

**E**mergency

**S**ocial

**S**ervices

*Plan*



Medicine Hat  
The Gas City

Assuring the essential needs of people affected by a significant emergency in Medicine Hat.

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## **Executive Summary**

### ***A region committed to emergency preparedness***

The Medicine Hat Regional Emergency Response Plan was formed by a commitment to emergency preparedness. The City of Medicine Hat, the Town of Redcliff, and Cypress County have pooled their resources to plan and prepare for emergencies on a regional basis. They share the Regional Emergency Response Plan and its multiple supporting plans including the emergency Social Services (ESS) Plan.

### ***Emergency Social Services***

Emergency Social Services (ESS) oversees the human component of emergency response. Specifically, ESS is responsible for securing the essential needs of evacuees and response workers in an emergency.

### ***ESS Plan***

The ESS Plan clearly defines guidelines, roles, responsibilities, and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency impacting the city. Specifically, the plan details:

- Activation, deactivation, and post-deactivation procedures for the ESS Plan including different response stages according to the magnitude of the emergency;
- Procedures for area evacuation;
- Guidelines for reception centres and volunteer centres, including designated and back-up locations;
- The provision of primary services to affected individuals, including emergency food, lodging, and clothing;
- The provision of specialized services to affected individuals, including transportation, personal services, and other services;
- Procedures for managing volunteers;
- Communication procedures for establishing and maintaining the flow of information within the agency and to everyone involved;
- An organizational structure that combines both the city's leadership role in ESS response and the integral role of assisting agencies;
- The roles and responsibilities of ESS personnel and assisting agencies; and
- Protocols for ensuring that the ESS Plan remains up-to-date.

### ***Appendices***

The appendices are a toolkit of resources invaluable in an emergency. The appendices contain:

- ESS personnel and assisting agency contact lists including after-hours contact information;
- Lists of designated and back-up ESS facilities with facility contacts;
- Lists of ESS logistical resources for the Medicine Hat, assisting agencies, and commercial suppliers.

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# 1

## Section 1 Navigating the ESS Plan

While Emergency Social Services (ESS) responders are the primary audience for this plan, members of the general public are also invited to read the plan. Treat this plan more like an encyclopedia than a novel. Feel free to jump to the sections that seem to best address your question or issue.

### ***If you are an employee with the City of Medicine Hat...***

You will want to understand this plan in its entirety. As an employee, you must "know the drill" before a significant emergency activates this plan. In particular, you will want to be clear about the role and responsibilities you may assume in an emergency response. For this reason, you may wish to start with Section 7, "Personnel Organization and Responsibilities" to confirm what is expected of you.

### ***If you are a member of an assisting agency or a supplier...***

You will want to see how the City of Medicine Hat plans to respond to emergencies of different magnitudes. In particular, you will want to understand how the City of Medicine Hat will draw upon your assistance and expertise when required. This is outlined in Section 6, "Operations" and Section 8, "Calling on Assisting Agencies."

### ***If you are a member of the public...***

You will want to gain a clear sense of how the City of Medicine Hat is prepared to assist you in an emergency. It is our hope that this plan will spur you to finalize your family's plan for dealing with an emergency.

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# 2

## **Section 2** **Introducing the ESS** **Plan**

### ***Part of an overarching regional plan***

A serious emergency could strike at any time and any place. Such an emergency would significantly impact the Medicine Hat Region in many ways. To mitigate these effects, the Disaster Services Agency would coordinate an emergency response according to the guidelines set out in the Regional Emergency Response Plan. The response would involve a cross-section of responders including Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical Services in addition to Municipal Works, Public Works, and Emergency Social Services (ESS). ESS is responsible for the human side of an emergency response. As such, the ESS Plan supports the Regional Emergency Response Plan.

### ***Understanding emergency social services***

Emergency social services are those services provided on a short-term basis to preserve the emotional and physical well-being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations. ESS provides for essential needs such as emergency food, lodging, clothing, transportation, and personal services. ESS also coordinates volunteers in an emergency response.

When emergency social services are called for, the City of Medicine Hat moves quickly to mobilize its resources. In recent cases, services have been made available in a matter of hours. In the event of a large disaster response, however, response time might be longer. Individuals and organizations must be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours or more. For this reason, it is critical that individuals and organizations prepare their own emergency response plans.

***The ESS Plan***

The ESS Plan profiles the City of Medicine Hat action plan to provide short-term essential needs to people impacted by an emergency. Since every emergency defies prescription, the ESS Plan is not a how-to manual nor does it detail response to any particular type of emergency. Instead, the plan provides structured, yet flexible, response guidelines and a toolkit of community resources that, together, ensure an effective ESS response to any emergency.

The City of Medicine Hat ESS Plan also includes volunteer management. As ESS is charged with the human component of emergency response, ESS is also responsible for managing volunteers whose aid is invaluable in an emergency response.

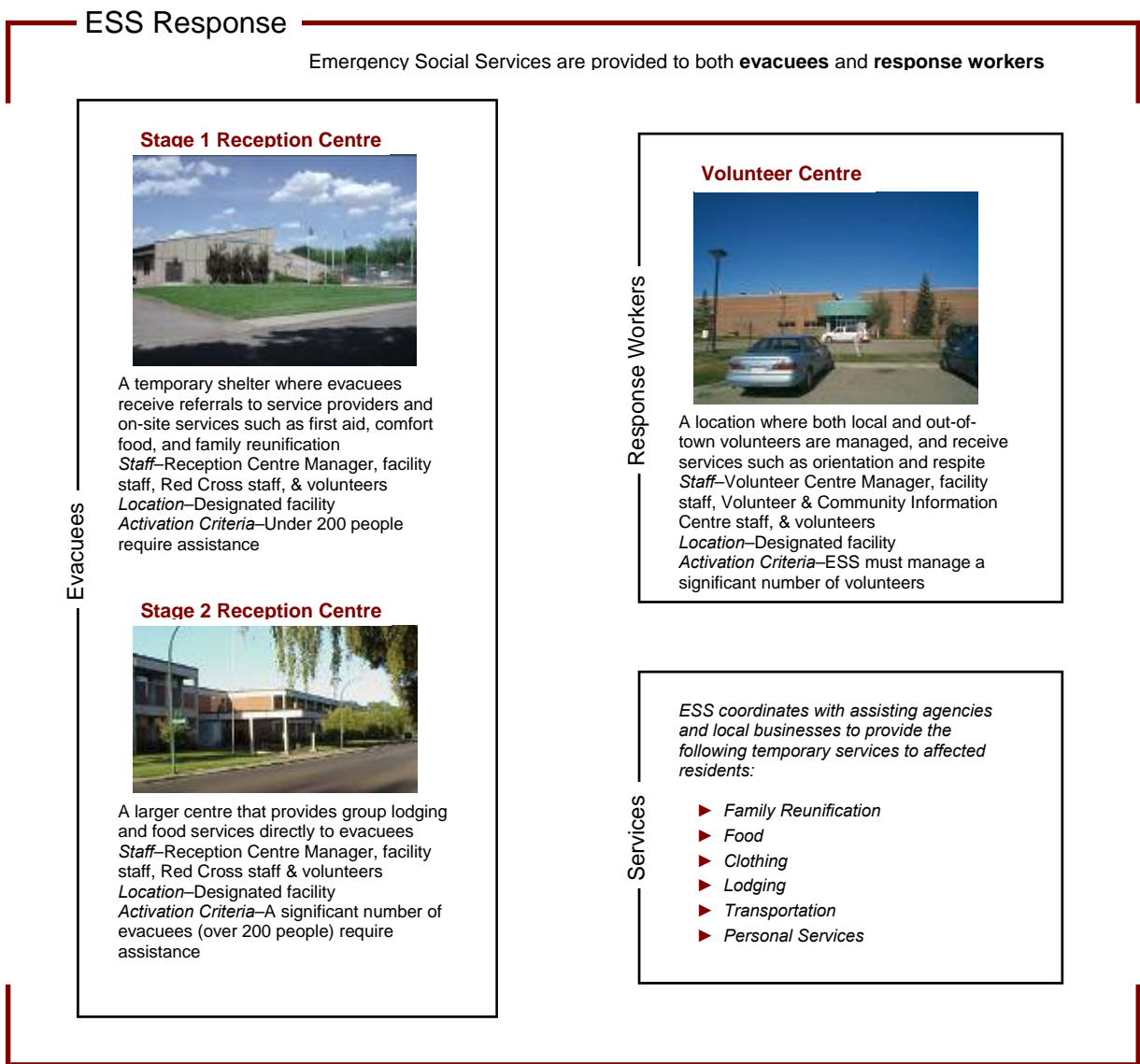
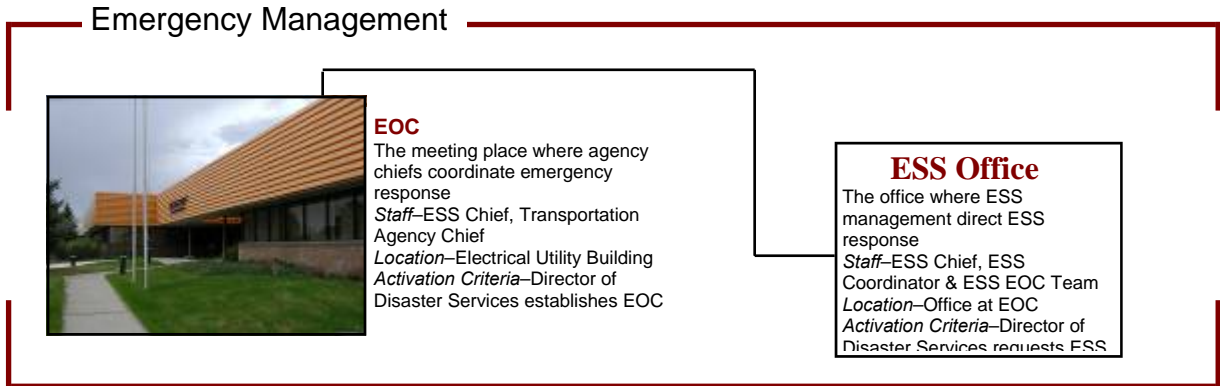
***An emergency is defined as...***

... a present or imminent event that requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property.

***Alberta Disaster Services Act***

**Diagram 1** and **Diagram 2** on the following pages illustrate the ESS Plan. **Diagram 1: Emergency Social Services Plan on a Page** incorporates ESS management, and both the services and facilities at the heart of ESS response. **Diagram 2: Medicine Hat Region Emergency Program Overview** shows the position of ESS within the regional emergency plan as a whole.

**Diagram 1: Emergency Social Services Plan on a Page**



**Diagram 2: Medicine Hat Region Emergency Program Overview**



# 3

## Section 3 Plan Authority

The Emergency Social Services Plan derives its authority from the City of Medicine Hat Emergency Response Plan.

Under the Alberta Disaster Services Act, local authorities are responsible for their own emergency response unless the provincial government assumes control. Local authorities are required to prepare their own emergency plans. They must also establish and maintain a municipal disaster services agency charged with responding to emergencies.

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# 4

## Section 4 Foundations of the ESS Plan

In the same vein, the City of Medicine Hat has 21 elementary schools, six secondary/middle schools, and one post-secondary school with a total enrolment of over 11,000 students.

### 4.1 Emergency Requirements

#### *Our population*

The 2009 City of Medicine Hat Census shows that the population of Medicine Hat is 61,097.

31% of the city's population is under 24 years of age and 40% of the population is over 45. In the future, the proportion of people over 65 will grow rapidly and "today's most typical resident (39 years of age) will become a 50-year-old over the next three decades" (13, Urban Futures Inc.). In an emergency, the city must be ready to provide special or additional assistance to the youngest and oldest sectors of the population.

#### *Medicine Hat Area Populations<sup>1</sup>*

Area	Population
West Crescent Heights	2,696
East Crescent Heights	10,772
Riverside	2,761
River Heights/Harlow, South West Hill, Kensington, Downtown, & Flats.	11,824
Norwood (including Marlborough/Meadowlands)	4,878
Crescent View (North of Southview Drive, East of Dunmore Road)	3,838
Ross Glen (South East of Southview Drive, East of Dunmore Road)	10,187
South Ridge, South Vista Heights, Saamis Heights, & rural area (including Tower Estates)	14,474
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61,097</b>

<sup>1</sup> Most recent municipal census data (2009)

## **4.2 Key assumptions of the ESS Plan**

### ***Urging self sufficiency, to the degree possible for . . .***

#### ***. . . Individuals***

Individuals are encouraged to be self-sufficient in the event of an emergency for at least 72 hours, until the normal infrastructure systems are accessible. If individuals are not able to provide for themselves, they are urged to look for assistance on a neighborhood level. If such assistance is inadequate, individuals should then request assistance from the City of Medicine Hat.

#### ***. . . Health Region***

All facilities coordinated or managed through the Health Region have emergency plans. The Health Region will shelter its patients within its care facilities. Failing that, the Health Region has designated back-up facilities. The City of Medicine Hat will provide assistance to the Health Region as needed.

#### ***. . . School Districts***

The School Districts have emergency plans in place in order to care for their student populations. The School Districts will place minimum demands on the City of Medicine Hat ESS efforts during a response.

### ***. . . the City of Medicine Hat resources***

The City of Medicine Hat has facilities and equipment, such as back-up generators, heavy machinery, and satellite phones which can be used during an emergency to maintain operations and assist the community. As well, the City of Medicine Hat has built relationships with local commercial suppliers and volunteer organizations who can supply resources to assist the City of Medicine Hat with its efforts.

### ***Securing assistance from others***

Representatives from key organizations and agencies have committed to providing assistance to the City of Medicine Hat, to the best of their ability, to address the needs of individuals in the event of an emergency. Their roles and responsibilities are detailed in Section 8, "Calling on Assisting Agencies".

## Case Study #1 Flood '95



In 1995, one of the worst floods in Medicine Hat's recorded history struck the community. Between June 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of 1995, heavy rain and melt water led to the flooding of the South Saskatchewan River. The river crested on June 9<sup>th</sup> at a peak flow of 53,8 m/s and a total rise in the water level of 5.41 m. The river did not recede to its normal levels until June 17<sup>th</sup>.

Large sections of Medicine Hat were flooded and the Flats area was particularly badly hit. The flood created more than 30 million dollars in estimated damage.

ESS mounted a tremendous response to the flood's massive repercussions. First, a reception centre was opened at the Medicine Hat College from June 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> to receive the evacuees whose homes were flooded. The Red Cross registered 2276 individuals at the centre and the centre provided food and lodging to approximately 100 people and 4 pets. Second, ESS opened a volunteer centre for two weeks at the Cultural Centre that registered 1200 volunteers and provided hundreds of referrals daily. Third, ESS hired a Case Coordinator to secure medium term lodging, food, and clothing for those whose homes were destroyed in the flood. ESS staff were also diverted to City facilities in the flood zone in order to move equipment and property to higher ground.

Recommendations from this major disaster were incorporated into the ESS Plan.



# 5

## Section 5 Activating the ESS Plan

### 5.1 Activation Stages

Depending on the magnitude of the emergency, the ESS Plan may be activated to one of three activation stages to meet the needs of the people involved.

#### **No Activation**

The ESS Plan will not be activated if the Director of Disaster Services sees no need to call on ESS. This would occur

when individuals can address their own personal needs by relying on family, friends, insurance providers, or community organizations. In such cases, emergency responders, the individuals concerned, and/or community organizations can respond to the event alone.

#### **Stage One Response**

The ESS Plan is activated to this level when an emergency has impacted a large number of individuals (up to 200 people) who require ESS assistance. At this level, a 'stage one' reception centre may be established to provide immediate assistance and referrals to commercial resources for affected individuals.

#### **Stage Two Response**

The ESS Plan is activated to this level when a significant number of individuals (over 200 people) have been impacted and require ESS. Response workers may also require assistance with meals and temporary accommodations while on assignment. At this level, multiple 'stage one' or 'stage two' reception centres may be established and individuals will either be referred to commercial resources or receive all essential services within the reception centre(s).

*The initial response to an event will be done at the lowest level possible. When required, other response functions and levels will be activated to deal with the situation. The activation stages are helpful guidelines but, ultimately, the ESS Chief, in conjunction with the Director of Disaster Services, will determine ESS response.*

#### **Stage One vs. Stage Two Reception Centres**

A 'stage one' reception centre is designed to accommodate up to 200 people and provides mainly referrals to service providers for primary services. Its larger counterpart, the 'stage two' reception centre, can accommodate more people in various locations and will provide mass feeding and group lodging, when necessary. For more information, see Sub-Section 6.2.1, "Reception Centres" of Section 6, "Operations."

## **5.2 ESS Plan Activation**

*When an emergency occurs in the City of Medicine Hat, the following actions are taken:*

### **1. Notification**

- Authorized personnel report the emergency to 9-1-1 Communications who then notifies the Director of Disaster Services.

### **2. City of Medicine Hat Emergency Response Plan Activation**

- The Director of Disaster Services determines the level of response to the emergency. If necessary, the Director of Disaster Services will activate the Emergency Operations Centre and the Emergency Operations Committee will declare a Local State of Emergency.

### **3. ESS Plan Activation**

- When paged by the Director of Disaster Services, the Emergency Social Services Chief reports to Emergency Headquarters to activate the ESS Plan and coordinate the ESS response. The Emergency Operation Centre is located at the Electric Utility Building unless the ESS Chief is notified of a designated alternate location.

### **4. ESS Response**

- The ESS Chief will assess the situation and begin ESS procedures to assist the affected individuals with their emotional and physical needs, such as:
  - Activating reception centre(s) and/or volunteer centre(s) (Appendix B)
  - Calling on assisting agencies (Appendix A)
  - Contacting suppliers to secure resources (Appendix C)

## **5.3 ESS Plan Deactivation**

The following steps must be taken to deactivate the ESS plan:

### **1. City of Medicine Hat Emergency Response Plan Deactivation/Downgrading**

- The Director of Disaster Services communicates the deactivation of the plan or the downgrading of emergency levels to the agencies involved.

### **2. ESS Plan Deactivation**

- The ESS Chief, under the advice of the Director of Disaster Services, can authorize the ESS Plan deactivation. The ESS Chief will communicate the deactivation to the ESS Facility Manager(s).

### **3. Facility Demobilization**

- The Facility Manager(s) will:
  - collect and finalize the appropriate documentation,
  - ensure the facility is cleaned up and restored to working order,
  - release staff and volunteers, and
  - provide a summary report to the ESS Chief.

### **4. ESS Demobilization**

- The ESS Chief will:
  - collect and finalize the appropriate documentation,
  - release staff and volunteers, and
  - create a summary report.

## **5.4 Post-Deactivation**

### ***Recovery Stage***

The ESS Plan provides for the temporary needs of people during the response stage to an emergency. During the ensuing recovery stage, the City of Medicine Hat's Community Development Department will attend to the ongoing needs of individuals. These ongoing needs include shelter and clothing for displaced persons. The Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager, when activated by the ESS Chief, will assist with most of those needs during the recovery stage. The ESS Chief must ensure the continuity of services as the service provider shifts from ESS to regional agencies.

In addition, volunteers will often continue to be invaluable during the recovery stage and cleanup of a disaster. For this reason, the volunteer management component of ESS can continue after the plan has been deactivated. Again, the ESS Chief must ensure that the volunteer management component persists after the ESS Plan is deactivated.

### ***Evaluation***

Within three weeks of the deactivation of the ESS Plan, ESS staff must meet to evaluate and review the plan.

# 6

## Section 6 Operations

### **Overview**

Depending on the emergency and the level of assistance required, ESS will:

- Prepare for an area evacuation;
- Activate the necessary facilities, including reception centres, and volunteer centres;
- Provide primary services including emergency food, clothing, and lodging;
- Provide specialized services including transportation, mental health support, pet care, and other services, as necessary;
- Manage local and out-of-town volunteers;
- Call upon outside aid when the region's capabilities are exceeded;
- Maintain the flow of information to all individuals involved; and
- Designate an Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager to assist displaced persons during the recovery stage of a disaster.

## 6.1 Evacuation Procedures

### **Step 1: Evacuation preparations**

The Director of Disaster Services consults all the agency chiefs before issuing an order to evacuate an area of the region. The ESS Chief will determine which facility will be used as the reception centre. The ESS Chief will then follow the procedures for activating a reception centre.

### **Step 2: Evacuation**

Once the reception centre facility is identified, the Public Information Officer will communicate the order to evacuate. The Police Service and/or volunteers will communicate the evacuation notice to residents in the area, if necessary. The ESS Chief will coordinate with the Transportation Agency Chief to provide transportation to those who do not have a means of transport to the reception centre. Finally, the Police Service will ensure that the area is completely evacuated.

### **Step 3: Registration at Reception Centre**

Evacuees who arrive at the reception centre will be registered by the Canadian Red Cross. The reception centre is a one-stop service site where ESS will assist the evacuees with their essential needs.

## **Case Study #2** **Derailment '84**



In the morning of January 7, 1984, Medicine Hat was struck by the worst train accident in its history. At 9:40 am, a runaway train descended the steep grade leading into the city. As the train turned the corner, 63 cars – some carrying hazardous chemicals – derailed on the north side of the South Saskatchewan River. The runaway's three engines and five remaining cars continued into the Canadian Pacific rail yard where they collided with a stationary train.

As a result, sections of Riverside were evacuated in addition to a senior citizen's residence. The City of Medicine Hat opened a reception centre at Veiner Centre. Emergency Social Services were provided to the evacuees. Most evacuees sought lodging with family and friends, thirteen evacuees spent the night at a hotel, and one evacuee remained at the centre overnight. The centre closed the following afternoon.

## 6.2 ESS Facilities

ESS facilities will be activated, as needed, to coordinate and deliver emergency social services. These facilities will include reception centre(s) and volunteer centre(s). These facilities will be staffed by a combination of City of Medicine Hat staff, volunteers, and assisting agency members.

The ESS Chief will determine the location of ESS facilities from the list of designated locations. If these designated locations are inappropriate, Appendix B contains a list of backup facilities including schools, churches, and community facilities.

### **ESS Facilities**

If ESS facilities are needed, ESS will use:

Designated Facilities  
or Schools  
or Churches  
or Community Facilities

Cypress County and the Town of Redcliff maintain their own respective lists of possible ESS facilities.

### 6.2.1 Reception Centres

A reception centre is any safe gathering place where individuals may obtain information and receive assistance. All evacuated citizens should register with the Canadian Red Cross at the reception centre. Reception centres may offer all primary and specialized services. Typically, individuals will receive referrals to obtain services, such as meals and lodging, from commercial suppliers.

Reception centres must also include a quiet, private area for reception centre staff. In this room, staff and volunteers can receive up-to-date information, food, refreshments, and respite.

#### **Reception Centre Activation**

The ESS Chief will contact the facility contact person to arrange to open the facility and will ensure that any necessary start-up supplies are delivered to the facility.

The ESS Chief designates a Reception Centre Manager to report to the facility and manage its operations. Prior to opening a reception centre, the Reception Centre Manager must evaluate the building to ensure that it can be safely occupied and used as intended.

**Stage One Reception Centre**

ESS will establish a stage one reception centre for incidents involving 200 people or less. At a stage one reception centre, evacuees will receive referrals to service providers and on-site services such as first aid, comfort food, family reunification, and mental health support. Evacuees will be registered and receive important emergency information. The individuals will seek food and shelter with family or friends, or will be referred to commercial services. As indicated in the next table, three facilities have been specially designated for use as stage one reception centres.

<b>Stage One Reception Centre</b>
<p>If this type of facility is needed, ESS will use:</p> <p>Veiner Centre Strathcona Centre Cultural Centre</p>



*Group lodging in a stage two reception centre*

**Stage Two Reception Centre**

In a large emergency involving 200 or more people, ESS will establish one or more stage two reception centre(s). At a stage two reception centre, individuals will have access to all stage one reception centre services. However, when commercial services are overwhelmed, stage two reception centres will provide both group lodging and mass feeding on-site. There are five designated stage two reception centre locations that are identified in the following table.

<b>Stage Two Reception Centre</b>
<p>If this type of facility is needed, ESS will use (capacity in parentheses):</p> <p>Veiner Centre (500) Crescent Height High School (1000) Medicine Hat High School (1000) Medicine Hat College (1000) Cypress Centre (3000)</p>

### 6.2.2 Volunteer Centre

If large numbers of volunteers were required during an emergency, then ESS will establish a volunteer centre to manage volunteers. The volunteer centre will offer services that include volunteer registration, orientation, refreshments, and respite.

The ESS Chief will determine the location of the volunteer centre, in consultation with the Volunteer Centre Manager. There are four designated volunteer centre locations that are shown in the following table.

The ESS Chief will contact the facility contact person to arrange to open the facility and will ensure that any necessary start-up supplies are delivered to the facility. The ESS Chief directs the Volunteer Centre Manager to report to the facility and manage the volunteer centre operations.

#### **Volunteer Centre**

If this type of facility is needed, ESS will use:

Volunteer & Community Information Centre  
Cultural Centre  
Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede Sites  
Veiner Centre  
Strathcona Centre

### 6.3 Services

ESS will help provide both primary and specialized services to preserve the well-being of individuals affected by an emergency.

#### **Primary Services**

Primary services are those vital services that normally address the physical needs of the affected individuals, including:

- Emergency Food
- Emergency Clothing
- Emergency Lodging

#### **Specialized Services**

Specialized services are all other services required for delivering the primary services and dealing with the emotional impact of the incident, including:

- Transportation
- Personal Services
  - Family Reunification
  - Child Care Assistance
  - Mental Health Support
  - Language Interpretation
  - Pet Care Assistance
  - Health Care Assistance
- Other Services

**In detail:**

**6.3.1 Primary Services**

***Emergency Food***

ESS will make arrangements with commercial suppliers (restaurants, catering firms, grocers, etc.) to provide meals or snacks as needed. If these arrangements become insufficient, food preparation staff will use existing kitchens within the reception centres to prepare meals or snacks.

***Emergency Food***

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Commercial Suppliers  
or Mass Feeding  
(at a reception centre)

***Emergency Clothing***

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Friends/Family of the individuals  
or Salvation Army

***Emergency Clothing***

The Salvation Army will coordinate the emergency clothing function of ESS. Evacuees are asked to borrow clothes from family or friends. If unable to do so, the Salvation Army is responsible for providing new or used clothing to evacuees.

***Emergency Lodging***

The Salvation Army will coordinate the emergency lodging function of ESS. Evacuees in need of lodging are asked to stay with family or friends, if possible. If not, the Salvation Army will refer evacuees to commercial suppliers (hotels, motels, etc.) and/or billets. If these arrangements are insufficient, group lodging will be established at the reception centre(s).

***Emergency Lodging***

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Friends/Family of the individuals  
or Commercial Suppliers  
or Billets  
or Group Lodging  
(at a reception centre)

### 6.3.2 Specialized Services

#### **Transportation**

Evacuees are asked to drive their own vehicles or carpool to the nearest shelter. If unable to do so, the Transportation Agency Chief will make alternate arrangements with public and special transit, school buses, or commercial suppliers (e.g. shuttle buses).

#### **Emergency Transportation**

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Friends/Family *of the individuals*  
*or* Public & Special Transit Buses  
*or* School Buses  
*or* Commercial Suppliers  
*or* Accessible vehicles through local agencies/societies

### Personal Services

#### **Family Reunification**

Individuals who arrive at the reception centre(s) can register their whereabouts or make inquiries about loved ones. This service is the responsibility of the Red Cross.

When appropriate, the Red Cross will establish a call centre and/or central registration information bureau (CRIB) to allow individuals to register or make inquiries over the telephone.

#### **Childcare Assistance**

If childcare assistance is required to support parents with their children at a reception centre, ESS will contact childcare suppliers and volunteers.

If children enter a reception centre without their parent or guardian, the childcare assistant at the centre will supervise the child until such a time as the authorized parent or guardian of the child arrives to take responsibility for the child.

#### **Childcare Assistance**

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Commercial Suppliers  
*or* Volunteers

***Mental Health Support***

When mental health support is required, ESS will call on the Mental Health Support Team. The team includes several community organizations that have committed to assist according to their expertise. The team's coordinator will receive and prioritize requests for aid and will deploy the team members to assist. The Mental Health Support Team includes Mental Health Services, Medicine Hat Family Services, Victim's Assistance, the Medicine Hat and District Ministerial Association, and the Salvation Army.

***Language Interpretation***

To assist those who do not understand English, a request for volunteers to interpret will be made at the scene or the reception centre. If no volunteer is available, ESS will contact Saamis Immigration Services, with the language and dialect required, to request a translator. Saamis Immigration has translators for approximately 72 languages at any given time.

***Mental Health Support***

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Mental Health Support Team

- *Mental Health Services*
- *MH Family Service*
- *Victim's Assistance*
- *MH and District Ministerial Association*
- *Salvation Army*

***Language Interpretation***

If this service is required, ESS will acquire it from:

Volunteers  
or Saamis Immigration

***Pet Care Assistance***

The SPCA will manage the Pet Care Assistance function. Evacuees should leave their pets in the care of family or friends, or in commercial boarding facilities. Failing that, the SPCA will temporarily care for pets but has a limited capacity. If a large number of pets require care, the SPCA will establish pet care areas outside an activated reception centre. The SPCA will contact volunteers and suppliers, such as pet stores, veterinarians, kennels, and food stores to help care for the animals.

***Pet Care Assistance***

If this service is required,  
ESS will acquire it from:

Friends/Family *of the individuals*  
or Commercial Boarding Facilities  
or SPCA  
or Volunteers  
or Commercial Suppliers

***Health Care Assistance***

If necessary, St. John Ambulance personnel will provide first aid assistance at the reception centre(s) and the incident site. As required, Alberta Health will be contacted to provide specific support such as community nursing, public health, and Home Care. Home Care will help evacuate homebound individuals, assist them at the reception centre(s), and assist electrically-dependent individuals such as those on oxygen. However, anyone with serious injuries will be transferred and directed to the nearest hospital. Medical needs such as prescriptions or eyeglasses may be addressed at the reception centre with referrals to the appropriate suppliers.

***Health Care Assistance***

If this service is required,  
ESS will acquire it from:

St. John Ambulance  
or Alberta Health  
(including Home Care)  
or Public Health Services

***Other Services***

When informed of the need for a service not presently listed, the ESS Services Coordinator will make appropriate arrangements.

## **6.4 Volunteer Management**

In an emergency, area residents are invariably compelled to assist in any way they can. Volunteers are often needed in an emergency response whether it be staffing reception centres or assisting community agencies. In these instances, ESS would activate its volunteer management component to effectively coordinate and care for volunteers.

If a volunteer centre is required, one will be activated according to the volunteer centre guidelines (6.2.2).

### ***Disaster Volunteer Registry***

The Volunteer & Community Information Centre has committed to establishing a Disaster Volunteer Registry (DVR) to coordinate volunteers. The Volunteer & Community Information Centre DVR receives volunteer registrations and volunteer requests, matches volunteers to requests, and deploys volunteers.



*Worker care at a volunteer centre*

The DVR structure incorporates three components: the intake unit, the research unit, and the reply unit. The intake unit registers volunteers and registers volunteer requests. The intake unit will register volunteers on-site at the volunteer centre, or will dispatch mobile registration teams to register volunteers off-site. The research unit matches volunteers to requests. The research unit finds volunteers by searching the database of registered volunteers, or by actively recruiting volunteers through, for example, agreements with community agencies. Finally, the reply unit will deploy the volunteers.

### ***Worker Care***

Emergencies create unique and difficult conditions that strain response workers. Volunteers are no exception. For this reason, the ESS Plan provides for special care to registered volunteers through its worker care function. Worker care consists of six focus areas:

1. Morale,
2. Nutrition & hydration,
3. Workload,
4. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM),
5. Family support, and
6. Leisure.

The Worker Care Coordinator is responsible for proactively and reactively addressing these areas. At the beginning of the emergency, the Worker Care Coordinator will evaluate the physical and psychological threat posed by the emergency, and will vary the level of worker care accordingly.

The Volunteer & Community Information Centre will provide worker care services to registered volunteers and staff on-site at the volunteer centre. Such services include providing a respite room, snacks, and refreshments. The City of Medicine Hat will provide worker care services to registered volunteers off-site, away from the volunteer centre.

The Salvation Army has committed to providing refreshments for volunteers. The Mental Health Support Team is committed to providing Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), counseling, and debriefing to staff and volunteers.

#### ***Out-of-Town Responders***

Emergency response situations often require the assistance of out-of-town specialists and volunteers. The Worker Care Coordinator will also make any necessary provisions for out-of-town responders. These provisions include accommodations, food, transportation, worker care, awareness of local services, etc.

### **6.5 When the Region's Capabilities are Exceeded**

The ESS Chief will notify the Director of Disaster Services if ESS is incapable of meeting the demand for its services. The Director of Disaster Services will make the necessary arrangements to call for additional help either internally or externally (neighboring communities, or the provincial or federal government).

## 6.6 Communications

The Emergency Response Plan details how communications will be maintained during an emergency. Normally, regular telephone, cellular phones, and faxes will be used to relay information from location to location. Failing that, the City of Medicine Hat would call on amateur radio operators and runners to relay information between the Emergency Operations Centre and ESS facilities. In particular, ESS would request the assistance of the City of Medicine Hat Emergency Communications Service to provide amateur radio links.

The Medicine Hat Region will rely on the media to broadcast emergency public information to the public.

### Information Flow

#### ***Releasing information***

The Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is the key source of information in the event of a significant emergency. The EOC is responsible for disseminating information to the region's officials, and to the general public through the Public Information Officer. The Public Information Officer is responsible for releasing information to the general public and will ensure that other Public Information Officers attend all ESS facilities to release this information to those who are at the ESS Facilities.

The ESS Chief is responsible for disseminating information to:

- assisting agencies, and
- ESS Facility Managers (Reception Centre Manager(s) and Volunteer Centre Manager(s)).

The Facility Managers are responsible for disseminating information to:

- response staff and volunteers, and
- the individuals within the facility.

Please note that information can not be released until it is authorized by the EOC. Furthermore, the Facility Manager must authorize all public information posted at ESS facilities.

#### ***Receiving information***

In an emergency, reliable public information is crucial to coordinating effective emergency response.

Sometimes, in the scramble following an emergency, several information sources can present mixed messages that confuse and frustrate the public. As a result, the City of Medicine Hat seeks to disseminate public information efficiently through a single source: the Public Information Officer.

Consequently, the ESS Facility Managers and assisting agencies are asked to pass on their public messages to the EOC through the ESS chief. From there, the Public Information Officer will release the information to the media and the public.

## **6.7 Extended Housing Assistance**

During the recovery stage of the emergency, the ESS Chief will designate an Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager when needed.

The Case Manager will assist individuals whose households are affected by the emergency. The Case Manager will assess their needs and coordinate the required financial assistance to provide accommodation on a short-term or long-term basis. The Case Manager will determine eligibility according to set criteria. The Case Manager will coordinate with community agencies, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, and the Provincial Disaster Services team.



*A candid photo of a funnel cloud that touched down north of Medicine Hat in August 2004*

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# 7

## **Section 7 Personnel Organization and Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Directing the ESS Response**

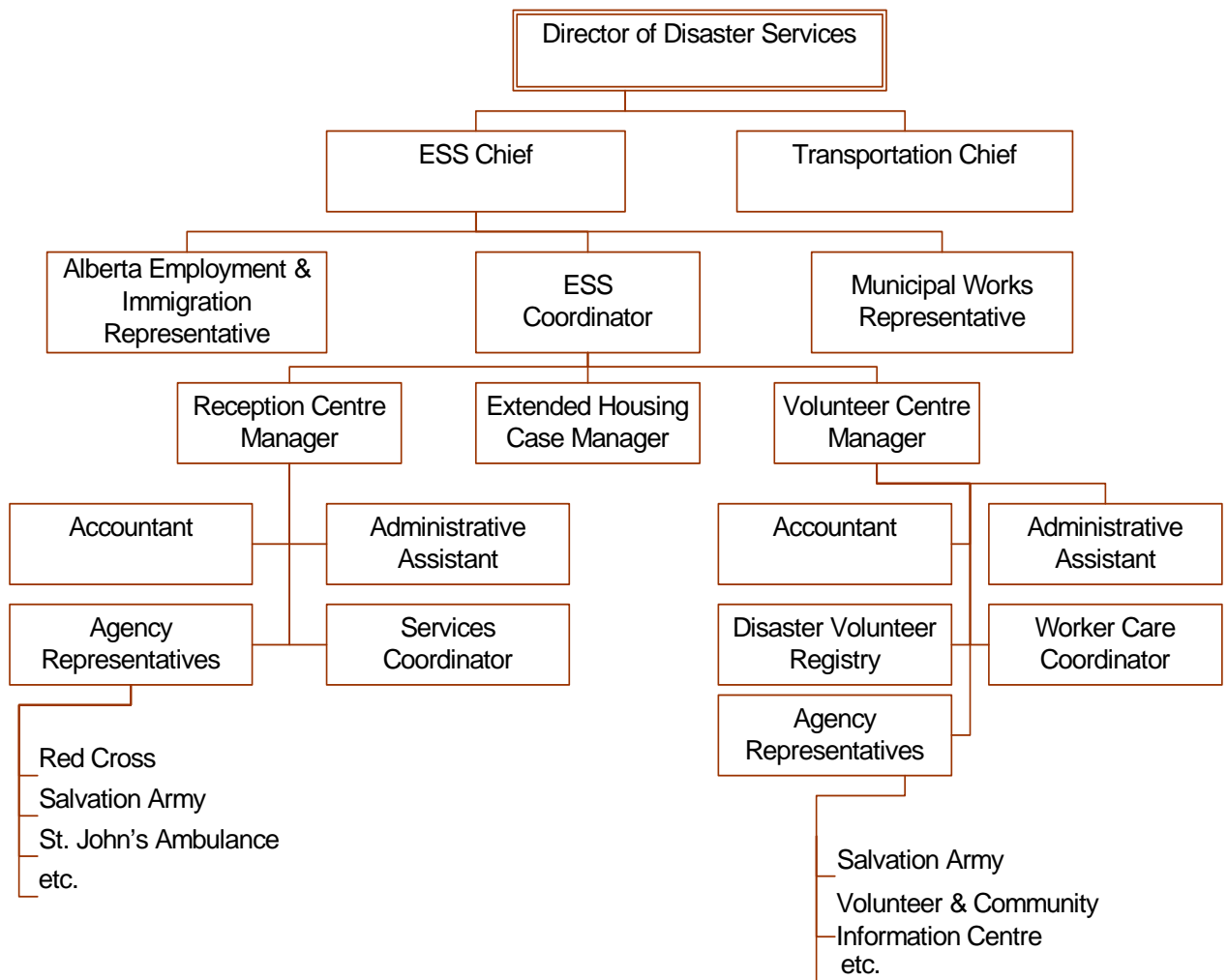
During all emergency responses, the Director of Disaster Services oversees the entire emergency response, including the ESS portion. The Director will call on the ESS Chief to report to the Emergency Operations Centre.

### **7.2 Organizing the ESS Response**

The ESS Chief will direct the ESS response. This includes contacting the necessary staff such as the ESS EOC Team (including the ESS Coordinator) and the Reception Centre Manager(s) or the Volunteer Centre Manager(s), when appropriate. The Reception Centre Manager(s) and Volunteer Centre Manager(s), in turn, will contact their facility personnel.

**Diagram 3: ESS Organizational Flow** shows how the Medicine Hat Region would organize its staff and assisting agencies during an emergency.

**Diagram 3: ESS Organizational Flow**



### 7.2.1 Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Staff

When the EOC is activated, the following staff have been designated to undertake the positions outlined in the table below. Trained alternates may be assigned to these positions as required.

Emergency Position	Regular Position	Tasks
<b>ESS Chief</b>	Community Development General Manager/ Social Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for coordinating the ESS response and overseeing all active ESS facilities</li> <li>• Reports to the Director of Disaster Services</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation Agency Chief</b>	Transit Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for coordinating the transportation agency response</li> <li>• Reports to the Director of Disaster Services</li> </ul>
<b>ESS Coordinator</b>	Social Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for assisting the ESS Chief with their duties</li> <li>• Reports to the ESS Chief</li> </ul>
<b>Alberta Employment And Immigration</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advises the ESS Chief and liaises within their own department to provide financial assistance and human resources for ESS purposes</li> <li>• Reports to the ESS Chief</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Works Representative</b>	Municipal Works Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advises the ESS Chief on facilities and maintenance requirements</li> <li>• Reports to the ESS Chief</li> </ul>

### 7.2.2 Reception Centre Staff

When a reception centre is activated, the following staff are designated to undertake the positions outlined in the table below. Alternates have been identified for the positions and will be assigned to specific positions as necessary.

Emergency Position	Regular Position	Tasks
<b>Reception Centre Manager</b>	Director of Family Leisure Centre/ Community Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for all of the activities within the reception centre</li> <li>• Reports to the ESS Chief</li> </ul>
<b>Assisting Agency Representatives</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the services outlined in Section 8</li> <li>• Reports to the Reception Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Services Coordinator</b>	Community Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for coordinating all reception centre services</li> <li>• Reports to the Reception Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Community Development Administrative Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the administrative and communication function at the Reception Centre</li> <li>• Reports to the Reception Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Accountant</b>	Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for keeping accounting records, and generating payment of all accounts receivable and payable</li> <li>• Reports to the Reception Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Function Personnel</b>	Volunteers or Community Development Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for performing duties as required to assist the evacuees</li> <li>• Report to the Services Coordinator or the Reception Centre Manager</li> </ul>

### 7.2.3 Volunteer Centre Staff

When volunteers are required, the following staff person is designated to undertake the position outlined in the table below. Alternates have been identified for the position and will be assigned to specific positions as necessary.

Emergency Position	Regular Position	Tasks
<b>Volunteer Centre Manager</b>	Senior Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for managing volunteers, out-of-town responders, and the volunteer centre</li> <li>Reports to ESS Chief</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Community Development Administrative Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for the administrative and communication function at the Volunteer Centre</li> <li>Reports to the Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Accountant</b>	Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for keeping accounting records, and generating payment of all accounts receivable and payable</li> <li>Reports to the Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Worker Care Coordinator</b>	Senior Outreach officer/Victims assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for ensuring the proper care for emergency volunteers and out-of-town responders</li> <li>Reports to the Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Disaster Volunteer Coordinator</b>	Volunteer & Community Information Centre staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for the coordinating the Disaster Volunteer Registry</li> <li>Reports to Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Assisting Agency Representatives</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for the services outlined in Section 8</li> <li>Reports to the Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Function Personnel</b>	Volunteers or Community Development Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for performing duties as required to assist the evacuees</li> <li>Report to the Services Coordinator or the Volunteer Centre Manager</li> </ul>

#### **7.2.4 Extended Housing Assistance Manager**

During the recovery stage, the ESS Chief will designate an Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager. The Case Manager reports to the ESS Chief.

#### **7.3 Workloads**

All ESS personnel are subject to maximum workload guidelines that are defined as follows:

- 60 hours per week
- 12 hours per day
- 10 hours between shifts
- 1 day off for every 6 days worked

These guidelines protect ESS personnel from becoming overworked and ensure the optimal performance of the whole ESS Agency.

#### **7.4 Roles and Responsibility Sheets**

Each ESS staff member has a well-defined role that is integral to the entire ESS Agency. The following sheets explain the role and responsibilities of each ESS staff member. These sheets will provide a quick reminder to ESS staff so that they can parachute into their role in an emergency.

### **ESS Chief**

#### ***Planning***

During normal operations, the ESS Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Designate staff and alternates for all ESS positions;
2. Ensure appropriate training programs for ESS staff, ESS alternates, and volunteer responders; and
3. Participate in municipal emergency planning activities as a member of the municipal Disaster Services Agency as required.

#### ***Emergency Response***

During an emergency, the ESS Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Report directly to the Emergency Operations Centre to the Director of Disaster Services, working closely with all other Agency Chiefs;
2. Activate the ESS Plan, if necessary;
3. Manage the ESS response;
4. Provide food, clothing, shelter, and other essential services as required for disaster victims and response workers;
5. Designate and second ESS personnel, as required;
6. Coordinate with assisting agencies and commercial suppliers to respond to the disaster;
7. Designate ESS facility locations, as required, arrange to open the facilities, and arrange to transport necessary start-up supplies to the facilities;
8. Receive and prioritize requests for aid;
9. Track ESS resources and their status (available, deployed);
10. Recommend mutual aid assistance when required;
11. Coordinate public information regarding ESS operations and arrange for the Public Information Officer to issue news releases;
12. Maintain a log of activities; and
13. Deactivate the ESS Plan when required.

#### ***Post-Deactivation***

After the ESS Plan is deactivated, the ESS Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Finalize all expenditures, financial claims, and appropriate documentation;
2. Coordinate transition of ESS services to regional authorities (Community Development Department in Medicine Hat) to ensure follow-up and/or continued services for disaster victims; and
3. Complete a post-disaster final report.

### **ESS Chief Checklist**

The checklist provides a helpful list of details that the ESS Chief must ensure are accomplished, in addition to the Chief's responsibilities.

#### ***Response Activities***

- Report to the Emergency Operations Centre upon the request of the Director of Disaster Services, and establish the ESS Office
- Ensure that alternates are designated for your position to allow for 24-hour extended operations
- Activate the ESS Plan in whole, or in part
- Coordinate ESS activities
- Initiate call-out of ESS staff, as required

#### ***Operational Phase***

- Establish and maintain a position log, records of financial expenditures and other necessary files
- Keep track of resources deployed and still available
- Approach Director of Disaster Services to request ESS resources from neighboring communities, the provincial government, and/or the federal government
- Ensure emergency expenses and extensions for ESS are pre-authorized by the Director of Disaster Services
- Provide your relief with a briefing at shift change, informing him/her of all ongoing activities, objectives for the next operational period, and any pertinent information
- Designate the location of the reception centre(s), Central Registration and Inquiry Bureau, volunteer centre(s), and Disaster Volunteer Registry, as required
- Arrange for the opening of ESS facilities and delivery of necessary start-up supplies
- Maintain communication with ESS Facility Managers
- Arrange for the Public Information Officer to issue news releases regarding ESS operations and arising from ESS assisting agencies

#### ***Deactivation Phase***

- Determine the need to deactivate the ESS Plan and advise the Director of Disaster Services
- Communicate the ESS Plan deactivation to ESS Facility Managers
- Collect and store all completed ESS forms and paperwork from all the ESS service centres
- Ensure that all expenditures and financial claims are submitted to the Finance Department

### **ESS Coordinator**

#### ***Planning***

During normal operations, the ESS Coordinator's responsibilities are to:

1. Maintain the ESS Plan for the City of Medicine Hat;
2. Maintain protocols with assisting agencies identified in the ESS Plan; and
3. Coordinate annual training sessions for ESS staff and assisting agencies.

#### ***Emergency Response***

During an emergency, the ESS Coordinator's responsibilities are to:

1. Report directly to the ESS Chief at the Emergency Operations Centre;
2. Work closely with the other members of the ESS EOC Team (ESS Chief, representatives from Alberta Human Resources and Employment, and from Municipal Works);
3. Dispatch all ESS directions on behalf of the ESS Chief and screen all requests for the ESS Chief;
4. Supervise clerical staff to ensure that they maintain a proper log of activities, as required; and
5. Ensure the post-disaster final report is completed.

### **Transportation Agency Chief**

#### ***Planning***

During normal operations, the Transportation Agency Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Establish and maintain the Transportation Agency Plan for the Medicine Hat Region;
2. Designate staff and alternates for all Transportation positions;
3. Ensure appropriate training programs for Transportation staff and their alternates; and
4. Participate in municipal emergency planning activities as a member of the municipal Disaster Services Agency, as required.

#### ***Emergency Response***

During an emergency, the Transport Agency Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Report directly to the Emergency Operations Centre to the Director of Disaster Services, working closely with all other Agency Chiefs;
2. Activate the Transportation Agency Plan, if necessary;
3. Manage the Transportation Agency's response;
4. Provide transportation for evacuees, injured persons, response workers, and volunteers, as required;
5. Designate and second Transportation personnel, as required;
6. Direct the Transportation Supervisor to initiate a fan-out of the Transit staff and activate emergency procedures;
7. Secure vehicles (through the Municipal Services Agency Chief) and drivers;
8. Coordinate with assisting agencies and commercial suppliers to respond to the disaster;
9. Receive and prioritize requests for aid;
10. Track Transportation resources and their status (available, deployed);
11. Arrange rerouting of Transit busses, if necessary;
12. Advise the Public Information Officer of any bus rerouting;
13. Maintain a log of activities; and
14. Deactivate the Transportation Agency Plan when required.

#### ***Post-Deactivation***

After the Transportation Agency Plan is deactivated, the Transportation Agency Chief's responsibilities are to:

1. Finalize all expenditures, financial claims, and appropriate documentation; and
2. Complete a post-disaster final report.

## **Reception Centre Manager**

### ***Planning***

During normal operations, the Reception Centre Manager's responsibilities are to initiate training sessions for ESS staff and assisting agencies identified in the reception centre management component of the plan.

### ***Emergency Response***

During an emergency, the Reception Centre Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the ESS Chief to stand by or activate the reception centre;
2. Activate the reception centre once the ESS Chief designates its location. First, evaluate the facility to ensure that it can be safely occupied and used as intended. Second, meet with the facility operator(s) to ascertain facility logistics (utility services, kitchen facilities, PA system, etc.);
3. Manage a reception centre and the services that it provides to evacuees. These services include emergency food, emergency lodging, emergency clothing, and personal services;
4. Contact facility staff, as required, for the positions of administrative assistant, accountant, and services coordinator;
5. Coordinate with assisting agency representatives to maintain reception centre operation;
6. Ensure that volunteers are available to fill support roles;
7. Report to the ESS Chief;
8. Forward logistical requests to the ESS Chief;
9. Supervise clerical staff to ensure that they maintain a proper log of activities, as required; and
10. If necessary, request a Public Information Officer.

### ***Post-Deactivation***

Upon the ESS Chief's directions to deactivate the reception centre, the Reception Centre Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Collect and finalize the appropriate documentation;
2. Ensure the facility is cleaned up and restored to working order;
3. Release staff and volunteers; and
4. Provide a summary report to the ESS Chief.

### **Volunteer Centre Manager**

#### ***Planning***

During normal operations, the Volunteer Centre Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Update and maintain the volunteer management component of the plan;
2. Maintain protocols with assisting agencies identified in the volunteer management component of the plan;
3. Liaise with the Volunteer & Community Information Centre to ensure an updated Disaster Volunteer Registry (DVR) Plan; and
4. Initiate training sessions for ESS staff and assisting agencies identified in the volunteer management component of the plan.

#### ***Emergency Response***

During an emergency, the Volunteer Centre Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the ESS Chief to stand by or activate the volunteer management component of the plan;
2. Manage emergency volunteers, out of town responders, and the operations of the volunteer centre;
3. Activate the volunteer centre, in consultation with the DVR coordinator, once the ESS Chief designates its location. Evaluate the facility to ensure that it can be safely occupied and used as intended. Meet with the facility operator(s) to ascertain facility logistics (utility services, kitchen facilities, PA system, etc.);
4. Contact facility staff, as required, for the positions of administrative assistant, accountant, and worker care coordinator;
5. Coordinate with assisting agency representatives to maintain volunteer centre operation;
6. Report to the ESS Chief;
7. Forward unmatched volunteer requests and logistical requests to the ESS Chief;
8. Supervise clerical staff to ensure that they maintain a proper log of activities, as required; and
9. If necessary, request a Public Information Officer.

#### ***Post-Deactivation***

When the ESS Plan is deactivated, the volunteer management component may persist if there is a still need for volunteers during the clean-up and recovery stage of the disaster. The Volunteer Centre Manager will determine, in concert with the ESS Chief, when to deactivate the volunteer centre. When the volunteer centre is deactivated, the Volunteer Centre Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Collect and finalize the appropriate documentation;
2. Ensure the facility is cleaned up and restored to working order;
3. Release staff and volunteers; and
4. Provide a summary report to the ESS Chief.

### **Administrative Assistant**

The Administrative Assistant's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the Reception Centre Manager or Volunteer Centre Manager to stand by or report to the ESS facility;
2. Supervise the administrative and communications functions in ESS facilities;
3. Schedule Medicine Hat Region employees, establish a sign in & out system for staff and volunteers, and contact support staff from the designated roster, as required;
4. Provide clerical support to the ESS facility including answering and directing incoming communications, filing documents, and circulating announcements to staff and evacuees;
5. Maintain an accurate log of activities; and
6. Assist in preparing the final report for the ESS facility.

### **Accountant**

The Accountant's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the Reception Centre Manager or Volunteer Centre Manager to stand by or report to the ESS facility;
2. Prepare and generate payment for all accounts receivable and payable for the ESS Facility;
3. Ensure an accounting system that separates the City of Medicine Hat purchases from assisting agency purchases;
4. Maintain accurate accounting records; and
5. Prepare the final accounting report.

### **Services Coordinator**

The Service Coordinator's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the Reception Centre Manager to stand by or report to the Reception Centre;
2. Ensure that all reception centre services are provided;
3. Coordinate with assisting agencies to ensure that the assigned services are provided;
4. Make arrangements to provide all reception centre services not provided by assisting agencies, using contact resources (Appendix A) and community resources (Appendix C); and
5. Maintain contact with the Reception Centre Manager and forward any requests for additional resources to the Manager.

### **Worker Care Coordinator**

The Worker Care Coordinator's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the Volunteer Centre Manager to stand by or report to the Volunteer Centre;
2. Ensure that emergency volunteers receive worker care, as needed. Worker care encompasses the following domains:
  - Morale,
  - Nutrition/hydration,
  - Workload,
  - Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM),
  - Family Support, and
  - Recreation;
3. Evaluate the physical and psychological threat posed by the emergency and vary the level of worker care accordingly;
4. Coordinate with assisting agencies to provide worker care services for volunteers;
5. Ensure appropriate care for out-of-town responders, such as accommodations, food, transportation, worker care, awareness of local services, etc;
6. Liaise with the Volunteer & Community Information Centre Worker Care Manager and the City of Medicine Hat's Human Resource Department to provide worker care to staff and volunteers within the volunteer centre;
7. Ensure a healthy, secure, and safe environment at the volunteer centre; and
8. Maintain contact with the Volunteer Centre Manager and forward any requests for additional resources to the Manager.

### **Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager**

#### ***Recovery Stage***

During the recovery stage of an emergency, the Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Await the directions of the ESS Chief to stand by or activate the extended housing assistance component of the plan;
2. Coordinate the needs assessment of individuals whose households have been affected by the emergency;
3. Determine eligibility for financial assistance, based on the following criteria:
  - a. Residence in the affected area
  - b. Inability to return home within a reasonable period of time
  - c. Presence of special needs or circumstances
  - d. Presence of financial concerns
  - e. Lack of other resources
  - f. Breakdown of previous alternative housing arrangements, such as billets, family, or friends;
4. Secure financial assistance for these individuals to provide short-term or long-term housing;
5. Report to the ESS Chief;
6. Coordinate with the City of Medicine Hat Community Development Department, Alberta Employment and Immigration, the Provincial Disaster Services team, and assisting agencies such as the Medicine Hat Social Housing Agency; and
7. Maintain complete records of requests for assistance, assistance provided, and financial transactions.

#### ***Post-Deactivation***

When the ESS Plan is deactivated, the extended housing assistance component may persist as it is usually activated in the recovery rather than response stage. The Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager will determine, in concert with the ESS Chief, when to deactivate the extended housing component. Once deactivated, the Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager's responsibilities are to:

1. Collect and finalize the appropriate documentation; and
2. Provide a summary report to the ESS Chief

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# 8

## **Section 8** **Calling on Assisting Agencies**

### **8.1 Regional Assisting Agencies**

In an emergency, the City of Medicine Hat depends on several community partners to help deliver Emergency Social Services. Listed below are some of these agencies and a summary of their responsibilities or abilities in an emergency response.

#### **Alberta Employment and Immigration**

*Assistance: Financial assistance*  
Alberta Employment and Immigration will help with financial claims and financial assistance for disaster victims who qualify.

#### **Canadian Red Cross**

*Assistance: Registration and family reunification & inquiry.*  
The Red Cross is responsible for the service of family reunification & inquiry. It operates registration and inquiry tables as well as the Central Registration & Inquiry Bureau (CRIB).

The Red Cross will set up a 20-line call centre, and dispense blankets and personal care kits, if required.

#### **CORE Association**

*Assistance: Support for persons with disabilities and Food Service facility*  
CORE Association is able to provide assistance in reception centres to persons with disabilities who may require additional supports. CORE also has staff knowledgeable in sign language. In addition, CORE's main facility is capable of preparing and serving meals for up to 50 people or more.

#### **Medicine Hat Family Service**

*Assistance: Crisis debriefing & on-call mental health support*  
The Medicine Hat Family Service will provide group and individual disaster debriefing services to disaster victims and volunteers, when called upon. It will also act as an on-call mental health support service for evacuees.

#### **Medicine Hat Regional Emergency Communications Service**

*Assistance: Communication*  
In the event that traditional communication lines are unavailable, the Regional Emergency Communications Service will provide radios and amateur radio operators to maintain communication between ESS facilities and the ESS Office.

#### **Canadian Mental Health**

*Assistance: Mental Health support*  
Canadian Mental Health will assist by providing mental health support.

**Medicine Hat and District Ministerial Association**

*Assistance: Spiritual guidance & mental health support*

The Medicine Hat and District Ministerial Association consists of spiritual leaders of most denominations. The Ministerial Association will provide spiritual guidance and mental health support to people affected by a disaster.

**Medicine Hat Community Housing Society**

*Assistance: Lodging*

The Medicine Hat Community Housing Society will place evacuees requiring housing, if it has vacancies. Furthermore, it can assess community housing to seek additional lodging for displaced persons.

**Next Step Residential Services (Medicine Hat) Ltd.**

*Assistance: Resource and support for persons with developmental disabilities*  
Next Step is able to provide resource information, supports and some specialized equipment (e.g. walkers, wheelchair and transfer belts) in reception centres, to persons with developmental disabilities and specific needs.

**Mental Health Services**

*Assistance: Mental health support & CISM for evacuees*

The Alberta Health Services Community Mental Health Services employs several therapists who will provide mental health support and Critical Incident Stress Management for victims of an emergency.

**Home Care**

*Assistance: Dependent adults*

Home Care provides assistance in reception centres to homebound adults forced out of their homes. It will help evacuate homebound community residents. Home Care will also assist electrically-dependent individuals, such as individuals on oxygen.

**REDI Enterprises Society**

*Assistance: Temporary shelter location; special transit; and transport vehicles for large supplies.*

REDI is able to provide a back-up facility for emergency temporary shelter, accessible vehicles for transport of persons with accessibility needs, and the use of their Ryder trucks to transport large number of supplies.

**Saamis Immigration Services Association**

*Assistance: Language interpretation & cross-cultural relations*

Saamis Immigration Services Association assists recent immigrants to Canada in the Medicine Hat region. At any given time, Saamis Immigration has translators for approximately 40 languages. Their employees also possess invaluable cross-cultural communication skills.

**St. John Ambulance**

*Assistance: First aid*

St. John Ambulance personnel provide first aid in reception centres or at the incident site. St. John can also identify qualified first aid volunteers to provide additional assistance.

**The Salvation Army**

*Assistance: Emergency clothing & lodging*

The Salvation Army also plays a major role in ESS delivery. The Salvation Army is responsible for the roles of emergency clothing and emergency lodging. In the emergency clothing role, it will provide new or used clothing for people who require them. In the emergency lodging role, it will refer displaced people to commercial suppliers (hotels, motels, etc.) or to billets.

As well, the Salvation Army will provide refreshments for volunteers and response workers, dispatch childcare workers to reception centres, and provide mental health support to affected people, as required.

**SPCA**

*Assistance: Pet care*

The SPCA will accept a limited number of pets, when evacuees cannot place their pets with friends or relatives, or in commercial boarding facilities. If these resources are overwhelmed, the SPCA will manage the Pet Care Assistance function of ESS. It and will register and care for pets in a “pet care area” near the reception centre(s).

**Victim’s Assistance**

*Assistance: Mental health support*

Victim’s Assistance will provide mental health support.

**Volunteer & Community Information Centre**

*Assistance: Disaster Volunteer Registry*

The Volunteer & Community Information Centre will operate a Disaster Volunteer Registry, when appropriate. The Disaster Volunteer Registry will register volunteers and volunteer requests, matches volunteers to requests, and deploy volunteers. The Volunteer & Community Information Centre will also orientate volunteers and provide worker care to volunteers on-site at the volunteer centre.

## 8.2 Provincial Assisting Agencies

Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are committed to responding to disasters anywhere in Alberta. They have joined to form the NGO Council of Alberta, which publishes [The Disaster Help Book for Alberta](#). This publication contains contact information for the members of the NGO Council and is contained in Appendix A. An overview of its members is presented below.

### **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)**

*Assistance: Donated goods management*

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency will sort, size, store, and distribute clothing, furniture, and other donated dry goods.

### **Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)**

*Assistance: Reconstruction & needs assessment*

The Disaster Response Services arm of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee can assist in a variety of recovery operations including: rapid response, organizational capacity building, needs assessment, reconstruction, estimating, and emotional and spiritual care.

### **Disaster Child Care**

*Assistance: Child care*

Disaster Child Care will provide child care in disaster settings by setting up and maintaining child care centres, and providing information and support for parents. Disaster Child Care uses trained and screened volunteers to provide specialized child care to help children cope with the trauma of a disaster.

### **Mennonite Disaster Services**

*Assistance: Reconstruction & cleanup*

Mennonite Disaster Services will assist during the recovery stage. It provides voluntary labor that will clean up after natural disasters, repair homes, and help people rebuild their physical and emotional lives.

### **Samaritan's Purse**

*Assistance: Needs Assessment & cleanup*

Samaritan's Purse will provide assistance during recovery phase to those not eligible for assistance from an insurance company. It coordinates and provides voluntary labor that will clean up after natural disasters.

*The Canadian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and St. John Ambulance are also members of the NGO Council. These community organizations have parent organizations nationwide that can provide them with additional assistance.*

# 9

## **Section 9 Managing and Maintaining the Plan**

### ***Administration***

The City of Medicine Hat Community Development General Manager (ESS Chief) and Manager of Social Development (ESS Coordinator) may amend and update the plan, and may add supporting documents or appendices, as necessary.

### ***General Maintenance***

To ensure that the plan remains current, the Manager of Social Development will undertake the following activities:

- Review the ESS Plan annually to update information;
- Review the ESS Plan, after any part of the plan has been activated, in order to incorporate recommendations;
- Continue to facilitate training and exercises to engage staff and assisting agencies;
- Maintain equipment to be used at the reception centres;
- Renew agreements with assisting agencies; and
- Update demographic information to reflect changes in the region.

### ***Training***

The City of Medicine Hat Community Development General Manager (ESS Chief) will institute a training program

for ESS personnel and their alternates, according to available funding. This training program will ensure that ESS personnel are adequately trained and that this training is current.

The City of Medicine Hat Senior Services Program Coordinator (ESS Coordinator) will also invite assisting agencies to ESS planning sessions. These sessions will reaffirm the vital role of assisting agencies in ESS response. Through paper exercises, the sessions will ensure that assisting agencies remain familiar with emergency procedures.

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# 10

Section 10  
Glossary

Term	Abbreviation	Definition
Central Registry and Inquiry Bureau	<b>CRIB</b>	The central site that collects and processes copies of the registration and inquiry cards from the reception centres and registration and inquiry sites and respond to inquiries.
Council		The Council of the City of Medicine Hat.
Director of Disaster Services	<b>DDS</b>	The person appointed by Council resolution as the Director of the Disaster Services Agency The person who coordinates all services and resources used in an emergency on behalf of the Mayor and the Council.
Disaster		A calamity caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure, or by the forces of nature that results in serious harm to safety, health or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property.
Disaster Services Advisory Group	<b>DSAG</b>	A select group of non-elected City of Medicine Hat officials that advises the Emergency Operations Committee in the event of an emergency.
Disaster Services Agency	<b>DSA</b>	An organization that acts as an agent of the Council to carry out the Council's statutory powers and obligations in an emergency as prescribed in the Disaster Services Bylaw.
Disaster Services Committee	<b>DSC</b>	During a disaster, the committee of four members drawn from available members of Council and select non-elected municipal officials who assumes the powers and duties of the Emergency Operations Committee if it is absent or unable to act during a disaster. During normal operations, the committee of elected and non-elected officials who advise and report to Council on the development of emergency plans and programs.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Disaster Volunteer Registry	<b>DVR</b>	Receives volunteer registrations and volunteer requests, matches volunteers to requests, and deploys volunteers
Emergency		A present or imminent event that requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property.
Emergency Operations Centre	<b>EOC</b>	The location where representatives from the Disaster Services Agency coordinate emergency operations.
Emergency Operations Committee		A committee of three elected officials with the power to declare a State of Local Emergency and request assistance from the provincial or federal governments.
Emergency Site Manager	<b>ESM</b>	The person who has the authority to command and control operations at the site of the emergency or disaster. The ESM is appointed by the Director of Disaster Services.
Emergency Social Services	<b>ESS</b>	Those services provided on a short-term basis to preserve the emotional and physical well-being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations.
Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Team	<b>ESS EOC Team</b>	The people who coordinate the ESS response including the ESS Chief and an advisory group that consists of the ESS Coordinator, a representative from Alberta Employment and Immigration, and a representative from Municipal Works.
Emergency Social Services Office	<b>ESS Office</b>	The physical location where the ESS EOC Team meets to coordinate the ESS response.
Emergency Management Alberta	<b>EMA</b>	The Alberta Municipal Affairs department that ensures that Alberta communities are prepared to respond to disaster and emergencies. EMA also provides assistance to municipalities in an emergency, upon request.
Extended Housing Assistance		Assistance provided to individuals whose households are affected by a disaster consisting of financial assistance, for those who qualify, with short-term or long-term accommodation.
Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness	<b>OCIPEP</b>	The federal government organization that develops programs and policies to prepare for national disasters through the Emergency Measures Act.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Public Information Officer	<b>PIO</b>	The official (City Clerk) responsible for alerting the public and media to an emergency and keeping them informed of the emergency response.
Registration and Inquiry	<b>R&amp;I</b>	The core of the family reunification service. The location of emergency victims is registered (i.e. reception centre, hospital, etc.). Concerned relatives can then make inquiries as to the location of their family.
Site Command Post	<b>SCP</b>	The location near the emergency or disaster, from which emergency operations are coordinated by the Emergency Site Manager.
Volunteer Centre	<b>VC</b>	A place to manage emergency response volunteers. At the centre, volunteers are registered, assigned, oriented, and debriefed.
Worker Care Function		The function that supports the self-care efforts of emergency responders by supporting their physical and psychological health.

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# 11

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# 12

## **Section 12** **Distribution List and** **Revision History**

### **12.1 Distribution List**

The following individuals and organizations will receive a hard copy and electronic copy of the ESS Plan:

- Director of Disaster Services\*
- Emergency Operations Centre
- ESS Chief\*
- Transportation Agency Chief\*
- ESS Coordinator\*
- Reception Centre Manager\*
- Volunteer Centre Manager\*
- Extended Housing Assistance Case Manager\*
- Services Coordinator\*
- Worker Care Coordinator\*
- Administrative Assistant\*
- Accountant\*
- Assisting Agencies
  - Superintendent, Medicine Hat School District No. 76
  - Superintendent, Medicine Hat Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 20
- Palliser Health Authority
  - Medicine Hat Hospital
  - Public Health Services
- Reception centre kits
- Shared Directory (electronic pdf copy)

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\* All designated alternates as well

## 12.2 Revision History

Date	Page(s)	Revision
June 27, 2008	Entire document	Plan review. Including updates to appendices, names and phone numbers, as well as general wording and information updates.
January 1, 2008	Entire document, including appendices D & E	Removed information about Redcliff and Cypress county from plan, no longer plan partners as of January 1, 2008.
Mar 21, 2011	Entire Document	Plan updated. Appendices A, B, C, E updated