



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To Community Safety Committee -
Jul 15, 2008

To: Richmond City Council

Date: July 1, 2008

From: Phyllis L. Carlyle
General Manager, Law & Community Safety

File: 09-5125-30-01/2008-Vol
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Re: Provincial/Federal/Local Government Earthquake Exercise

Staff Recommendation

That the City of Richmond participate in the Provincial/Federal/Local Government regional earthquake exercise on June 3, 2009.

Phyllis L. Carlyle
General Manager, Law & Community Safety
(604-276-4104)

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Environmental Programs	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Roads & Dykes	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sewerage & Drainage	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Water Services	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire Rescue	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
R.C.M.P.	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Maintenance & Operations	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES	NO	REVIEWED BY CAO
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

The Provincial and Federal Governments have been refreshing their earthquake response plans and these are anticipated to be completed this year. The Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) is planning a functional earthquake scenario exercise that will take place on June 3, 2009 to exercise and test their new plan.

The exercise will focus on five Local Governments. The plan is for the North Shore Emergency Management Office, the City of Vancouver, the City of Nanaimo, the Capital Regional District and the City of Richmond to activate and have a functional exercise of their Emergency Operations Centres (EOC's). This is a fully simulated interactive opportunity for EOC staff to practice responding to an emergency in a realistic way in response to messages.

The City of Richmond is the only local government that has been invited to participate by also having a full-scale exercise. A full-scale exercise is a field exercise that is as close to a real disaster as possible by simulating the disaster scene. It achieves realism through staged scenes with volunteers acting as "victims" and requiring response and coordination from the City. It is an opportunity for the City to practice what it has learned in the classroom and through the less complex Olympic series of exercises planned for November 2008 and February 2009.

Analysis

Initial planning for the earthquake exercise indicates that the exercise will focus on activation, communication, coordination, decision making of Emergency Operations Centres, Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centres and Department Operations Centres, while the site response will be simulated in all locations with the exception of Richmond. Here, the federal government have already identified that they want to deploy their Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) team to a collapsed structure requiring structural engineering and rigging for a massive structural collapse as well as their National Health Emergency Response Team (NHERT) mobile hospital and staff to supplement local mass casualty treatment capabilities. The Province may also have some specific objectives they would like to address in addition to testing their new plan and the City will have the opportunity to have input and develop their objectives for this exercise as well.

The scenario for the June 2009 exercise will be a non-catastrophic earthquake impacting the Lower Mainland and Southern Vancouver Island. The scenario earthquake is a magnitude 7.3 event located in Georgia Strait. Structural damage to buildings and critical infrastructure will be incorporated into the exercise. A tsunami will not be generated by this earthquake.

Financial Impact

It is estimated that City costs for participating in this exercise would be approximately \$29,400. This includes location costs, logistics, rentals, supplies, set up, take down and participation by Public Works, Richmond Fire and the RCMP.

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Conclusion

This exercise presents a rare opportunity for the City to manage the response to a large scale disaster and to incorporate those learning's into its emergency response. The level of complexity involved in responding to such a disaster far exceeds that of recent events in Richmond, such as the Saba Road airplane incident, the Canterbury Court fire, the Richmond Inn fire or the Versacold fire and would give the City an invaluable learning opportunity to practice prior to an actual response to a disaster.



Deborah Procter
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DP:dp

