



January 26th, 2024

Reference: 640491

Aimee Watson
Chair
Regional District of Central Kootenay
Email: *Via* CHopkyns@rdck.bc.ca

Dear Chair Aimee Watson:

Thank you for your correspondence received on December 20th, 2023, addressed to the Honourable David Eby, Premier and the Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, concerning the Province's timeline and your regional district's capacity to engage on the development of regulations for local authorities and post-emergency financial assistance under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*. I am responding on behalf of the Premier and Minister.

I appreciate the Regional District of Central Kootenay's support for the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*. The Province shares the opinion that the new legislation is a bold step in the right direction; it provides B.C. with the most comprehensive and progressive forward-looking emergency management framework in Canada.

A wide range of regulations are needed to support this new statutory framework. When engagement on future regulations for local authorities and post-emergency financial assistance was launched at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/emergencymanagementregulations> on October 12th, 2023, the engagement period was set to close on December 31st, 2023. In response to requests like yours, on November 29th, 2023, we announced that engagement would be extended until January 31st, 2024.

At this time, the government is not planning a second extension to this engagement period. However, we appreciate the keen interest of the Regional District of Central Kootenay and suggest that if the regional district is unable to share its views on the two discussion papers posted to the engagement site ahead of the formal deadline, that it still share its views by emailing submissions to modernizeEM@gov.bc.ca when it is able. While it is important for the government to move ahead with work to develop regulations to support the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*, this work will take some time. The ministry will do its utmost to consider submissions received after January 31st, 2024, up to the point at which regulations proceed to Cabinet for consideration. The timing for this work depends on many factors and has not yet been finalized.

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I would also like to ensure you are aware that in recognition of the unique circumstances of regional districts, the Province intends to make regulations that will limit the minimum required scope of regional district risk assessments and emergency management plans to geographic areas for which the making of plans is most critical. Page 12 of the discussion paper for local authority regulations includes a discussion question on the scope of regional district planning requirements. The discussion paper can be found here: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/863/2023/09/B.C.s-Modernized-Emergency-Management-Legislation-Regulations-for-Local-Authorities.pdf>. We look forward to receiving the Regional District of Central Kootenay's feedback on this question.

I am also pleased to advise that the Province has committed \$18 million for communities to support consultation and cooperation in advance of emergency events. The funding is intended to:

- support relationship-building across jurisdictions through consultation and cooperation with Indigenous governing bodies.
- ensure the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and cultural safety across emergency management practices.
- support policy improvements that reflect the lived experience of Indigenous Peoples; and,
- address the disproportionate impacts on Indigenous Peoples during emergency events.

Eligible local authorities and First Nations are being contacted by Ministry staff. For full program information, please visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/local-emergency-programs/financial/ierfp>.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

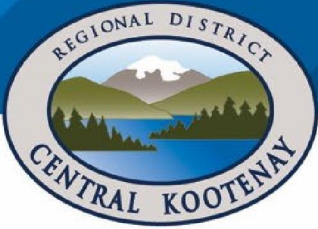
Sincerely,



Tara Richards
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Emergency Management
and Climate Readiness

CC: The Honourable David Eby, Premier
The Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
Albernie Clayoquot Regional District
Bulkley Nechako Regional District
Capital Regional District
Cariboo Regional District
Central Coast Regional District
Columbia Shuswap Regional District
Comox Valley Regional District
Cowichan Valley Regional District
East Kootenay Regional District
Fraser Valley Regional District
Fraser-Fort George Regional District

Islands Trust
Kitimat-Stikine Regional District
Kootenay Boundary Regional District
Metro Vancouver Regional District
Mount Waddington Regional District
Nanaimo Regional District
North Coast Regional District
North Okanagan Regional District
Okanagan-Similkameen Regional District
Peace River Regional District
qathet Regional District
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
Strathcona Regional District
Sunshine Coast Regional District
Thompson-Nicola Regional District



December 20, 2023

Premier David Eby
Via email: premier@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Bowinn Ma
Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
Via email: EMCR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Premier Eby and Minister Ma:

RE: Feedback on EDMA Regulations for Local Authorities and Disaster Financial Assistance

Please accept this letter as notification that at the December 14, 2023, Regular Board Meeting the Regional District of Central Kootenay Board of Directors adopted the following resolution:

That the Regional District of Central Kootenay Board send a letter to the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and the Premier of British Columbia, requesting more time to provide feedback to the Province on its new regulations for post-emergency financial assistance (often referred to as “disaster financial assistance” or “DFA”) and Regulations for Local Authorities related to the Emergency and Disaster Management Act, and that the letter also request that the Province provide supplemental funding to address the capacity and resourcing required to complete this work, and that the letter be copied to all 27 Regional Districts.

In principle, the RDCK supports the EDMA, accompanying regulations, and proposed changes to DFA as bold steps in a positive direction to address the changing hazard landscape in BC. While these are important changes, they are complex and reach across all areas of our district and operations. Consequently, the Board emphasises that meeting the Province’s expectations, as currently set out without additional time and resources, is not only impossible due to the substantial task, but also given the already full workload of our Board and Staff.

Given our geographic size, population density, taxation base, staff capacity, and the logistics needed for meaningful collaboration with multiple neighbouring municipalities, regional districts, and Indigenous Governing Bodies, the RDCK Board of Directors respectfully requests: 1) more time to review the new regulations for DFA and Regulations for Local Authorities related to the EDMA, and that 2) the Province provide supplemental funding to address the capacity and resourcing required to thoughtfully and comprehensively complete this work.

As indicated, we support the update of Provincial Legislation to better reflect how we are managing not only the increasing scale, frequency and cost of emergencies, but also the ability to do all we can to mitigate and

prepare for their inevitable impact. With 20 distinct jurisdictions within the RDCK, many of which who do not have comprehensive fire, water or other basic services, ensuring that we are meeting the needs of all we are responsible for requires time and capacity.

Therefore, we are hopeful for a positive response from the Province to our request. “Unreasonable haste is the direct road to error.” – Molière

Sincerely,



Aimee Watson
Board Chair, Regional District of Central Kootenay

cc: All Regional Districts in BC