



REPORT TO COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Local Emergency Management Organization **DATE:** March 8, 2024

SUBJECT: Hay River Community Emergency Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HAY RIVER approves the 2024 version of the Town of Hay River Community Emergency Plan as recommended by the Local Emergency Management Organization.

BACKGROUND:

The community of Hay River is vulnerable to numerous types of emergencies. These can be human caused such as transportation accidents, hazardous materials spills, infrastructure disruptions, and natural hazards such as flooding and wildfires. Given that a portion of the community is situated in a flood plain, Hay River is annually at risk of spring flooding emergencies caused by ice jams. Through current drought conditions, the Hay River area has experienced an increased risk of wildfires.

The Town of Hay River Community Emergency Plan establishes the framework that ensures the community is prepared to deal with any of these emergencies and hazards. It is the mechanism through which resources will be mobilized in the event of an emergency and for restoring the community to a state of normalcy. It is designed to ensure that engaged agencies are fully aware of their respective roles and responsibilities during an emergency.

The Emergency Plan makes provisions for the earliest possible coordinated response to an emergency, creates an understanding of the personnel and resources available to the community, and recognizes that additional expertise and resources can be called upon if required.

In 2023, the community of Hay River experienced unprecedented wildfire activity through two separate events. Both events resulted in full evacuations of the community for a combined period of approximately eight weeks. Over 520,000ha of forest land was burnt, significant electrical utility assets were damaged, and nine residential and business properties were lost. Several lessons were learned through the emergency preparedness, response, and recovery activities. Suggested changes to the 2024 version of the plan help address some of the gaps and opportunities for improvement. The updated plan also incorporates changes to better align with evolving legislation, standards, and guidelines produced by the GNWT's emergency management organizations.

The draft plan has been reviewed and edited by the Local Emergency Management Organization and partner agencies as well by MACA ahead of the submission to Council for approval.

A summary of recommended changes to the plan are presented as follows:

- Change of management organization name from Community Emergency Management Committee to Local Emergency Management Organization (LEMO)
- Removal of second Council representative on LEMO
- Substitution of Emergency Operations Coordinator with Incident Commander (ICS)



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- Improved definition of ICS organizational structure
- Added typical assignment of ICS titles/ roles to LEMO membership
- Improved definition of LEMO responsibilities (planning/preparedness and response/recovery)
- Improved definition of Partner Agencies and development of Partner Agency Agreement templates
- Creation of 'Support Service Providers' - a local organization that may be required to operate during evacuation to provide goods and services to emergency responders (e.g., food, fuel, and medicine providers). Development of process for inclusion in emergency response and recovery activities.
- Improved definition of 'Vulnerable Populations' and support organizations
- Substituted independent hazard risk assessment with the GNWT's Hazard Identification Risk Assessment standard
- Improved formatting of document and usability of forms and procedures
- Added financial controls through declaration and renewal of local emergency and included references to financial liability considerations
- Improved language tied to Evacuation messaging
- Added checklist format to response procedures

The Emergency Plan makes reference to By-law No. 2190/PS/24 – Town of Hay River Emergency Management By-law. This bylaw amendment is scheduled for third and final reading by Council at April 8, 2024 meeting.

COUNCIL POLICY / STRATEGY OR GOAL:

N/A

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BYLAWS, STUDIES, PLANS:

Town of Hay River Emergency Management By-Law 2190/PS/24
Cities, Towns and Villages Act 2003
NWT Emergency Management Act 2018

Standards:

NWT Community Emergency Plan Template 2024
NWT Emergency Plan 2024 (draft)
NWT Hazard Identification Risk Assessment 2024
Incident Command System

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A



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ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

2024 Town of Hay River Emergency Plan

Prepared by:
Glenn Smith
SAO
Date: April 3, 2024

Reviewed by: