



Strategic Emergency Management Plan



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Section

1

Introduction

Emergency management in Nova Scotia is a shared responsibility, starting with individuals and families and continuing through municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. Weather events are increasing in frequency and severity, transportation routes (land, air and marine) are seeing more traffic, and Nova Scotia's population is growing and shifting. These all contribute to the potential for emergencies that require a provincially coordinated response.

The Province of Nova Scotia, through the Emergency Management Office (NSEMO), provides a provincial legislative framework to develop effective emergency management programs. In addition, NSEMO works with municipalities/communities, federal government, critical infrastructure partners, industry, and the private sector to develop specific emergency strategies, plans and programs.

1.1 Definition of Emergency

Any incident, whether natural, technological, or human-caused that is causing (or could cause) substantial casualties, widespread damage to property, catastrophic interference in normal activities, or loss of confidence in the provincial government, requiring immediate attention and remedial action. Response to emergencies begins with municipalities, with NSEMO providing provincially coordinated support when more than one municipality (region/regions) or the entire province is affected, or upon the request of one or more emergency management partner.

Definition of Emergency Management: Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters. (Source: [FEMA](#))

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office's Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is to describe the methodology for an effective, efficient, and coordinated emergency management planning and response for the Province of Nova Scotia. The SEMP replaces NSEMO's provincial all-hazards Emergency Response Plan of 2015.

1.3 Authorities and Legislative Requirements

This plan is issued pursuant to the Nova Scotia *Emergency Management Act*. It is designed to guide actions and decisions in a provincial-level emergency response – whether it involves a response from a single department on a contained site or a fully coordinated, joint response involving many departments and multiple jurisdictions. It should be used in conjunction with the Incident Command System (ICS) and may be implemented in whole or in part as the emergency requires.

1.3.1 Federal

The federal government, through Public Safety Canada (PSC), is responsible for the national emergency response system. In the event of a nationally declared emergency event, the federal government can/will implement its Federal Emergency Response Plan ([FERP](#)) and will consult with provinces and territories through their regional offices.

Emergency Management Act: Federal

The Minister of Public Safety is responsible for exercising leadership relating to emergency management in Canada by coordinating, among government institutions and in cooperation with the provinces and other entities, emergency management activities.

The Minister of Public Safety's authority includes:

- Coordinating the Government of Canada's response to an emergency
- Coordinating the activities of government institutions relating to emergency management with those of the provinces and supporting the emergency management activities of the provinces, and through the provinces, those of local authorities

- Establishing arrangements with each province whereby any consultation with its lieutenant governor in council with respect to a declaration of an emergency under an Act of Parliament may be carried out effectively
- Coordinating the provision of assistance to a province in respect of a provincial emergency, other than the provision of financial assistance and the calling out of the Canadian Forces for service in aid of the civil power under Part VI of the National Defence Act
- Providing assistance other than financial assistance to a province if the province requests it
- Providing financial assistance to a province if: (i) a provincial emergency in the province has been declared to be of concern to the federal government under section 7, (ii) the Minister is authorized under that section to provide the assistance, and (iii) the province has requested the assistance

1.3.2 Provincial

The Province of Nova Scotia assumes an emergency management (EM) leadership role to promote the safety and security of Nova Scotians, their property, and the environment by providing a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies. The following section outlines the legislative and regulatory framework associated with this responsibility:

Emergency Management Act: Provincial

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has authority over all matters respecting emergency planning, preparedness, response, mitigation, recovery, and emergencies that go beyond normal response in the Province.

The Emergency Management Office has and shall exercise and perform such powers and duties as are vested in it by or under this Act and those assigned to it by the Minister.

The Emergency Management Office may, subject to the approval of the Minister

- a. Review and approve, or require modification to Provincial and Municipal emergency management plans
- b. Make surveys and studies to identify and record actual and potential hazards that may cause an emergency

- c. Make surveys and studies of resources and facilities to provide information for the effective preparation of emergency management plans
- d. Conduct public information programs related to the prevention and mitigation of damage during an emergency
- e. Conduct training and training exercises for the effective implementation of emergency management plans
- f. Procure food, clothing, medicines, equipment and goods of any nature or kind for the purposes of emergencies
- g. Authorize or require the implementation of any emergency management plan
- h. Enter into agreements with any persons, organizations, or associations in respect to emergency management plans

Additionally, the Minister may

- a. Divide the Province into districts and sub-districts for the purpose of this Act
- b. After consultation with the municipalities concerned, designate a combination of municipalities or parts thereof as a municipality for the purpose of this Act and determine the respective responsibilities of municipalities in the designated area
- c. Require municipalities to prepare emergency management plans, including mutual aid programs, and to submit such plans to the Emergency Management Office for review for adequacy and integration with the Provincial emergency management plans
- d. Establish procedures for the prompt and efficient implementation of emergency management plans
- e. Require any person to develop emergency management plans in conjunction with the Emergency Management Office or the municipalities to remedy or alleviate any hazard to persons or property.

The Minister may declare a state of emergency in respect to all or any district, sub-district or area of the province, if satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist, and after consulting, if it is practical to do so, with a majority of the

members of a committee established pursuant to Section 5 or a quorum of the Executive Council.

1.3.3 First Nations

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) partners with First Nations communities to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP) is consistent with Public Safety Canada's Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP).

ISC can request support from NSEMO for response to emergencies in First Nations communities through a federal-provincial Request for Assistance process led by Public Safety Canada.

NSEMO includes Public Safety Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and Mi'kmaq First Nations emergency management officials in its emergency alerts and information during responses. Seats in training and exercising events are also made available to First Nations leadership and emergency management personnel.

1.3.4 Municipal

Municipalities in Nova Scotia also have obligations and responsibilities under the *Emergency Management Act*. Since November 1, 1991, each municipality shall:

- a. Subject to the approval of the Minister, establish and maintain a municipal emergency by-law
- b. Establish and maintain a municipal emergency management organization
- c. Appoint a coordinator of the municipal emergency management organization and prescribe the duties of the coordinator, which shall include the preparation and coordination of emergency management plans for the municipality
- d. Appoint a committee consisting of members of the municipal council to provide advice on the development of emergency management plans
- e. Prepare and approve emergency management plans

The municipality may

- a. Pay the reasonable expenses of members of the organization or members of the committee appointed pursuant to clause (b) or (d) of subsection (1)
- b. Enter into agreements with and make payments to persons and organizations for the provision of services in the development and implementation of emergency management plans
- c. Enter into an arrangement or agreement with any other municipality respecting a common organization, plan, or program
- d. Appropriate and expend sums approved by it for the purpose of this section

Section 10A of the Act requires a municipality to, immediately upon becoming aware of it, inform the Department of any real or anticipated event or emergency that could impact the health, safety or welfare of Nova Scotians, their property or the environment.

1.4 Scope

This document is designed to guide emergency management planning activities, actions and decisions in a provincial-level emergency response, whether it involves a response from a single department on a contained site or a fully coordinated, joint response involving many departments and multiple jurisdictions. It should be used in conjunction with established standard operating procedures for the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) and may be implemented in whole or in part as the emergency requires.

Several sections are designated to address those functions considered vital in any emergency response such as emergency planning, command and control, communications, and public information.

While the Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan addresses the response necessary to deal with those situations outlined in the provincial Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA), Nova Scotia is committed to an all-hazards approach planning methodology.

1.5 Background

Comprehensive and integrated emergency management is a shared responsibility between all levels of government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and individual citizens.

A key function for the Government of Nova Scotia is to promote the safety and security of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians.

With respect to the Emergency Management Office, the Minister is responsible for prevention/mitigation of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from emergencies affecting the Province of Nova Scotia.

Four pillars of effective emergency management in Canada have been considered in all aspects of this plan and are described as follows:

Prevention and Mitigation: actions taken to identify and reduce the impacts and risks of hazards before an emergency or disaster occurs.

Preparedness: increases a community's ability to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies and to recover more quickly from their long-term effects, and involves actions taken prior to an event to ensure the capability and capacity to respond.

Response: actions taken during or immediately after an emergency or disaster to manage the consequences.

Recovery: actions taken after an emergency or disaster to re-establish or rebuild conditions and services to an acceptable level.

The following diagram illustrates the Emergency Management continuum in the context of an effective Emergency Management System. (See Figure 1)

Emergency Management Continuum:

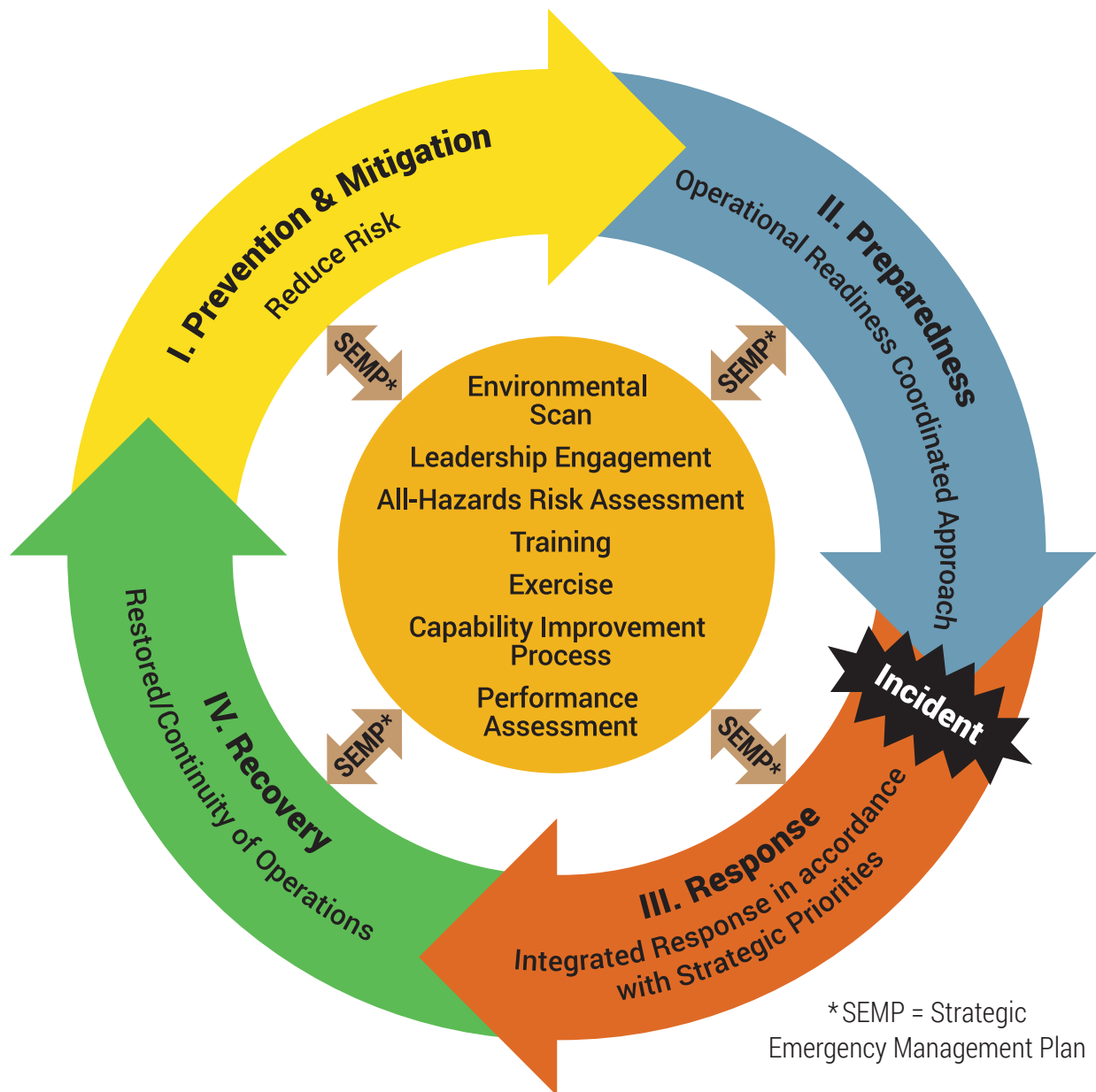


Figure 1. Four functions of Emergency Management. *Source: Public Safety Canada.*

Figure 1 highlights the four inter-dependent risk-based functions of Emergency Management: prevention and mitigation of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from emergencies. These functions can be undertaken sequentially or concurrently, and they are not independent of each other.

The inner circle includes all the elements that influence the development of the Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), such as:

- Updates of environmental scans
- Ongoing/regular all-hazards risk assessments
- Engaged leadership
- A training and exercise program
- A Continuous Improvement Process: the whole-of-government approach to the collection and analysis of government response for exercises and real events

The figure also places the SEMP in the continuum as a living document that is continuously improved and adjusted, for instance, as lessons learned through responses/exercises or a changing risk environment are integrated.

1.6 Objectives

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is the overarching plan that provides a comprehensive and coordinated whole-of-government approach to emergency management activities within the Province of Nova Scotia. Many provincial and municipal government institutions already have specific plans or processes to deal with various aspects of emergency management (e.g., emergency response plans, operational plans, all-hazard critical infrastructure plans, business continuity plans, etc.).

The NS Strategic Emergency Management Plan:

- Establishes the NS Emergency Management Office's objectives, approach, and structure for enhancing Nova Scotians' ability to prepare for and recover from threats and hazards within the Province and sets out how NSEMO will assist the coordinated provincial emergency response
- Represents NSEMO's planning associated with its "external" environment

- The qualifier “strategic” is used to differentiate this high-level plan from other types of EM plans, including operational plans. The development and employment of a SEMP is an important complement to other types of EM plans, because it promotes an integrated and coordinated approach to emergency management planning

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is intended to meet the following objectives (Source: [FEMA Principles of Emergency management](#)):

- **Comprehensive:** Considers all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to disasters
- **Progressive:** Anticipates future disasters and takes preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistance and disaster-resiliency
- **Risk-Driven:** Uses sound risk management principles (hazard identification, risk analysis and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources
- **Integrated:** Helps ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of a community
- **Collaborative:** Creates and sustains broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication
- **Coordinated:** Synchronizes the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose
- **Flexible:** Uses creative and innovative approaches to solving challenges
- **Professional:** Values a science- and knowledge-based approach founded on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship, and continuous improvement

Section

2

Risk Environment

Risk assessment is central to any risk management process as well as the emergency management planning cycle. It is a formal, systematic process for estimating the level of risk in terms of likelihood and consequences to inform decision making.

In 2015, several provincial departments conducted a Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment, which used an all-hazards approach to identify hazards, quantify the risks, define the vulnerabilities, and analyze the impact of a loss of critical infrastructure on susceptible populations. This analysis informs emergency managers to prepare for and mitigate events that have the potential to impact Nova Scotia. NSEMO is basing its all-hazard and hazard-specific planning on the 2015 HRVA.

2.1 Concept of Operations

The work of the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office is guided by the four pillars of emergency management: prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. These pillars, and the programs administered by NSEMO, serve to protect Nova Scotians as they go about their daily lives.

Prevention and Mitigation

The aim of prevention and mitigation is to eliminate or reduce the impacts and risks of hazards through proactive measures taken before and during an emergency event. Mitigation strategies can be either structural or non-structural in nature and can include building protective structures such as dams, dykes, berms, fire roads, hydrants, etc. Non-structural examples include land-use management by-laws, public education, public alerting, etc.

Preparedness

Not all emergency events can be prevented or mitigated. Once a jurisdiction has exhausted their mitigation strategies, preparedness is the next level of readiness. Preparedness builds the capacity to effectively and rapidly respond to an emergency event that is threatening Nova Scotians' safety, their property, or the environment. Preparedness encompasses the planning, exercising, evaluating and education crucial to achieving a state of readiness.

Response

Response includes those actions taken immediately before, during and after an emergency event to manage its consequences and minimize suffering and loss. Response actions include, but are not limited to, multi-agency coordination, support of first responders, public information, and evacuations.

Recovery

Recovery is the coordinated management of resources necessary to restore communities and conditions to a normal state. Examples include the restoration of power, water management, return of evacuees, psychosocial counselling, financial assistance, etc.

2.2 Nova Scotia Emergency Management Governance Structure

2.2.1 Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NSEMO)

Organizational Structure

NSEMO is a division of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing; it is led on a day-to-day basis by an Executive Director and two Directors: the Director of Incident Management and Director of 911.

The Director of Incident Management is responsible for overseeing all aspects of emergency management for the Province of Nova Scotia.

The Director of 911 is responsible for ensuring the continuous delivery of high-quality 911 services to Nova Scotians.

The NSEMO Executive Director reports to the Associate Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Minister has the responsibility of ensuring

a prompt and coordinated response to all emergency events that require a coordinated whole-of-government approach in Nova Scotia.

The Emergency Management Office (Nova Scotia) headquarters is located at 33 Acadia Street, Eric Spicer Building, Dartmouth.

NSEMO's divisional responsibilities are as follows:

Incident Management Division

The Incident Management Division is primarily focused on promoting the operational readiness of the province and coordinating a whole-of-government response in times of emergency. Activities of the Incident Management Division include:

- Providing emergency management training and exercise expertise and opportunities to its partners
- Supporting the development of municipal emergency plans
- Liaising with provincial departments to support their readiness for emergencies
- Working with federal partners to provide an integrated approach and response
- Liaising with industry and non-governmental organizations
- Collaborating with other provinces and/or states to ensure a national and international level of readiness and response
- Maintaining readiness of the Provincial Coordination Centre to activate as necessary to support a coordinated response to emergencies
- Operating Nova Scotia's Critical Infrastructure Resiliency Program
- Provincial emergency management planning and policy development
- An emergency public alerting platform (Alert Ready) is also available across Nova Scotia. This platform enables emergency alerts to be issued to radio, television, and mobile devices.

911 Division

The 911 Division delivers the provincial emergency reporting system (911) in Nova Scotia, which allows Nova Scotians needing help to be connected with police, firefighters, paramedics, or poison control. Staff support maintenance and

replacement of the technological infrastructure for 911, call taker training, and public awareness of when to contact 911.

Communications/Public Affairs

Clear communication to Nova Scotians before, during and after emergencies is essential to protecting lives and property. The Emergency Management Office, in collaboration with Communications Nova Scotia (CNS), provides alerts and updates to the public through social and traditional media channels, as well as information materials for community groups, schools, and municipalities.

In times of emergency, CNS supports the Provincial Coordination Centre to provide timely and effective communication to Nova Scotians to help them stay informed and make important decisions about their safety.

2.3 Prevention and Mitigation

How a community, sector, or organization manages emergencies depends on its specific mandate. The key to success is having a clear understanding of the hazards that exist in our province, the risk they pose to our citizens, and our vulnerabilities.

Planning and preparedness are done beforehand as a way of helping the population and protecting infrastructure. The response depends on resources as well as relationships with government, departments, agencies, organizations, and the private sector. This is essential to reducing the impacts of hazards and building resiliency.

2.3.1 Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment

Preparedness and mitigation are a shared responsibility among all levels of government, non-government organizations, and the private sector. The mandate of the organization and the stakeholders involved will determine the strategies that are developed. The scope of hazards being considered, the timeframe, the plans, and the capabilities currently in place will determine the level of commitment.

In addition to its all hazards approach to emergency management, NSEMO has developed a list of hazards and the legislated lead agency or organization. The selection of specific hazards is based on the level of risk posed to Nova Scotians and the likelihood of the hazard taking place.

The hazards for which specific planning has been undertaken in the Legislated Leads Annex are:

Canso Causeway closure (prolonged)	Cyber attack	Drinking water contamination
Drought	Earthquake	Environmental contamination: land
Environmental contamination: sea	Extreme cold	Extreme heat
Flood	Food contamination	Fuel shortage
Hurricane/Tropical storm	Mass evacuation at sea	Pandemic/Epidemic
Power outage	Radiological (nuclear) release	Severe snow or ice storm
Sporadic disease outbreak	Storm surge	Supply chain disruption
Tantramar Marsh (NB-NS land connection) closure	Telecommunications outage	Terrorist act
Tornado (severe weather)	Transportation corridor closure	Transportation disaster (crash)
Tsunami	Wildland fire	

Public Alerting

Alert Ready is Canada's emergency alerting system. NSEMO oversees Alert Ready for Nova Scotia. Government partners across Canada developed a specific list of types of alerts that are considered a threat to life, which should be immediately broadcast on television, radio, and mobile devices. Non-broadcast-immediate alerts can also be issued.

The lead agency for an emergency response contacts NSEMO to request that they issue an emergency alert. The lead agency provides the content of the message that notifies the public of what is happening and what actions to take. NSEMO prepares the message, seeks approval from senior officials, and issues the alert.

Depending on circumstances, and at the discretion of the lead agency, alerts may be issued to the entire province or a specific region.

2.3.2 911 Service

NSEMO administers the province-wide 911 emergency reporting service. It manages operations through partnerships between the province, the private sector, and municipal governments. NSEMO is committed to providing an integrated, reliable, and resilient 911 service by:

- Maintaining and upgrading the necessary 911 telecommunication equipment for its primary and backup Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)
- Delivering the 911 training program for all 911 call takers in Nova Scotia
- Participating in the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) voice trial and testing
- Developing and implementing the NG 9-1-1 platform provincially to meet the mandated timeline set out by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
- Administering the civic addressing and Municipal Grant programs
- Educating the public on proper use of 911

2.3.3 Critical Infrastructure Resiliency

Nova Scotians expect that hospitals, roads, water supplies, electricity, and other critical infrastructure (CI) will continue to operate, regardless of who owns and operates them. Various risks and hazards, whether caused by natural events or deliberate actions by people, pose a threat to the continuous functioning of critical infrastructure.

NSEMO operates the Critical Infrastructure Resiliency Program, which aligns with the National Critical Infrastructure Strategy. Activities include connecting critical infrastructure partners across levels of government and the private to enhance the emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capacity of critical infrastructure in Nova Scotia.

Building and maintaining strong relationships is essential to increasing resiliency to the risks that threaten the province's CI. To that end, partners meet regularly and have opportunities to engage in training and exercising, and they receive regular communication from NSEMO.

2.4 Preparedness

2.4.1 Emergency Management Planning

2.4.1.1 Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP)

Most emergencies are local in nature and are managed by the municipality. The federal government can become involved where it has primary jurisdiction and responsibility as well as when requests for assistance are received due to capacity limitations and the scope of the emergency.

Under the *Emergency Management Act*, the Minister of Public Safety is responsible for coordinating the Government of Canada's response to an emergency. The Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP) is the Government of Canada's all-hazard response plan. The FERP outlines the processes and mechanisms to facilitate an integrated Government of Canada response to an emergency and to eliminate the need for federal government institutions to coordinate a wider Government of Canada response.

2.4.1.2 National Emergency Management Strategy

In February 2019, the Ministers responsible for Emergency Management approved a new [Emergency Management Strategy](#) for Canada. This strategy seeks to better align the emergency management activities of the federal government, provinces, and territories through five priority areas of activity:

- Enhance whole-of-society collaboration and governance to strengthen resilience
- Improve understanding of disaster risks in all sectors of society
- Increase focus on whole-of-society disaster prevention and mitigation activities
- Enhance disaster response capacity and coordination and foster the development of new capabilities
- Strengthen recovery efforts by building back better to minimize the impacts of future disasters

Nova Scotia participates on the implementation working group for the EM Strategy and is also developing its own plan to ensure the objectives and priorities of the EM Strategy are considered in NSEMO's activities.

2.4.1.3 Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)

NSEMO has legislative responsibilities to provide a prompt, coordinated, whole-of-government response to emergencies. To that end, the Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) serves as the overarching guiding document for emergency events, clarifying the structure to be used by NSEMO and its partners.

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan is designed to support an integrated response involving all provincial departments, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and the private sector.

The SEMP includes:

- The governance structure for emergency management within Nova Scotia
- A concept of operations for prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response (including the role of the PCC), and recovery operations
- Lead agency and agency representative roles and responsibilities
- Municipal roles and responsibilities
- Plan maintenance schedule and responsibilities

2.4.1.4 Departmental Emergency Response Plans (DERP)

The [*Emergency Management Act*](#), and [*Civil Emergency Regulations*](#), require individual provincial departments to develop and maintain both emergency management response plans and business continuity plans that include critical infrastructure owned and operated by that department.

Additionally, certain provincial departments with specific legislated or regulated responsibilities are the lead agency for events that fall within their area of authority. Lead agencies oversee the provincial response with support and coordination assistance from NSEMO.

Departmental Emergency Response Plans are expected to support the SEMP and the province's emergency response goals.

2.4.1.5 Municipal Emergency Management Plans

The *Emergency Management Act* mandates municipalities to establish an emergency management organization and to develop municipal emergency management plans. Included in these plans is the municipal emergency response plan, which will provide the structure for municipal response to emergency events.

2.4.2 Emergency Management Training Program

In fulfilling its responsibilities under the *Emergency Management Act*, NSEMO has established training programs for its own staff and for key emergency management and critical infrastructure partners.

These programs are designed to develop, coordinate, and deliver training to assist both provincial and municipal emergency management practitioners.

A training schedule is shared regularly with municipal Emergency Management Coordinators, Agency Representatives, and critical infrastructure partners.

2.4.3 Emergency Management Exercise Program

Exercises play a vital role in emergency preparedness by enabling whole community stakeholders to test and validate plans and capabilities and identify both capability gaps and areas for improvement.

A well-designed exercise provides a low-risk environment to test capabilities, familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities, and foster meaningful interaction and communication across organizations. Exercises bring together and strengthen the whole community in its efforts to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from all hazards.

An effective exercise program maximizes efficiency, resources, time, and funding by ensuring that exercises are part of a coordinated and integrated approach to building, sustaining, and delivering core capabilities.

Key elements of NSEMO's approach to exercise program management include:

- Engaging elected and appointed officials to provide intent and direction. Elected and appointed officials must be engaged early and often in an exercise program. They provide both the strategic direction for the program as well as specific guidance for individual exercises. Routine engagement with elected and appointed officials ensures that exercises have the support necessary for success.
- Including key critical infrastructure partners. NSEMO engages internal and external critical infrastructure owners and operators on exercising opportunities to allow these departments and organizations to test their emergency plans.

- Establishing multi-year exercise program priorities. These overarching priorities inform the development of exercise objectives, ensuring that individual exercises evaluate and assess core capabilities in a coordinated and integrated fashion.
- Using a progressive approach. A progressive exercise program management approach includes exercises anchored to a common set of objectives, built toward an increasing level of complexity over time, and involves the participation of multiple entities.
- Developing a multi-year training and exercise plan. A training and exercise plan (TEP), developed through a Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (TEPW), aligns exercise activities and supporting training to exercise program priorities.
- Maintaining a rolling summary of exercise outcomes. A rolling summary report provides elected and appointed officials and other stakeholders with an analysis of issues, trends, and key outcomes from all exercises conducted as part of the exercise program.
- Managing exercise program resources. An effective exercise program utilizes the full range of available resources for exercise budgets, program staffing, and other resources.

2.4.3.1 Exercise Methodology

NSEMO uses a common methodology for planning and conducting individual exercises. A common methodology ensures a consistent and interoperable approach to exercise design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. (See Figure 2)

Exercise Cycle:



Figure 2. Exercise cycle. *Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).*

Exercise Design and Development

In designing and developing individual exercises, exercise planning team members are identified to schedule planning meetings, identify and develop exercise objectives, design the scenario, create documentation, plan exercise conduct and evaluation, and coordinate logistics.

Exercise Conduct

After design and development activities are complete, the exercise is ready to occur. Activities essential to conducting individual exercises include preparing for exercise play, managing exercise play, and conducting immediate exercise wrap-up activities.

Exercise Evaluation

Evaluation is the cornerstone of an exercise and must be considered throughout all phases of the exercise planning cycle, beginning when the exercise planning team meets to establish objectives and initiate exercise design. Effective evaluation assesses performance against exercise objectives and identifies and documents strengths and areas for improvement relative to core capabilities.

Improvement Planning

During improvement planning, the corrective actions identified during individual exercises are tracked to completion, ensuring that exercises yield tangible preparedness improvements. An effective corrective action program develops Improvement Plans (IPs) that are dynamic documents, which are continually monitored and implemented as part of the larger system of improving preparedness.

2.4.3.2 Regional Consultation and Coordination

Nova Scotia adheres to the graduated response model for emergency management. The responsibility begins with individuals who need to mitigate and prepare for the effects of an emergency for themselves and their families. The responsibility then falls to municipalities, which maintain emergency management organizations, poised to bring the resources of the community into place to manage the consequences associated with any emergency.

The province supports the municipal response by bringing provincial resources and expertise together to augment the municipal response efforts. The province has the added obligation of provincial coordination should the emergency event affect multiple communities or threaten provincial infrastructure or responsibilities. Finally, the federal government supports provinces by accessing federal resources and expertise in support of the provincial response. During an emergency, these resources are accessed by NSEMO through a request for assistance to Public Safety Canada.

NSEMO takes a proactive approach in support of municipal obligations to emergency management. A day-to-day relationship, fostering integrated emergency management programs, strengthens response capabilities in times of a crisis. Consultation and coordination with municipal units is a large portion of the work undertaken by NSEMO, which employs field personnel whose full-time duties are focused on those day-to-day relationships.

2.4.4 International Emergency Management Assistance Compact

2.4.4.1 General

In the past ten years, several disasters and emergencies have required state and provincial emergency management organizations to request out-of-jurisdiction mutual assistance. In June 1998, following the ice-storm, the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers signed Resolution 23-5 aiming to adopt the International Emergency Management Assistance Compact (IEMAC).

IEMAC provides form and structure to international mutual aid between the states and provinces. It establishes procedures for a disaster- impacted jurisdiction to request and receive assistance from other member jurisdictions quickly and efficiently. It resolves two key issues up front: liability and reimbursement. The requesting jurisdiction (1) agrees to assume liability for out-of-jurisdiction workers deployed under IEMAC, and (2) agrees to reimburse assisting jurisdictions for all deployment related costs.

IEMAC also provides for the process of planning mechanisms among the agencies responsible for mutual cooperation including emergency related exercises, testing, or other training activities.

2.4.4.2 Party Jurisdictions

States have emergency management agencies while provinces have emergency management organizations. In the IEMAC Guidebook and Operation Manual (GOM), the terms Emergency Management Agency and Emergency Management Organization are synonymous.

The following jurisdictions are members of IEMAC:

United States Jurisdictions	Canadian Jurisdictions
Maine	New Brunswick
Massachusetts	Newfoundland and Labrador
New Hampshire	Nova Scotia
Vermont	Prince Edward Island
Connecticut	Quebec
Rhode Island	

2.4.4.3 IEMAC Activation

If a party jurisdiction needs assistance from another jurisdiction due to a major disaster or an imminent emergency event, the authorized representative (AR) of the requesting jurisdiction may choose to contact another party jurisdiction directly, or, if the disaster is of a larger-scale and more help is needed, they may contact one of the IEMG co-chairs.

IEMAC assistance requests may be initiated verbally. However, the AR of the requesting jurisdiction must complete and submit Part I of the International Requisition (IREQ) form within twenty-four hours of a verbal agreement. Except under extenuating circumstances, the IREQ Form must be completed before responding to the IEMAC request.

2.5 Response

2.5.1 General

The response to an emergency begins with the individual/family and may escalate successively to involve the affected municipality and mutual aid/assistance from neighboring services, municipalities and/or regions.

Resources from the province or even the federal government may also be required, depending on the nature and severity of the emergency event. This is the graduated response model that is widely adhered to within the North American jurisdiction.

Situations occurring at the international or national level may reverse or otherwise change this response approach.

Provincially, the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office is responsible for:

- Assisting municipalities with their emergency management programs
- Coordinating the provision of provincial resources during emergencies
- Assisting a municipality that requests support
- Coordinating if the emergency is large in scale and affecting more than one municipality
- Assisting with emergencies of federal jurisdiction, if requested by the Government of Canada
- Assisting with emergencies in the United States, if requested by members of the International Emergency Management Assistance Compact (IEMAC)
- Conducting or assisting with analysis and evaluation after an emergency

2.5.2 SEMP Implementation

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is the overarching plan that provides a comprehensive and coordinated approach to emergency management activities within the Province of Nova Scotia. The SEMP is intended to guide emergency management coordination.

There are several trigger mechanisms that will activate this plan to guide provincial coordination, including:

- Notification of NSEMO of an emerging or imminent municipal or regional emergency event
- A municipal or regional emergency event requiring a coordinated provincial response
- A State of Emergency, declared by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- A Minister assigned as a lead agency requests assistance from NSEMO
- Directions from the Executive Director of the Emergency Management Office
- The declaration or imminence of a federal emergency

2.5.3 Guiding Principles

Upon activation of this Plan, the following guiding principles will assist in setting direction regarding NSEMO priorities when responding:

1. Determine the threat to life and safety, property, the environment, critical infrastructure, the economy, the government, and the response capability to each threat; and
2. Maintain public confidence

2.5.4 Emergency Management

Nova Scotia has adopted and utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS) for the management of emergency events.

Using a defined system in which all staff are trained allows for the effective and efficient management and coordination of emergency incidents.

The ICS is designed to be interdisciplinary and organizationally flexible. The benefits of using such a system will allow NSEMO to meet the needs of incidents of any kind or size. It will also allow personnel from a variety of agencies, departments or governments to meld rapidly into a common management structure.

Finally, ICS provides logistical and administrative support to operational staff and becomes cost effective by avoiding duplication of efforts.

ICS is comprised of two main operating components, the Command Staff and the General Staff. The Command Section has an Incident Commander and staff. Each of the other four sections is managed by a Section Chief (the general staff) and supported by other functional units.

The ICS sections have specific functions, as follows:

Command	Sets objectives and priorities, has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
Operations	Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan, develops the tactical objectives, organization, and directs all resources.
Planning	Develops the action plan to accomplish the objectives, collects and evaluates information. Maintains resource status.
Logistics	Provides support to meet incident needs, provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident.
Finance	Monitors costs related to incident, provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analysis.

2.5.5 Graduated Response

A graduated response allows for the control and coordination of resources needed to deal with an emergency. Only the resources, human and material, needed to meet the requirements of an incident are used. By activating at the lowest level to coordinate emergency responses, NSEMO is tailoring the response to the circumstances without exhausting people or material resources.

The *Emergency Management Act* defines an emergency as a “present or imminent event in respect of which the Minister or a Municipality, as the case may be, 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 the Province”.

Individual response

Emergency management begins at the individual level, where families plan for emergencies and prepare an emergency kit with enough supplies for themselves, their family, and pets, to last 72 hours.

This does not mean that municipal emergency management officials, NSEMO and its partners will not act for the first 72 hours. Circumstances such as impassible roads or hazardous weather conditions might affect the ability of responders to get to homes. NSEMO has information available to help individuals and families prepare for emergencies.

Municipal authority

The next level of emergency response is at the municipal level by Municipal Emergency Management Coordinators and local emergency responders. All municipalities in the province must have an emergency plan, which is reviewed by the Emergency Management Office in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act*.

Section 10A of the Act requires a municipality to, immediately upon becoming aware of it, inform the Department of any real or anticipated event or emergency that could impact the health, safety or welfare of Nova Scotians, their property or the environment.

Provincial coordination

When an emergency affects more than one municipality or region, it needs more resources than are available at the local level, or provincial resources and supports are required, NSEMO will coordinate a whole-of government, provincial response to the emergency through the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC).

Federal assistance

If the emergency needs more resources or support than the Province can provide, requests for assistance flow up to the federal level through Public Safety Canada.

2.5.6 Provincial Coordination Center (PCC)

The Provincial Coordination Center (PCC) is the designated location for the Province's coordinated response to emergencies or emerging threats to the safety of Nova Scotians. It is located in the Eric Spicer Building at 33 Acadia Street, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. The PCC is not staffed around-the-clock.

An Operations Duty Officer and a 911 Duty Officer are on call 24/7 should NSEMO support be required for emergency management or 911 service-related incidents. They can be reached at 1-833-758-4540.

After-hours requests for PCC support go to the Duty Officer, who notifies officials if a coordinated response may be required. There is always a team of NSEMO staff on standby to activate the PCC if required.

It is critical that NSEMO be notified as soon as possible if an emergency occurs or is anticipated.

Regardless of whether the PCC is activated, there is a regular flow of information between NSEMO and its federal, provincial, municipal, critical infrastructure, and non-profit organization partners. This includes weather briefings and other situational updates with the goal of allowing planning and decision making by key stakeholders and senior leadership within the province of Nova Scotia.

When NSEMO is made aware of an emerging or imminent threat that will require provincial supports and resources to address, the PCC is activated at one of three levels. It may remain activated around-the-clock until officials decide that the threat is over and/or recovery is sufficiently underway to scale down operations.

PCC Levels of Activation

The three levels of Provincial Coordination Centre activation are:

Level	Description
<p>1 Monitoring</p>	<p>This level of activation is implemented when there is an emergency or developing situation that may move beyond the ability of local responders to address at the municipal level.</p> <p>This could include an anticipated flood, severe storm conditions, spreading fire, or another escalating incident. The PCC will notify its partners and government leadership that it is activating at an enhanced monitoring level with only the key staff and partners needed to respond to the emergency.</p> <p>Throughout the activation, NSEMO receives and shares information with its partners through regular briefings.</p>
<p>2 Partial activation</p>	<p>A partial activation is implemented when there is a moderate event expected, or if a current situation escalates to the point where it involves more communities or a greater risk to the public.</p> <p>During a partial activation, more resources are brought into the PCC to support a more complex coordinated response.</p>
<p>3 Full activation</p>	<p>The PCC enters full activation when a major event involving multiple locations is happening or anticipated. At this point, several agency and government representatives are involved.</p>

2.5.6.1 Activation procedure

In the event of an emergency, contact the NSEMO duty officer at 1-833-758-4540. The duty officer from NSEMO will contact the Director of Incident Management, who will brief the Executive Director and make a recommendation on activation based on one or more of the triggers. The Executive Director may activate the PCC to facilitate a whole-of-government, coordinated response.

The Executive Director may activate the PCC under the following circumstances:

- Upon request from a municipality or any provincial department
- Upon the activation of any Emergency Coordination Centre
- When an emergency affects more than one municipality
- When an emergency affects the whole province
- Upon direction from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

When the PCC is activated, the Director of Incident Management and Manager of Operations will determine which staff officers, departments, and agencies should be contacted initially. A team of EMO staff is always on standby to respond should the PCC activate.

Upon activation, the Director of Incident Management will contact all necessary NSEMO staff, Agency Representatives, communications officers, and any other officials necessary to coordinate the response. These personnel will assemble at the PCC to collect and evaluate information and to identify and authorize use of necessary resources as the emergency unfolds.

Once the Executive Director decides to activate the PCC the Incident Commander will ensure the Standard Operating Procedures are followed.

2.5.7 Declaration of States of Emergency

The *Emergency Management Act* empowers the Minister to declare a provincial state of emergency (SOE) when the emergency affects the province generally. But many emergencies can be managed without the need for provincial SOEs. The act also provides for states of local emergency (SOLEs) which can be declared by municipal authorities. Both of these states of emergency provide the province or the municipality with powers they would not normally possess.

2.5.7.1 State of Local Emergency

A [State of Local Emergency](#) may be declared by the Mayor, upon receipt of a resolution of Council, and is in effect for seven (7) days. There are prescribed forms and processes for a municipality to follow when declaring a local state of emergency, which are laid out in the Regulations.

A municipality may declare a state of local emergency for any portion of its jurisdiction, or, if needed, the entire municipality.

Any state of local emergency must be forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and any declared state of local emergency may be renewed should the situation warrant or the emergency still exist. The Minister has the right to renew or terminate a State of Local Emergency.

Note: If there is an imminent threat to public safety, property or the environment the Mayor/Warden may declare a state of local emergency without first consulting Council.

2.5.7.2 State of Emergency

A state of emergency is declared by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and is valid for fourteen (14) days. Similar to a state of local emergency, a state of emergency may be declared for a specific geographical portion of the province or for the entire province if required.

A state of emergency can be renewed at the end of 14 days should sufficient reasons exist to support its continuation. States of emergency supersede states of local emergency and convey the special powers necessary for all jurisdictions.

During a state of emergency, Lead Agencies continue to be responsible for overseeing the portion of the emergency response that lies within their mandate, in collaboration and coordination with NSEMO.

2.5.7.3 States of Emergency: Special Powers

States of emergency are not linked in any way to disaster financial funding or to obtaining provincial or federal resources to assist with an emergency. Declaring a state of emergency hinges on the need for special powers or authorities for local officials or the Minister.

The special powers for a state of emergency, outlined in the Act, are as follows:

Upon a state of emergency being declared in respect to the Province or an area thereof, or upon a state of local emergency being declared in respect to a municipality or an area thereof, the Minister may, during the state of emergency, in respect of the Province or an area thereof, or the mayor or warden, as the case may be, may, during the state of local emergency, in respect of such municipality or an area thereof, as the case may be, do everything necessary for the protection of property and the health or safety of persons therein and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, may:

- a. Cause an emergency management plan or any part thereof to be implemented
- b. Acquire or utilize or cause the acquisition or utilization of personal property by confiscation or any means considered necessary
- c. Authorize, require a qualified person to render aid of such type as that person may be qualified to provide
- d. Control or prohibit travel to or from an area or on a road, street or highway
- e. Provide for the maintenance and restoration of essential facilities, the distribution of essential supplies and the maintenance and co-ordination of emergency medical, social and other essential services
- f. Cause or order the evacuation of persons and the removal of livestock and personal property threatened by an emergency and make arrangements for the adequate care and protection thereof
- g. Authorize the entry by a person into any building or upon land without warrant
- h. Cause or order the demolition or removal of any thing where the demolition or removal is necessary or advisable for the purpose of reaching the scene of an emergency, of attempting to forestall its occurrence or of combating its progress

- i. Order the assistance of persons needed to carry out the provisions mentioned in this section
- j. Regulate the distribution and availability of essential goods, services and resources
- k. Authorize and make emergency payments
- l. Assess damage to any works, property or undertaking and the costs to repair, replace or restore the same
- m. Assess damage to the environment and the costs and methods to eliminate or alleviate the damage

2.5.8 Alert Ready

Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NSEMO) is the Authorized Government Agency (AGA) for Public Alerting in Nova Scotia. As the AGA, NSEMO will issue Alert Ready messages for an organization with jurisdiction over the physical location where the Alert is to be provided as well as a mandate over the subject matter of the requested alert.

Government partners across Canada developed a specific list of types of alerts that are considered a threat to life, which should be immediately broadcast on television, radio, and mobile devices. Non-broadcast-immediate alerts can also be issued.

The lead agency for an emergency who is not an authorized Alert Ready Issuer within the Province must contact NSEMO via Shubie Radio to request an emergency Alert Ready Message. Those agencies authorized by NSEMO as an Alert Ready Issuer have access to the Alert Ready System and can send their own alerts. Alert Ready authorized issuers and non-issuers must have the jurisdiction and the mandate for the type of emergency.

2.5.9 Nova Scotia Emergency Communications Plan

Communications Nova Scotia works with the Emergency Management Office to prepare and update an emergency communications plan for the province. This plan guides all communication activity by the Province before, during, and after emergencies.

2.5.10 Municipal Emergency Management Response

General

In the event of a large-scale emergency, the secondary effects of the event and their subsequent consequences may require the mobilization of the total resources of the municipality. The municipal emergency response will begin with the implementation of the municipal emergency plan.

In support of this concept of operation are three definitions:

Emergency Management

The establishment of a framework (overall plan of action) through which the effects of a disaster are mitigated and a return to a normal state is achieved. Two key elements are necessary in the management of emergencies at the municipal level: the municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) and an Incident Commander (IC).

Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC)

The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place.

Incident Commander (IC)

The individual appointed to control the operations at the site of an emergency. His/her purpose is to locate victims, save lives, reduce pain and suffering, and mitigate damage.

2.5.11 Federal Lead Agency Emergency

Emergency response and recovery operations are most effective when federal and provincial governments co-operate with local authorities to reduce the effects of emergencies.

Local authorities, and occasionally the province, will coordinate most emergencies in Nova Scotia. Certain emergencies, however, the federal government will coordinate.

The following emergencies are typical of those under federal jurisdiction:

- Aircraft crashes
- Emergencies occurring on Canadian coastlines
- Foreign animal or plant diseases
- International emergencies
- Public order emergencies
- Radiological emergencies
- War or threats to national security

2.5.11.1 National Planning Framework

The initial responsibility for meeting emergencies normally rests with those directly affected. Where government involvement is necessary, response normally starts at the local level, moves to the provincial level and finally to the federal level, as necessary.

The Fundamentals

The *Emergency Management Act* and Federal Emergency Response Plan define the roles and responsibilities of federal organizations for emergency planning. While all federal organizations must ensure continuity of their functions, some are responsible for essential infrastructure, services, and networks of critical resources or their support systems. Other organizations operate resources or manage programs to limit the effects of emergencies, aid response, or speed up recovery. These agencies are considered lead agencies as they are expected to show leadership within their mandates.

2.6 Recovery

2.6.1 Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement (DFAA)

Following a natural disaster which results in extensive property damage or disruption of the delivery of essential goods and services, and subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may ask the Minister of Public Safety Canada to authorize a Disaster Financial Assistance program (DFAA) to provide financial supports to individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations for uninsurable losses.

The Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NSEMO) administers the disaster financial assistance program in accordance with terms and conditions established by the Province and Government of Canada.

In the event a DFA program is implemented, information about the program and how to apply will be provided to the public through the government website, social media, media releases and other channels.

DFA is not intended to be an alternative or a substitute for adequate insurance coverage. Damage for which costs could be recovered through personal insurance and damage covered in whole or in part by another government program or recoverable at law will not be considered.

2.6.2 Improvement Planning

NSEMO will evaluate incident responses following its activations to identify potential corrective actions that could be taken to improve future responses. Corrective actions are concrete, actionable steps that are intended to resolve capability gaps and shortcomings identified during the response.

When conducting after-action reviews, the following questions may be used to guide discussion when developing corrective actions:

- What changes need to be made to plans and procedures to improve performance?
- What changes need to be made to organizational structures to improve performance?

- What changes need to be made to management processes to improve performance?
- What changes to equipment or resources are needed to improve performance?
- What training is needed to improve performance?
- What are the lessons learned for approaching similar problems in the future?

Once corrective actions have been identified, they will be consolidated into an After-Action Report and submitted to the Executive Director. Corrective actions captured in the After-Action Report will be consolidated into an Improvement Plan, tracked, and assigned to a point of contact responsible for implementation of improvement who will report on their progress in implementing corrective actions.

Tracking corrective actions to completion will ensure tangible improvements to preparedness as a component of a wider continuous improvement process that applies prior to, during, and after the response is completed.

Section

3

Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office

3.1.1 Mission

To take a leadership role coordinating emergency management planning and response through partnerships among governments and private partners to enhance the safety and well-being of Nova Scotians.

3.1.2 Vision

NSEMO is an organization that reflects integrity, innovation, and responsiveness. By building relationships with partners, and through intergovernmental and international cooperation, NSEMO provides Nova Scotians with effective emergency preparedness education and coordinated emergency responses.

3.1.3 Mandate

To enhance Nova Scotians' safety and well-being through innovative, collaborative, and integrated emergency planning and response.

3.1.4 Core Business Functions

NSEMO plans to meet its mission through the following activities:

3.1.4.1 Integrated Emergency Planning

This province-wide effort involves developing co-operation and consulting with different municipalities, provincial departments and agencies, and the private sector.

While providing support for local emergency planners, NSEMO works closely with the three levels of government to develop relations, policies, and procedures necessary for an effective and coordinated emergency response. NSEMO also participates in hazard analysis to assess potentially threatening situations for the region and prepares accordingly.

3.1.4.2 Integrated Emergency Coordination

When an emergency exceeds local response capacity or affects more than one jurisdiction, NSEMO may step in to facilitate a whole-of-government, coordinated response. It will gather information, consider all levels of government, establish a decision-making process, and plan a course of action in the response.

NSEMO will also assist in coordinating the response by helping access provincial resources and personnel to contribute to the response effort.

3.1.4.3 911 Service

NSEMO administers the province-wide 911 emergency reporting service. It manages operations through partnerships between the province, the private sector, and municipal governments. NSEMO staff investigates civic addressing issues and educates the public on 911.

3.1.4.4 Emergency Management Training

Training available to NSEMO partners includes such courses as Basic Emergency Management (BEM), Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), and Incident Command System training.

3.1.4.5 Critical Infrastructure Resiliency

NSEMO works with provincial and private owners and operators of critical infrastructure to share information, training, and exercising opportunities that will help to strengthen the collective resiliency of critical infrastructure in Nova Scotia.

3.1.4.5 Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement

Working with Nova Scotians and the Federal Government in securing cost recovery associated with disasters.

Section

4

Emergency Management Coordination

4.1 Lead, Supporting, and Coordinating Agencies

4.1.1 Lead Agency

The lead agency is the organization assigned by legislation, regulation, policy or a plan, or with the required expertise, to lead the management of a specific emergency event. The Coordinating Agency (NSEMO) offers supports to the Lead Agency in the emergency response.

External, private critical infrastructure owners and operators may be the lead agency, depending on the type of emergency (e.g. power outage, telecommunications interruption). In certain events, there may be multiple lead agencies that function in a unified command along with NSEMO.

4.1.2 Supporting Agency

A supporting agency is an organization assigned by legislation, regulation, policy or a plan, or with the required expertise, to assist in the management of a specific emergency event. Supporting agencies provide general or specialized assistance to the lead agency and/or NSEMO as required.

4.1.3 Coordinating Agency

The assignment of the coordinating agency is crucial to the success of the emergency management system and the plan.

The coordinating agency is the organization assigned by legislation, regulation,

policy or a plan, or the required expertise, to coordinate the efforts of different orders of government, supporting/logistic agencies and other emergency management partners (private sector, NGOs, etc.) to assist in the coordination of requests, allowing the lead agency to deal with the direct effects of the emergency event.

The coordinating agency is also responsible for dealing with the indirect consequences of the specific event and ensuring public safety in non-affected areas of their jurisdiction.

The coordinating agency, at the municipal level, is the local municipal Emergency Management Organization (municipal EMO) or in the case of regionalized communities the local Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO).

The coordinating agency for the Province of Nova Scotia is the Emergency Management Office (NSEMO).

The coordinating agency for the Government of Canada for national emergencies is Public Safety Canada (PSC).

4.2 Coordination with Federal Government

4.2.1 Public Safety Canada (PSC) Mandate

The mandate of Public Safety Canada is to keep Canadians safe from a range of risks, including natural disasters, crime and terrorism. To do this, Public Safety Canada coordinates and supports the efforts of federal organizations helping to ensure national security and the safety of Canadians, and works with other levels of government, the police, first responders, community groups, the private sector and foreign governments.

4.2.2 PSC NS Regional Office Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Public Safety Canada – NS Regional Office are to:

- Work with national headquarters, federal and provincial governments and other partners on emergency plans, exercises and events
- Act on requests from the province or another federal department for emergency assistance (a one-window approach to federal resources)

- Operate within the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) in times of emergency events to align federal support and response with that of the province and municipalities
- Coordinate federal emergency public communications with those of the province and individual municipalities to ensure consistent and key messaging from all levels of government
- Two-way information flow with the Government Operations Centre and other federal departments/agencies in emergencies
- Receive/screen funding applications for DFAA
- Undertake and coordinate business continuity planning, emergency management evaluations and critical infrastructure analysis for federal agencies or organizations

4.2.3 Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is the lead agency for emergencies that occur in First Nations. It partners with First Nations communities to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The Emergency Management Assistance Program (ISC) is consistent with Public Safety Canada's Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP).

ISC can use a federal-provincial Request for Assistance process to seek support from NSEMO for emergency responses in First Nations communities. NSEMO partners with ISC to make training and exercising opportunities available to Mi'kmaq leadership and emergency management personnel.

4.2.4 Government Operations Centre (GOC)

The Government Operations Centre (GOC) is Canada's strategic-level operations centre. It is the hub of a network of operation centres run by a variety of federal departments and agencies including the RCMP, Health Canada, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, CSIS, and National Defence.

The GOC also maintains contact with the provinces and territories as well as international partners such as the United States and NATO. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, gathering information from other operation centres and a wide variety of sources, both open and classified, from around the world.

The GOC deals with developing, imminent, or actual natural disaster or man-made activity that threatens the safety and security of Canadians or the resiliency of Canada's critical infrastructure.

As Canada's strategic-level operation centre, the GOC's primary function is to provide coordination and direction on behalf of the Government of Canada in response to an emerging or occurring event affecting national interest.

4.2.5 Provincial Departmental Emergency Management Responsibilities

The Civil Emergency Planning Regulations designate certain departments as having specific planning responsibilities, and they must have emergency plans to enable the continued provision of services in times of emergency. These plans, governing the provision of necessary services, together with procedures by which government employees and other persons are to respond, constitute the initial provincial emergency response.

Departments assigned specific responsibilities will usually only deal with the effects of an emergency, while the municipal government will retain its responsibilities.

Once an emergency occurs, any department may be expected to provide assistance as needed. The most basic form of assistance is the provision of advice to a community. Assistance may expand to the provision of personnel, equipment and other resources to assist the municipality in dealing with the cause of the emergency.

4.2.5.1 Agency Representatives

Provincial departments, critical infrastructure owners or operators, and other emergency management partners as identified by NSEMO are required to identify an Agency Representative (ARep) and alternate.

An Agency Representative is the primary point of contact for updates and alerts to and from NSEMO, and participates in briefings, meetings, through teleconferences or in person at the Provincial Coordination Centre if it activates and their presence is required.

The Agency Representative can be a senior staff member with the authority to share information and make decisions on providing support to a provincial response. An ARep could also be a less-senior staff member who has a direct line of communication to senior officials to provide updates and mobilize any resources or personnel to assist in an emergency response. The alternate will work in the same capacity if the ARep is unavailable or if the emergency extends for a protracted period.

Provincial department Agency Representatives may be asked to perform any function within the Incident Command System as required. Each government department ARep sits on an Agency Representative Committee (ARC).

NSEMO provides training to its Agency Representatives and offers them opportunities to participate in exercises. Provincial department AReps are responsible for:

- The development of departmental emergency response plans (DERP) and programs, as required, and the submission of such plans and updates to NSEMO
- Ensuring their department is aware of and understands the Alert Ready Request Form so the department can request a public alert if required.
- Coordinating the provision of departmental representatives and support staff to a provincial or regional response as necessary
- Coordinating the provision of departmental liaison officers and on-site emergency response personnel to advise and assist municipal authorities
- The allocation and release of departmental resources
- The preparation of departmental post-emergency reports
- Retaining full legislative and regulatory responsibility over matters within their department's scope during times of emergency
- Developing and implementing appropriate accounting procedures for departmental expenditures in response to emergency operations
- Responding directly to those emergencies for which the department has been given a specific responsibility and in accordance with approved departmental plans and procedures

- Responding as part of a coordinated provincial emergency response in accordance with the procedures and guidelines set out in the Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan
- Briefing their Deputy Minister and other senior leadership of the activities in the Provincial Coordination Centre

When reporting to the PCC, all Agency Representatives should:

- Check in at the PCC in accordance with check-in protocols, and determine the status of agency resources that may have been assigned to the emergency
- Obtain briefings from the Incident Command Staff as appropriate
- Attend planning meetings and briefings as requested or required
- Liaise with their own department's emergency coordination centre (ECC) if applicable and relay appropriate information to the Operations Chief
- Document findings in accordance with PCC standard operating procedures
- Provide input on the deployment of agency resources
- Monitor the well-being and safety of any departmental staff involved in the emergency and alert the safety officer if required
- Advise on any special agency needs or requirements
- Maintain a duty log
- Undertake personal individual training and select and nominate appropriate specialist and support personnel from within the department to undertake training related to emergency planning and operational response

4.3 Municipal Emergency Management Responsibilities

4.3.1 General

Emergency management is a shared responsibility between all levels of government and as the graduated response model indicates, municipalities play a pivotal role in managing and coordinating local emergency response efforts. Well-developed municipal emergency plans and trained personnel form the front line for the coordination and management of emergency resources in times of crisis.

Every municipality must establish an emergency management organization and operate an emergency coordination centre (ECC). Through the use of MOUs and Mutual Aid agreements, municipal resources will be augmented to provide the surge capacity needed for larger-scale emergency events.

The province will provide field consultation to the municipal emergency management organizations and stand ready to assist municipalities in times of a crisis. The lines of communication between municipalities and the province need to be at their strongest when danger exists, and resources are required in a timely manner. The province continues to work diligently to improve the technology requirements which will allow seamless integration between municipal ECCs and the PCC.

4.3.2 Legislative Responsibilities

4.3.2.1 Establish an Emergency By-law

Each municipality is required to have an approved emergency management by-law. This by-law includes provisions for the appointment of an advisory committee comprised of members of the municipal council that advises on the development and maintenance of the emergency management program, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

This by-law includes the appointment of an Emergency Management Coordinator and the establishment of an Emergency Management Organization. It sets the conditions for the declaration of a State of Local Emergency. The by-law's intent, powers and procedures must comply with the *Emergency Management Act*.

4.3.2.2 Establish and maintain an Emergency Management Organization

Each municipality is required to establish an Emergency Management Organization (EMO). The municipal EMO consists of municipal staff and external stakeholders responsible for emergency management. The emergency management plan will identify the members of the organization.

The municipal Emergency Management Organization includes trained staff to manage an emergency or other event identified by a comprehensive Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) that is part of the municipal emergency plan.

4.3.2.3 Appoint an Emergency Management Advisory Committee

The municipality shall appoint a standing Emergency Management Advisory Committee to advise council on the development and maintenance of an emergency management program (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) and associated plans.

The meeting schedule and composition of the Emergency Management Advisory Committee are determined by the municipality.

4.3.2.4 Appoint an Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC)

The municipality must appoint a coordinator of the municipal emergency management organization or a coordinator of a provincially designated regional emergency management organization (REMO). The EMC's responsibilities are clearly stated in the appointment document and include management and coordination of all aspects of the municipal emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

The appointment of the EMC is based upon the Emergency Management Advisory Committee's recommendations to Council. The EMC is responsible to the Emergency Management Advisory Committee for the management and coordination of the municipality's emergency preparedness program, including but not limited to plan development, maintenance, training coordination, delivery, and exercises. The individual appointed to be the EMC should have emergency management experience and ICS training, which is available through NSEMO.

4.3.2.5 Prepare and approve emergency plans

The municipality must prepare and approve an All-Hazards Emergency Management Plan. Emergency management plans are the documents that guide the municipal emergency management organization (EMO) or regional emergency management organization (REMO) in ensuring that the basic emergency functions of mitigation (prevention), preparedness, response and recovery are effectively managed. Sufficient funding must be allocated to support the development and implementation of these plans.

The development of emergency management plans should be guided by a planning committee that includes municipal staff and stakeholders.

Emergency management plans meet or exceed standards, policies and/or best practices for planning. Emergency management plans are presented by the Advisory Committee to the Mayor and Council for approval. Council may suggest changes to the plans, the committee will make the needed revisions and present the revised plans to Council. Once satisfied with the plans, Council will be the authority to officially approve all plans.

4.3.2.6 Notify NSEMO of an emergency event

Effective emergency management response depends on receiving and sharing information on a continual and regular basis and in a timely manner. The sharing of information as it relates to potential or actual unfolding emergency events will facilitate a rapid response, reduce planning time and enhance the delivery of support resources.

Section 10A of the Act requires a municipality to, immediately upon becoming aware of it, inform the Department of any real or anticipated event or emergency that could impact the health, safety or welfare of Nova Scotians, their property or the environment.

4.4 Critical Infrastructure partners

NSEMO operates a provincial critical infrastructure that is closely aligned to the National Strategy on Critical Infrastructure, a federal-provincial-territorial strategy released by Public Safety Canada in 2009.

The National Strategy on Critical Infrastructure by Public Safety Canada organizes critical infrastructure (CI) into ten key sectors:

Energy and utilities	Finance
Food	Transportation
Government	Information & communication technology
Health	Water
Safety	Manufacturing

NSEMO works with provincial and external owners and operators of key critical infrastructure to help prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. Contact information for private owner/operators is maintained and kept current. Stakeholders from various sectors are invited to participate in exercising opportunities to test their business continuity and emergency response plans.

Before and during activations, NSEMO supports internal and external critical infrastructure partners by sharing information and notifications that include detailed weather alerts from Environment and Climate Change Canada Warning Preparedness Meteorologists (section 5.1), activation staffing and activity updates, and situational awareness from all EM partners as emergencies unfold.

During activations of the Provincial Coordination Centre, CI partners are encouraged to participate as needed in person via an Agency Representative, or through teleconferences and web conferences.

Regular participants in PCC activations include representatives from provincial departments responsible for critical infrastructure, Nova Scotia Power, fuel suppliers, and telecommunications companies. Municipal emergency plans also account for critical infrastructure stakeholders within their jurisdictions.

4.5 Volunteer and Non-Governmental Agencies

The Nova Scotia government and municipal governments can provide a more comprehensive response when they involve other community resources. Local agencies, organizations, clubs, groups, and qualified individuals exist in every community to provide specialized skills, equipment, or personnel at little or no cost in an emergency.

Municipalities using volunteer assets should develop an MOU with the agency describing what resources will be provided and how.

4.5.1 The Canadian Red Cross

4.5.1.1 Purpose

The Province has an agreement with the Canadian Red Cross to provide certain services during emergencies. The Canadian Red Cross has established minimum

service requirements for its emergency services, which apply directly to provincial and municipal emergency management organizations:

- The provision of emergency relief for individuals and families (food, shelter, clothing, registration and inquiry, personal services) for up to 72 hours for undeclared emergencies in conjunction with government or other agencies
- Disaster relief for communities (based on negotiated agreements); this can include registration and inquiry.
- Assist with the identification and coordination of evacuees.
- Assistance for victims of internal disturbances, which includes the unique role of the Canadian Red Cross based on international humanitarian law and the organization's fundamental principles, including neutrality and impartiality

4.5.1.2 Command Structure

The Canadian Red Cross coordinates its response efforts with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, which, in turn operates under the umbrella of the Emergency Management Act and Regulations of Nova Scotia. In the event of a local emergency that affects only one municipality, the Department of Community Services will take its lead from the municipal emergency management coordinator.

4.5.1.3 Personnel

The Canadian Red Cross response in Nova Scotia includes the following:

Regional Response Teams

The Nova Scotia Region is reorganizing its structure into regional branches. Each will be required to have an Emergency Services Committee and an Emergency Response Team of trained volunteers. There already exists a core of trained volunteers in nine counties able to provide basic registration and inquiry service. The Nova Scotia Region has developed a leadership core of training volunteers in the remaining counties.

Disaster Response Team

This group of trained staff can respond to any municipal emergency. In a provincial emergency, the team will provide the coordination of the Red Cross response from the regional headquarters at 133 Troop Avenue, Burnside Industrial Park, Dartmouth and will provide specialized support to the Regional Response Teams. Emergency Response Teams, located in the more populated regions of the province, are groups made up of five or more trained volunteers who respond to family or individual disasters or emergencies in their regions. The Canadian Red Cross expects to exercise its Emergency Response Teams once a year through municipal exercises or its own workshops. A similar program exists in rural Nova Scotia, where House-Fire Responder Teams are dispersed throughout the regions.

Thirty-Minute Disaster Process/Training

As registration and inquiry is a basic task to perform for gathering personal information, each team should be prepared to screen and train any new volunteers on the spot. This may be necessary in the event of a large or widespread emergency. Previously trained volunteers will provide the leadership and coordination for the team.

Section

5

Logistical Support and Resource Requirements

5.1 Environment and Climate Change Canada

5.1.1 Overview of Weather Support to NSEMO

The relationship between weather and emergency management is indisputable. Whether dealing with an approaching hurricane, a forest fire or hazardous material release, weather information is always an important consideration in the decision-making process. Nova Scotia EMO and Environment and Climate Change Canada have developed a long-standing relationship in dealing with weather related issues.

5.1.2 Embedded Weather Support for Emergency Management

There are numerous weather resources available to emergency managers but one of the most important one is the Warning Preparedness Meteorologist (WPM). These meteorologists are employed by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and work hand in hand with emergency management officials from the local to federal level.

In Nova Scotia, ECCC and NSEMO have entered into an agreement whereby the WPM is permanently embedded within NSEMO Operations and physically located at NSEMO Headquarters in order to provide direct in-person support before, during and after all emergencies. WPM activities in this role may include but are not limited to the following:

- Participating in various committees as required
- Participating in emergency planning and exercising

- Providing weather related training as it applies to emergency management
- Providing formal seasonal preparatory briefings (e.g. hurricane and winter related briefings)
- Providing specialized weather information before, during and after storms as well as for non-weather emergencies

5.1.3 Other support

- ECCC's Atlantic Storm Prediction Centre (ASPC) located in Dartmouth produces the weather forecasts and weather warnings for Nova Scotia. ASPC forecasters could also be called upon to provide support to NSEMO in the absence of the WPM.
- ECCC's Canadian Meteorological Centre (CMC) located in Montreal, houses the meteorological computer models used to produce weather forecasts. CMC can also produce key modeling such as plume and dispersion maps during large fires or other environmental emergencies. Requests for such modelling can flow through the WPM or ASPC.

5.2 Military Assistance

5.2.1 General

NSEMO continues to maintain a close relationship with Joint Task Force Atlantic (JTFA), which is responsible for 'domestic operations' in the four Atlantic provinces. A Provincial Liaison Officer (PLO) is located at EMO and acts as that vital link between civilian and military operations.

5.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Provincial Liaison Officer (PLO)

The PLO fulfils day-to-day functions with specific responsibilities in times of emergencies:

- Assists with provincial planning, exercise and evaluation programs as they relate to operational readiness and military response or resource capabilities
- Undertakes the monitoring of civilian emergency events from their inception

- Maintains situational awareness and apprises the regional commander regarding possible resource requests
- Maintains contacts with other PLOs, which facilitates regional situational awareness and timely resource requests

This proactive role in emergency management serves to facilitate planning, operational response and the timely delivery of vital resources.

5.2.3 Military Resource Requests: Protocol

- Requests for military assistance from municipalities shall be directed to NSEMO.
- NSEMO will assess the request and determine if other suitable resources are available at the municipal, provincial, or private level.
- Upon confirmation that no other suitable resources are available, NSEMO will forward the formal request to Public Safety Canada (PSC).
- PSC will review and assist the province in the development of the formal request and then forward the request along to the Government Operations Centre (GOC) for consideration.
- The GOC will receive all requests for federal support, and then review them with existing protocols on behalf of the Minister of Public Safety. Once reviewed they will forward the formal request to the appropriate federal ministry (Department of Defense).
- DND reviews all requests and subsequently provides the appropriate approvals. They will then forward the request to the Joint Task Force Atlantic (JTFA) Regional Commander for the appropriate action.
- JTFA will action all approved requests and determine the resources to be allocated to meet each task request. They will then marshal the appropriate resources to a staging area for deployment to the incident site.

Section

6

Plan Testing, Review, and Maintenance

6.1 Plan Administration

6.1.1 Administration

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is administered by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, in accordance with the obligations and duties defined in the *Emergency Management Act*.

6.2 Exercise Plan

6.2.1 Procedures

The NS Strategic Emergency Management Plan and its related processes and procedures will be exercised on a three-year cycle. The NS Emergency Management Office will develop an annual Exercise Plan based upon the following:

- Exercises will be designed, conducted, and evaluated as per established best practices for exercise programs.
- Exercises will be based upon the following general risk factors:
 - Health Emergency (e.g., pandemic/epidemic, large scale contamination of food/water/air)
 - Severe Weather Emergency (e.g., snow/ice storm, flood/storm surge, hurricane/tropical storm)

- Forest Fire
 - Transportation-related Event (e.g., airplane crash, train derailment, ship collision)
 - Industrial Disaster (e.g., mine, gas plant, pipeline, oil handling facility, power plants)
- All exercises will have clearly-defined objectives and include a thorough evaluation process.
 - To the greatest extent possible, exercises will include the participation of the greater response community (e.g., municipality, police, fire service) and affected stakeholders.
 - Corrective actions will be identified in an After-Action Report.
 - An Improvement Plan will be developed identifying responsibility for specific actions and concrete deadlines for implementation. Corrective actions will be tracked and reported on until completion.

6.2.2 Exercise Schedule

The NS Emergency Management Office will develop an annual Exercise Plan as per the following schedule:

- Each of the Regional Zones; as well as the NSEMO Headquarters, will conduct an annual notification drill to confirm key contacts when responding to emergencies.
- In addition, each of the Regional Zones and NSEMO Headquarters will conduct an annual exercise of relevant emergency management functions related to associated risk factors existing in their area.
- Risk scenarios will vary between Zones/Headquarters to ensure that all relevant risk factors (as per above) are exercised over the three-year cycle.
- The annual exercise plan will be developed using a “building block” approach as demonstrated in the following sample schedule:

Year 1	Workshop
Year 2	Tabletop Exercise
Year 3	Command Post or Full-Scale Exercise (Depending on operational involvement of the greater response community)

- Exercise type will rotate between Zones/Headquarters to ensure that a minimum of one Command Post/Full-Scale Exercise is held each year somewhere within the province.

Section

7

Reviewing and Updating the SEMP

The Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan is intended to reflect current situations and best practices. NSEMO staff will review the SEMP, at minimum, every two years, and update it, as necessary. A significant review and update of the SEMP will be conducted every five years.

Appendix

A

Acronyms

AR	Agency Representative
DERP	Departmental Emergency Response Plan
DND	Department of National Defence
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
EEMC	Executive Emergency Management Committee
EM	Emergency Management
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EMPO	Emergency Management Planning Officer
FERP	Federal Emergency Response Plan
GOC	Government Operations Centre (Federal)
HRVA	Hazard-Risk Vulnerability Assessment
ICS	Incident Command System
IEMG	International Emergency Management Group
IEMAC	International Emergency Management Assistance Compact
JTFA	Joint Task Force Atlantic
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PCC	Provincial Coordination Centre
PEAT	Provincial Emergency Activation Team
PLO	Provincial Liaison Officer

PSC	Public Safety Canada
SEMP	Nova Scotia Strategic Emergency Management Plan
SOE	State of Emergency
SOLE	State of Local Emergency
WPM	Warning Preparedness Meteorologist

Glossary of Terms

Critical Infrastructure	The processes, systems, facilities, technologies, networks, assets, and services essential to the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Nova Scotians and the effective functioning of government.
Disaster	A social phenomenon that results when a hazard intersects with 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, welfare, property, or environment of people; may be triggered by naturally occurring phenomenon which has its origins within the geophysical or biological environment or by human action or error, whether malicious or unintentional, including technological failures, accidents, and terrorist acts.
Emergency	A present or imminent event in respect of which the Minister or a 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 the Province.
Emergency Coordination Centre	The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place.

Emergency management	Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.
Emergency management plan	Any plan, program or procedure prepared by the Province or a municipality that is intended to mitigate the effects of an emergency or disaster and to provide for the safety, health or welfare of the civil population and the protection of property in the event of such an occurrence.
Hazard	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.
Incident management	The broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing effective and efficient operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, utilizing both governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.
Mitigation	Sustained actions taken to eliminate or reduce risks and impacts posed by hazards well before an emergency or disaster occurs; mitigation activities may be included as part of prevention.
Municipality	A city, incorporated town, or municipality of a county or district.

Preparedness	Actions that involve a combination of planning, resources, training, exercising, and organizing to build, sustain, and improve operational capabilities. Preparedness is the process of identifying the personnel, training, and equipment needed for a wide range of potential incidents and developing jurisdiction-specific plans for delivering capabilities when needed for an incident.
Provincial Liaison Officer	A representative of Joint Task Force Atlantic who is located at EMO and acts as that vital link between civilian and military operations.
State of emergency	A state of emergency declared by the Minister, pursuant to the <i>Emergency Management Act</i> .
State of local emergency	A state of local emergency declared by a municipality or renewed by it, pursuant to the <i>Emergency Management Act</i> .

Strategic Emergency Management Plan

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