

President Brian Frenkel  
Union of BC Municipalities  
Suite 60-10551 Shellbridge Way  
Richmond, BC V6X 2W9

RE: UBCM Flood and Wildfire advisory committee

Dear President Frenkel,

Fraser Valley Regional District is grateful to participate in the UBCM Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee. We commend the evolution of the Emergency Management framework in British Columbia and the work of UBCM and the Province of BC.

Through participation in this committee, we recognize a notable gap with respect to fulsome and meaningful consultation with municipalities and regional districts as envisioned within the spirit of the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter*. The Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee was a positive first step in building a framework for consultation and communication.

The field of Emergency Management is vast and fragmented. Local emergency programs are implemented and interpreted with broad variance across the province. The lack of centralized communication channels or common approaches results in consultation and comprehension gaps. Many appointed with the responsibility for local government emergency management programs operate under banners of Fire/Rescue Services, Police Services, or external contract; rarely interacting with the local government framework. Contractors operate solely within the context of their agreement with little engagement with senior leadership in their organizations.

Modernizing Emergency Management through the lens of one suite of legislation has the potential to create gaps in the correlation between the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter*, and *Municipal Finance Act*, among other legislative suites. Local governments are struggling to address current mandates, in addition to reviewing and providing feedback on initiatives that are launched without advance consultation for alignment of the local government framework.

The UBCM places an emphasis on communication with local governments and consultation with orders of government. FVRD suggests there may be an opportunity for UBCM to facilitate greater and continued engagement in the field of local government emergency management, potentially by transitioning the Flood and Wildfire Advisory Committee into a Standing Committee for Emergency Management to foster clear communication and consultation processes into place, bridging the gaps with local government emergency management. Additionally, the inclusion of engagement with the BC Association of Emergency Managers in a standing committee could be considered as a method to ensure effective outreach and input from the practitioner audience. This would be of mutual benefit to Emergency Management BC and local governments across the province.

By fostering a collaborative approach to local government emergency management initiatives, together we can ensure effective partnerships that support and sustain a safer British Columbia in alignment with the all-of-society approach in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jason Lum, Chair