

General

A **Volunteer** is someone who willingly provides his/her services without receiving financial compensation.

An **EMO volunteer** is:

1. A current member of an EMO affiliated volunteer organization, including but not limited to Joint Emergency Management Teams, Amateur Radio and the Auxiliary Telecommunications Service; or
2. An HRM employee who assists EMO in times of an emergency outside of their routine or expected hours of work (i.e., during days off).

An **affiliated volunteer** is one who is affiliated with either a governmental agency or NGO and who has been trained for a specific role or function in disaster relief or response during the preparedness phase. Examples of affiliated volunteer may include but are not limited to GSAR teams, Red Cross, Amateur Radio clubs, St. John Ambulance, etc. While spontaneous volunteers may bring needed skills and resources, affiliated volunteers will most likely be used before a spontaneous volunteer.

Anyone volunteering who does not fall within one of the above categories would be considered an **emergent volunteer**. An emergent volunteer is an individual who is not initially affiliated with a response or relief agency or pre-registered with any other organization. However, they may possess training, skills and experience that can be useful in the relief effort.

Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Teams

Role of the JEM Program

The role of the program is to bring together citizens, municipal business units and governmental agencies from the local community level to work together under the HRM EMO banner to prepare for and respond to any emergency situation as well as to coordinate resource needs with the rest of the municipality.

Concept of Operations

The concept of operations of the JEM program is to involve local agencies and people from community groups within HRM, to participate in emergency planning and response from an EMO perspective. The JEM program does not interfere with the roles and responsibilities of existing emergency first response agencies, but rather can complement their efforts.

In an **emergency preparedness** function, the JEM concept allows local agencies and business units to become known to team members in advance of an eventual but unknown peril. This may entail exercises, reviewing and updating of evacuation profiles, and similar activities. In addition, team members can also coordinate and provide **public education** sessions for local residents, speaking to many topics including but not limited to personal preparedness.

During and after an emergency event, the JEM team can participate in coordinating humanitarian efforts for affected populations. This coordination will involve JEM team member agencies and can extend to humanitarian agencies that are not part of the JEM but wish to offer assistance. This humanitarian piece may include but is not limited to **comfort centre management**.

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The JEM team can also perform a support role to the local first response agencies by offering a trained, localized team of persons that can be used to mobilize additional resources and other logistical needs that the emergency site may require. This can include but is not limited to providing a *JEM Support Centre*.

Lastly, the JEM may be the link between the local community and EMO, thus allowing for a more efficient use of neighborhood, community and municipal resources. Linkages in the community will include establishing and maintaining groups of community volunteers to provide localized community updates. This network is known as the *community status reporter (CSR) function*.

JEM teams are comprised of multiple communities and will follow existing community boundaries so as to not subdivide neighbourhoods.

JEM Structure

An objective for JEM teams is to have a healthy cross-section of community volunteers, agencies and service groups from the local area. Member agencies for a JEM team will normally come from HRM business units and outside agencies that have offices in the coverage area of the team. This also means that team members who are representing local agencies are also likely to live in, or close to the local community. The team has an open membership allowing participation from multiple levels of government, non-government organizations (NGO) and the private sector. This can include elected officials. Outside agencies that do not have offices or members in the coverage area can still participate in team planning and response. The advantage to having an open membership will be in the increased knowledge by the team of locally based agencies, their staffs and resource availabilities.

Each JEM team will have various groups of volunteers including but not limited to team members, CSRs, and support staff. Within the JEM team, there will be the following positions: chair, vice-chair, and secretary. When needed, there can also be coordinators to manage specific activities to allow for work-load distribution and span of control (i.e. CityWatch coordinator, CSR coordinator, etc.). All JEM teams shall have a chair however if other positions cannot be filled, the responsibility comes to the chair to ensure that key tasks and functions are still accomplished.

The chair, vice-chair, and secretary positions will make up the local JEM Executive. Each JEM team shall be represented at a body referred to as the JEM Council. The JEM Council, under EMO, provides administrative guidance, coordination, and planning for the entire JEM organization and its programs and does not have any operational responsibilities.

Relationship with EMO

A JEM team is comprised from within the community(s), for the community(s), and managed by the community(s). The JEM team provides local community emergency planning and response in conjunction with, and under the auspices of, EMO. The HRM Emergency Management Coordinator, or designate is an advisor to the JEM organization, but will not hold any position within the team.

EMO will arrange adequate insurance for JEM members when activated. Although a goal of EMO is for the JEM teams to function autonomously, EMO shall be the final authority of the JEM program and any related matter to ensure that it is in the best interest of the municipality and its citizens.

Relationship with community first responders

The community first response agencies may be members of the JEM, but it must be understood that the JEM will always act in support of the first responders. The community’s first response agencies may assist this by participating in the regular meetings of the JEM. The JEM will not attend an emergency site unless requested to by the Incident Commander, or EMO. The JEM can provide a logistical service to the emergency site if requested.

JEM Support Center

A JEM team may establish a JEM Support Center (JSC) at their local level to coordinate its activities in an emergency. JSCs are activated in support of an emergency incident and will support the incident response. In a major event when the EOC is operational, the JSC may be activated in order for EMO and the JEM team to coordinate resource needs to and from the community. EMO will provide training for JEM members and will assist with JSC provisions. Where possible, EMO will provide radio communications and at least one telephone line and internet access.

Role in an Emergency Incident

The JEM team is primarily made up of organizations located within the community as well as community members at large. When an incident occurs, the response agencies have existing first and second response procedures and protocols. The JEM team’s principal role will be to support these agencies and the municipality as required.

JEM Team Activation

JEM teams are usually activated using HRM’s mass notification system (MNS) that will make outgoing notifications to select contact lists. The JEM team will create and maintain appropriate MNS lists that can be utilized in normal day-to-day events as well as in emergencies. The JEM team structure should have one position that is tasked to develop and maintain these lists as well as coordinating this information with EMO or the MNS Administrator.

In some occurrences, a member of the local JEM team executive may be notified by EMO who will then in turn respond or activate the rest of the local team as directed / required.

Community Status Reporters

An element of a JEM team, Community Status Reporters (CSR) are volunteers who provide situational awareness and updates from their respective communities and neighbourhoods from the comfort and security of their homes.

CSRs are activated by the local JEM team using MNS, and are instructed as to the particulars of the emergency and how to relay information back to the local JEM. The JEM team will then compile all situational reports received and communicate them to EMO as required.

Roles between Incidents

JEM teams play an active role in a community’s emergency preparedness. There are five core responsibilities that the JEM teams will provide within their communities. They include comfort shelter management, CSR coordination, emergency planning, JSC coordination, and public education. The JEM team can also assist with the maintenance of the EMO community evacuation profile for the neighbourhoods contained in the local JEM coverage area. The JEM can also be expected to liaise periodically with members of first response and other community agencies and support EMO training as well as participate in EMO exercises. The JEM team will meet on a regular basis to collect and distribute information, discuss matters related to the five core responsibilities, and to ensure the needs of the local JEM team are being managed and met.

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Liability

EMO will provide liability and accident insurance for JEM team members that do not have existing insurance in place as part of a responding agency. In order for this insurance to be valid, the following must be adhered to:

- (1) only EMO activated responses are covered under EMO insurance;
- (2) an attendance list is to be completed and submitted to EMO for all JEM team volunteers involved in an emergency event; and
- (3) volunteers are only performing duties for which they have been properly trained.

HRM EMO Auxiliary Telecommunications Service

The purpose of an auxiliary telecommunications service (ATS) is to provide the Halifax Emergency Management Office with a trained cadre of telecommunications operators in support of, or to augment telecommunications systems normally used by responding agencies when regular systems become damaged or overloaded by an emergency incident or a disaster.

The ATS will train volunteers to handle important message traffic in a uniform and professional manner and will develop and participate in telecommunications exercises, in order to enhance operator skills, as well as, to test redundant systems. The ATS will establish a call-out system to rapidly deploy telecommunications support assets when activated by EMO.

As part of its overall mandate, the ATS will maintain, test and utilize parallel telecommunications systems that can be used in the support of Joint Emergency Management teams (JEM) sites and Comfort Centres. These telecommunication systems will also be capable of providing or augmenting telecommunications at an incident, or other emergency sites as directed.

Although existing telecommunications systems operated by first responders are very robust, there exists the possibility that severe atmospheric or weather related incidents could render all or part of those systems inoperable. Depending on where the incident occurs, cellular sites may be subject to severe overloading as may be the case for the Trunked Mobile Radio System. In such circumstances the municipality could call upon the Auxiliary Telecommunications Service to provide supplementary support until repairs to those infrastructures could be effected.

Emergent Volunteers Plan

General

Volunteers represent a potential resource to a community affected by a disaster, whether of natural or man-made origin. However, volunteers who respond spontaneously and without appropriate training and qualifications can easily overwhelm the capabilities of local government and other agencies. With a system in place for receiving and referring spontaneous volunteers, local government agencies and relief organizations can capture this valuable resource and thus provide more efficient and cost-effective service to the community.

This plan establishes an organizational structure and process by which the municipality can access and manage emergent volunteers for disaster response, relief and recovery efforts. When managed appropriately, emergent volunteers provide valuable and cost-effective resources to the municipality.

Goals

The goals of this emergent volunteer management plan are:

- a. To augment, as a supporting appendix, the municipal emergency plan;
- b. To enhance resources available to the jurisdiction and the community-at-large for disaster response and recovery through the involvement of volunteers;
- c. To establish a means by which volunteers and service program members can contribute their time and talents following a disaster;
- d. To encourage partnerships among governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations for the most effective community-wide approach to disaster volunteer coordination; and
- e. To ensure that implementation of the emergent volunteer plan is in accordance with principles and practices as described in the municipal emergency plan.

Scope

This emergent volunteer plan is designed for use by the municipality during the response and recovery phases of emergency management for all hazards. The jurisdiction may take complete responsibility for activating and implementing this appendix or it can share responsibility with a volunteer centre or other non-governmental organization (NGO). The emergent volunteer plan focuses on the mobilization, coordination and referral of emergent volunteers. Additionally, it addresses other related issues, such as the recruitment and management of affiliated volunteers.

Planning Assumptions

During a disaster/emergency, that requires activation of this plan, the following considerations may affect the municipality’s response:

- a. The municipality may delegate some of its volunteer coordination responsibilities to a volunteer centre or other organization through its MEP or through the action planning process during response and recovery operations;
- b. Service program members and affiliated volunteers that have pre-disaster training and are affiliated with a government agency or NGO such as the Red Cross will report to their respective agency or organization at the time of a disaster as previously arranged;
- c. The first priority in an emergency or disaster is to utilize volunteers that are affiliated with the municipality;
- d. All unaffiliated volunteers and unaffiliated service program members will be considered and processed as emergent volunteers;
- e. The municipality is responsible for interviewing, screening, registering, training and the safe supervision of any volunteers that it involves in its own disaster operations. This is for the protection of both the volunteer and the jurisdiction; and
- f. Likewise, NGOs and other local organizations that involve volunteers in their own operations are responsible for interviewing, screening, registering, training and the safe supervision of those volunteers.

Municipal Emergency Plan

Tantallon Wildfire

Recovery Section

Halifax Regional Municipality
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 28, 2023, Halifax Regional Municipality experienced the most substantial interface wildfire event to ever occur in Nova Scotia, displacing approximately 16,700 and destroying 151 homes. A State of Local Emergency was declared to support multiple evacuation orders, alerts and additional municipal restrictions.

The Halifax Regional Emergency Operations Centre was activated at a level three capacity immediately upon request of the on-site Incident Commander. The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) was the lead response agency for operational fire response which was supported by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency.

Red Cross and Joint Emergency Management Teams from Mainland North and Western Region were activated to 'stand up' an evacuation centre in addition to three comfort centres to support residents while they were displaced from their homes. Victims Services, Salvation Army, St Johns Ambulance, Insurance Bureau of Canada and Dartmouth Animal Rescue Team (DART) also provided an exceptional level of service to the community.

The short-term recovery needs for residents, businesses, and schools may include utility restoration, expanded social, medical, and mental health services, re-establishment of municipal services, transportation route restoration, debris removal and clean-up operations, building safety inspections, demolition of hazardous structures, and need for temporary housing and business spaces. Long-term recovery needs for residents, businesses, include reconstructed public assets, coordinated delivery of long-term social and health services, improved land use planning and implementation, review of the Emergency Operations Plan, re-establishment of the local economy to pre-disaster levels, recovery of disaster-related costs, and effective integration of mitigation strategies into recovery planning and operations.

The recovery plan's focus is three-fold:

1. Short-Term
2. Intermediate
3. Long-Term

Phases of recovery may occur concurrently with the goal of providing the area with support as it rebuilds the capacity and infrastructure to support its own recovery and resilience. All municipal recovery activities are directly subject to funding and programming available through senior levels of government and NGO partners.

GENERAL

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide the framework to which the Recovery Team will provide. This plan will also outline a level of service and scope of recovery response including goals the community hopes to achieve.

Scope

The scope of this plan will focus on the Tantallon Fire State of Local Emergency Area which started on May 28, 2023.

Project Oversight

The Director of Emergency Management will maintain overall directive responsibility for this project. The Recovery Manager will coordinate and oversee day to day progression of community recovery operations.

Resident Focus

Disasters affect people in many ways and every situation is unique. Those within the localized area(s) are most acutely impacted, though the larger community is also substantially affected. It is imperative that people are supported with empathy and compassion during the recovery process using multiple approaches and tools to overcome social, economic, mental, and physical hardships caused by the wildfire. Meaningful resident participation in the recovery process is vital to the community's resilience and sustainability.

Timing

Recovery strategies must be identified and implemented in a timely manner. Activities for assistance should be delivered through a coordinated effort with support agencies, these must be adaptable and evolve as the recovery process moves forward and new needs or gaps are identified.

There are not set times on when a community moves between recovery phases. Recovery may be different per each individual and neighbourhood given unique resiliency, vulnerability and impact.

Change Management

An After-Action Report and Demobilization Documentation Unit have been established to chronologically organize all response activities. Through this process, a gaps analysis and operational debrief will be conducted to determine success and areas of improvement which will be used to identify change management strategies.

Mitigation & Resiliency

The potential for future events of similar nature is highly probable, thus the plan should include strategies to safeguard the community and minimize potential future disasters from causing damage to the community. Emergency Management will continue to support programs that are available through sharing of information, and prioritize recommendations that are highlighted through the Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.

Partnerships and Supports

Providing supports to the community is not done in isolation, rather is a collaborative effort across a multitude of organizations. The Recovery Team has worked closely with corporate NGO's, community groups and associations, different business units to assess and advocate to support residents who have unmet needs.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Operations

Initial Call

On the afternoon of Sunday, May 28th, 2023, a wildfire began in the Westwood Hills subdivision of Tantallon. Subsequently, the Halifax Regional Municipality Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) approved that the Emergency Management Division open the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to respond to the emergency event.

State of Local Emergency

Under the authority of the *Emergency Management Act*, declaring a *State of Local Emergency* gives the municipality "a higher level of intergovernmental coordination, access to emergency discretionary funds, the ability to mobilize additional supports, organizations and businesses to support evacuated residents." The SOLE was declared on May 28, 2023 and renewed on June 4, 2023.

Emergency Response Agencies

Incident Command was under the authority and direction of the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Natural Resources & Renewables (DNRR) with Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE), Halifax Regional Police (HRP), Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Department of Natural Defense providing emergency resources and tangential supports.

Evacuations

In coordination with the HRM EOC, RCMP from 'H Division' expedited the Evacuation Order to residents whose properties were within the Evacuation Order Areas.

Provincial and Municipal Fire Ban and Restrictions

DNRR issued a province-wide fire ban for all fires due to the significant increase in wildfire activity and challenging weather conditions. Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NSEMO) issued an emergency alert on Monday evening stating burning in Nova Scotia — including campfires — was banned until at least June 25" or until conditions improve.

Communications

At the time of this report, HRM Corporate Communications issued over forty Public Service Announcements communicating with residents on the event. An information page on the Halifax Website (Halifax.ca) was created to notify residents for supports available to them and information response activities. All HRM social media platforms were being used in additions to media briefings which were televised.

Mass notifications were distributed using the Provincial Alerting system to ensure that emergency communications were being received by as many residents as possible.

PLAN

Objectives

As response actions wind down, stabilization activities become the primary focus. Recovery (Short, Intermediate and Long-Term) may continue for months or years depending on the extent of redevelopment and revitalization needed. The goal of long-term recovery is to move the impacted community toward self-sufficiency, sustainability, and resilience.

The objective of the Tantallon Wildfire Recovery Plan is to outline HRM’s actions to support the communities impacted. It should be noted that the municipality is not responsible for needs outside of the municipal scope of responsibility. However, Emergency Management will bring forward these recovery needs to the appropriate organizations.

The Disaster Recovery Process

As a disaster event evolves, response activities transition into recovery operations. Figure 1 shows the typically path of response through long-term recovery.



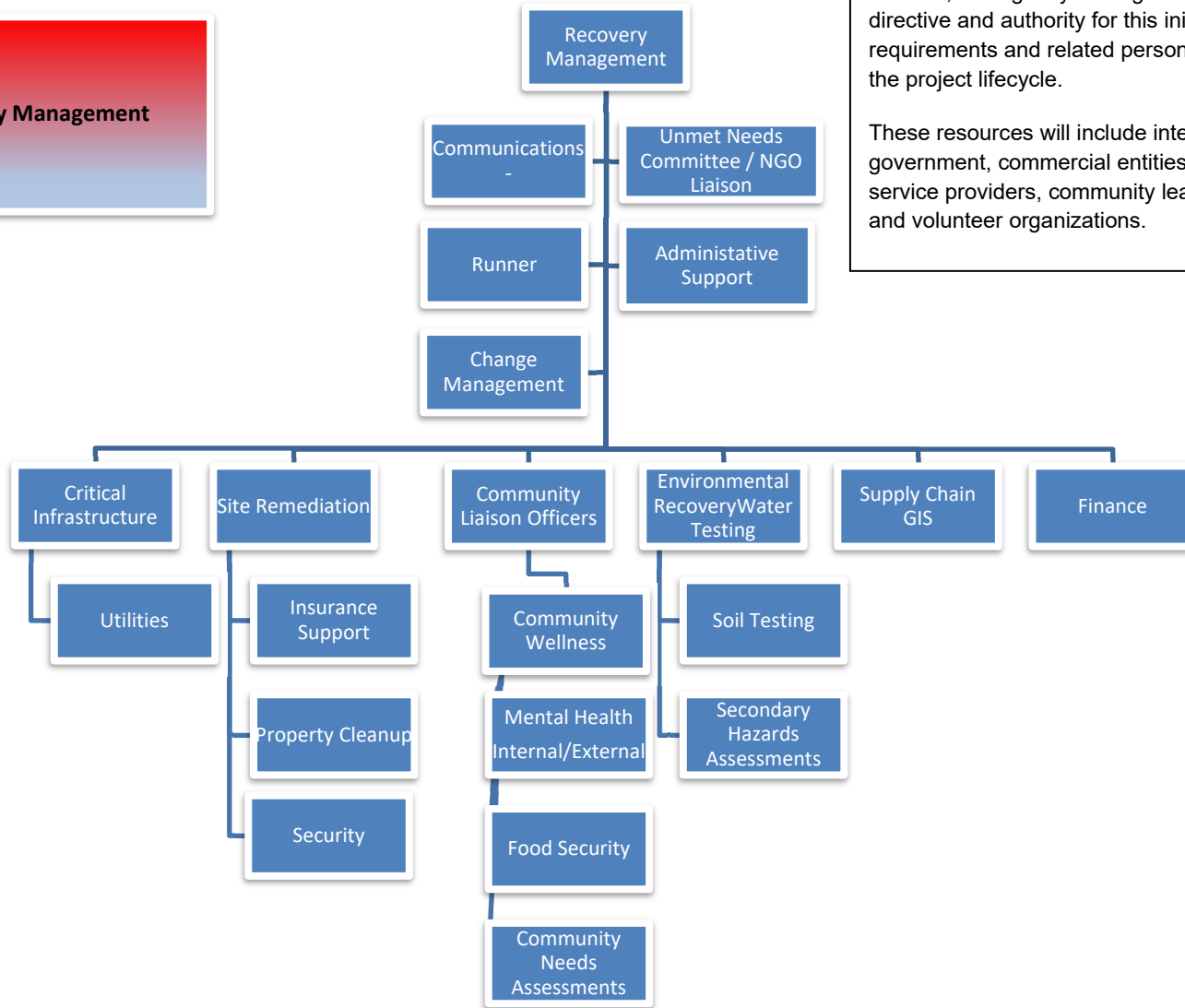
Figure 1

Recovery Phase Priorities

PHASE	PRIORITIES
Short Term	Critical Infrastructure Repair Utility Restoration Site Remediation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Insurance Support ▪ Property Cleanup ▪ Security Community Wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Hub ▪ Mental Health Support ▪ Food Security ▪ Community Safety ▪ Financial Aid Housing/Sheltering Environmental Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary Risk Assessments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water Safety ▪ Wildlife Safety
Intermediate	Housing/Sheltering Mental Health
Long Term	Housing/Sheltering Mental Health

Recovery Structure



Notes on Structure

Director, Emergency Management maintains overall directive and authority for this initiative. Resource requirements and related personnel may change during the project lifecycle.

These resources will include internal staff, other orders of government, commercial entities, professional crisis service providers, community leaders, spiritual leaders, and volunteer organizations.

Recovery Activities

Critical Infrastructure

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Repair Transportation Routes	Inspect and repair all transportation routes within HRM jurisdiction.	Public Works

Utilities

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Restore power to all areas	Inspect and repair all damaged Infrastructure	NS Power
Communications	Inspect and repair all damaged Infrastructure	Communications Companies

Insurance Support

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Provide opportunities for information distribution	Arrange for insurance companies to be available to answer inquiries.	IBC/HRM Emergency Management/Insurance Providers

Site Remediation

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Property Cleanup	Team Rubicon Canada	HRM Emergency Management/Residents
Fencing	Install fencing to secure property	HRFE
Septic		NS Environment
Permitting	Support Community in Expediting applicable	HRM Planning and Development

	building processes	
Solid Waste	Provide guidance on debris removal and discarding, service interruptions or changes.	HRM Emergency Management/ HRM Public Work

Security

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Arrange security in impacted area to ensure community safety	Request RCMP Roving Patrols Obtain services of security companies	HRM Emergency Management / RCMP

Community Wellness

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Mental Health (Community)	Increase opportunity and capacity for impacted residents to access mental health supports.	Province of NS / HRM Emergency Management
Mental Health (Staff)	Provide guidance on how staff can access supports should they require it.	HRM Senior Leadership / HRM Emergency Management
Food Security	Determine if supply chains have been disrupted and if residents are receiving support from NGO's.	NGOs/ HRM Emergency Management
Recovery and Resiliency Centre	Provide a space in community for residents to access information and to provide information through Community Liaisons and service providers.	HRM Emergency Management
Community Needs Assessments	Through information gathering and networking, work with NGO's and	HRM Emergency Management, NGO's

	community to determine immediate needs.	
Community Advocacy	Advocate for residents and participate on committees to discuss gaps and challenges regarding recovery and impact.	HRM Emergency Management/NGO's

Environmental Recovery

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Water Testing	Request that the Province support residents in testing wells on their property.	HRM Emergency Management
Soil Testing	Request that the province support residents in determining whether soil is contaminated on their property if not covered by insurance provider.	HRM Emergency Management
Secondary Hazard Assessments	Request that the province preform secondary hazard assessments due to environmental degradation.	HRM Emergency Management

Communications

Tasks	Actions	Lead Agency / Stakeholder
Recovery Email	<p>Develop distribution lists for residents who have significant damage or housing loss to establish direct communication for unique needs.</p> <p>Provide an specific email which is regularly monitored to support recovery inquiries.</p>	HRM Emergency Management

311	Ensure 311 has all appropriate information.	HRM 311/ HRM Emergency Management
PSA	Should significant updates be required, work with CComs to issue PSAs.	CCOMS/HRM Emergency Management
Website	Provide accurate and up-to-date information on recovery activities including live calendars for recovery scheduling and events, FAQ's and service updates.	HRM Emergency Management / CComs
Community Hub	Provide an opportunity for residents to speak directly with HRM Staff, NGO's and other service providers.	HRM Emergency Management

Appendix 1 – STAKEHOLDERS

Successful long-term recovery will depend on all stakeholders and every order of government working collaboratively. This section describes the recovery roles and responsibilities of individuals and families; municipal, provincial and federal governments; businesses; emergency service providers and not-for-profit organizations.

Individuals and Families

Westwood Hills Community
Haliburton Heights
Bonsai
Upper Hammonds Plains
Hammonds Plains Road
Stillwater Lake
Yankeetown

Municipal Government

Community Safety
CAOs Office
HRFE
HRP
RCMP
Planning and Development
Parks and Rec
Public Works

Province of Nova Scotia

EMO
Department of Natural Resources & Renewables
Environment and Climate Change
Mental Health

Federal Government

Public Safety Canada

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Canadian Red Cross
Team Rubicon
United Way
Lions Club
NS Power
IWK

APPENDIX 2 – Wildfire Maps

