
Manitoba First Nations Fire Preparedness Forum

APRIL 17 & 18, 2018

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs



Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
FIRST NATION RECOMMENDATIONS	4
Day One – April 17, 2018	5
OPENING PRAYER	5
WELCOMING REMARKS	5
Carmen Kardoes, Director of Governance and Community Development, Indigenous Services Canada	5
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FIRE EMERGENCIES	5
Shauna Kortz, Fire Control Officer, Manitoba Sustainable Development Wildfire Program	5
First Nation Questions and Discussion	7
Saad Jalili, Senior Environmental Health Officer, First Nations and Inuit Health, Department of Indigenous Services Canada	9
Paula Ewan, Nursing Operations, First Nations and Inuit Health	10
First Nation Questions and Discussion	10
Sara Budowski, Senior Regional Program Officer, Emergency Management, Indigenous Services Canada	12
First Nation Questions and Discussion	13
Carmen Kardoes, Indigenous Services Canada Response to Questions	14
Cailin Hodder, Senior Manager, Disaster Management, Canadian Red Cross	16
First Nation Questions and Discussion	18
Irma Hudson and Ernest Bruce, Poplar River First Nation 2017 Wildfire Experience and Lessons Learned	18
First Nation Questions and Discussion	20
Day 2 – April 18, 2018	21
David Diabo, Special Advisor, Emergency Management, Assembly of First Nations	21
First Nation Questions and Discussion	24
Dr. Danny Blair, Co-Director, Prairie Climate Centre	25
First Nation Questions and Discussion	26
Cailin Hodder, Senior Manager, Disaster Management, Canadian Red Cross	27
First Nation Questions and Discussion	28
APPENDIX A	31
Participating First Nations	31
APPENDIX B:	32
Evaluation: Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Fire Preparedness Forum	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs hosted a Manitoba First Nations Fire Forum on April 17 & 18, 2018 at the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre in Thompson, Manitoba. The purpose of the forum was to provide Manitoba First Nations an opportunity to learn and expand their knowledge and understanding towards preparing, mitigating, responding and recovering from fire events that may affect their communities. The deliverables were for First Nations to become knowledgeable on which departments and agencies respond to fire events and the various roles and responsibilities, an understanding of climate change impacts and forecasts and emergency management plan best practices.

The forum heard presentations from various provincial and federal government departments responsible for fire emergencies, the Canadian Red Cross, Assembly of First Nations and the Prairie Climate Centre. The Poplar River First Nation also shared their 2017 wildfire experience and lessons learned. An invitation was sent to all 63 First Nations to participate, out of this there were 53 participants from 26 First Nations that attended. There were an additional 18 participants from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), Manitoba Sustainable Development Wildfire Program, First Nations and Inuit Health (FNIH), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Canadian Red Cross (CRC), Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the Prairie Climate Centre.



FIRST NATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- First Nations need enhanced funding for overall fire preparedness to include infrastructure, equipment, capacity/training etc.
- First Nations require ready tables in each community to fight wildfires, need to work with ISC to determine ways to purchase.
- First Nations would benefit from bulk purchasing of equipment, need to work with the Province and ISC to determine cost effective ways to purchase.
- First Nations need clarification on traditional territories and who pays for wildfires in these areas, as First Nations respond due to the cultural significance and need to protect the areas.
- First Nations need own representative(s) in a liaison role working with the Province, Indigenous Services Canada, Canadian Red Cross etc.
- First Nations would like feedback into policy review and development that impact First Nations i.e. community protection zones.
- First Nations need ongoing fire training, preferably certified.
- The Province needs to change the mandate to action of fires, it costs less to action a fire earlier.
- The Province needs to utilize trained First Nation personnel and crews to assist in provincial fires.
- First Nations need nurses and health care providers in the community during emergencies and evacuations as they are trained to deal with medical emergencies.
- First Nations need help ensuring greater communication, collaboration and understanding of where to go during emergencies.
- With the merging of FNIH and ISC, there needs to be greater collaboration to ensure streamlined services and solving of issues and problems for First Nations in areas of emergency management and health.
- First Nations need enhanced mental health services after dealing with evacuations, many people are often traumatized and require services versus prescription drugs.
- First Nations request for Manitoba Hydro to be invited to future forums to answer questions.
- First Nations need to develop capacity and create an Indigenous led organization to take on the work of the CRC and similar to what MANFF used to provide, but with enhanced funding to delivery effective services.
- Ensure report findings are provided to leadership and that there is a plan of action or resolution from the AMC.

Day One – April 17, 2018

OPENING PRAYER

An opening prayer was provided by Parry Francois, Elder for the AMC Grand Chief's Office.

WELCOMING REMARKS

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas was unable to attend and sent his regrets.

Carmen Kardoes, Director of Governance and Community Development, Indigenous Services Canada

Acknowledged the gathering on Treaty 5 territory and AMC for organizing the forum. Carmen introduced the Emergency Management Staff in attendance from ISC. The purpose of the program is to ensure First Nations access to comparable emergency assistance services. Manitoba is home to 10% of Canada's First Nations people but spend about 40% of the emergency budget. He stated that emergency situations have one thing in common, the need for consistent and sustainable communication which includes discussions like today to review and make plans to improve services together. He talked about the importance of wildfire preparedness, response and recovery and the coordinated efforts and integrated approach to respond to wildfire. He encouraged participants to talk to staff of ISC in attendance, or the representatives from the Province to discuss issues and concerns and create relationships and partnerships.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FIRE EMERGENCIES

Shauna Kortz, Fire Control Officer, Manitoba Sustainable Development Wildfire Program

The presentation included an overview of the province, regions and priority zones, the program mandate, FireSmart Overview and the wildfire outlook for 2018. There are 22 full time personnel, a small group that look after all aspects of the fire program. The province is divided into 5 regions: eastern, central, western, northwest, and northeast. Fires are managed out of 3 offices: Thompson; The Pas; and Lac du Bonnet.

Fire are prioritized by zones: red zone is full action; yellow zone is action, with possible limits; green zone is assess priorities; white zone is assess values at risk; and community protection zones are 20 kms radius and full action. All zones can have varying degrees of action based on the Regional and Provincial hazard level, such as the red zone fire may be left due to other priorities. In 2017, there were a total of 559 fires, 423 were from lightning and 136 were from humans. Out of this 358 were actioned, 102 had limited action, and 99 had no action.

The Fire Program Mandate is to coordinate the Provincial Wildfire Program to ensure maximum utilization, efficiency and cost effective of fire suppression resources to minimize human, property and resource losses.

1. To minimize the number of human caused fire starts through prevention and education.
2. To provide the capability to detect, report and safely initial attached all fires throughout the province with minimal costs and loss in accordance with the Initial Attack Preparedness System and Fire Program Policy and Operational Guidelines.
3. To assist in the prevention of forest fires through public education.
4. To provide a trained complement of fire-line staff to successfully meet policy objectives.
5. To coordinate the Provincial Wildfire Program to ensure adequate manpower, aircraft and equipment resources are available to achieve efficient and cost-effective fire suppression activities required to minimize human, property and resource losses.

Wildfires in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and FireSmart

The WUI is structures in locations where conditions result in the potential for their ignition from flames and firebrands of a wildland fire. A WUI fire is where the fuel being consumed by a wildfire changes from a wildland fuel to urban fuel. Structural ignition occurs when wildfire embers or flames kindle vulnerable parts of a structure. Fires can be spread through embers – more than 50% of homes destroyed by wildfires are ignited by embers. Time to refocus efforts – reducing losses before the fire starts and reducing fire intensity as influenced by the surrounding vegetation.

There are FireSmart guidebooks on protection for your community from wildfire that include structural guidelines, vegetation guidelines and infrastructural guidelines.

There are “Seven FireSmart Disciplines” provides the framework and foundation for FireSmart. They are: education; legislation; cross training; interagency cooperation; development; emergency planning; and vegetation management.

The benefits of FireSmart program include: enhance personnel safety during a wildfire event; enhance emergency response capability; mitigate economic impact during shutdowns; and mitigate infrastructure loss of damage. What can be done? There is a template for a community wildfire protection plan, pre-response and sprinkler plans, and mitigation plans.

2018 Wildfire Season Outlook

North of the elbow in the region looks good, Island Lake will likely reset to 15 (full soil moisture recharge) on the drought code after the added precipitation since March. Southern Manitoba may be a concern for spring fires. The three-month outlook sees April, May and June forecast to be possibly below normal temperature. When the weather turns warmer, the delayed green-up and increased human activity on the land will be a concern for agro-fringe and wildland urban interface fires in southern Manitoba. Ice on lakes may hinder air-tanker operations. East of Lake Winnipeg may be a concern later in the spring and summer without a good dose of precipitation. Northern Manitoba currently looks in good shape and would require a prolonged period to become more active than normal.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

There is difficulty in getting the public to listen to fire smart education in communities. One First Nation lost two homes in the past week due to grass fires. Question – Is it possible to start charging people?

Province - In Nelson House there were a lot of fires, they called the province and put something in place to deal with it. In First Nations the fire departments are limited, need leadership to develop bylaws and to enforce them, and to ensure consequences when people start fires.

Question - What is deemed traditional territory (ceremonial sites and medicine picking) of First Nations, wildlife management area that is Crown land. There were fires on this land and no one showed up to put out. The First Nation actioned it but are unsure of where to bill for the work.

Province - If the fire is on Crown land then the province deals with it. If it starts on municipal land, then it has to go through office of the Fire Commissioner first.

Question - A fire that was stubble burning and lots of smoke, our leadership says we have to action it as it's our traditional territory. It cost us money to action out of our own budget and no answer to previous calls on this issue.

Province - Will look into this issue.

Question – Can the province loan out equipment?

Province – Yes equipment has been loaned out, we encourage people to buy theirs from where we get ours. I have loaned out equipment to the fire departments. Go to your duty officer and make a request.

Question – Ready tables were previously borrowed. First Nations are funded for fire protection for the First Nation fire aspect. First Nations are equipped for structure fires not wildfires. First Nations need ready tables and to cost this out.

ISC - Funding for this comes from the capital program. They heard this as well at the flood forum, there are gaps in what Emergency Management covers and what Capital covers. Colleagues in HQ were talking about how to fill those. The Emergency Management program funds the province to help First Nations during fires. The province stated that when they get a call whether it is First Nations, City of Thompson etc. if there is a fire on First Nation lands or others, it is up to their fire departments to look at first to try and action it, then the call comes to us. The province has helped others and go to the First Nations quite a bit.

Question – From year to year basis, its different? Why do you back up so soon?

Province – Our crews get hired from May to August. We have to put in funding for extending the crews, as the season goes. A lot of the fire fighters we have are students, and have priorities come fall. We have a hard time keeping full crews come September.

Question – Where is the honorary fire guard?

Province – It went away, last one was in 2012 in Norway House.

Question - Can you look into it again?

Comment – Adding to the previous discussion, feels this is a Jordan's Principle situation in that no one wants to take responsible for costing or paying bills. Feels that there needs to be resolution at this meeting to create funding – and take responsibility.

Question – Many times when we go to purchase the equipment, we are doing one offs, makes it hard to purchase, can the province bulk purchase and coordinate with First Nations. Help us cost share and we can buy the stuff from the province. Any consideration for this?

Province – This was not brought up in the past, all purchase through Winnipeg, can bring forward and it makes sense. We put out tenders for equipment.

Question – who responds to the forest fire close to a community – we contacted the conservation officer and he said it was okay and being monitored then it ended up gulping up and creating damage, who says it's time to go out and fight the fire?

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Province – combination of us in the regions and Winnipeg. We have to look at regional priorities. Look at the proximity to the community, terrain, are there lakes, do an assessment, full response, monitor, or let it go. It comes to us in the region, we consult with Winnipeg, and also depends on resources available. If it's right next to a community then we will action it.

Comment – What happened in my community could have been prevented, it spread really fast, and we kept calling the Conservation Officer and he said don't worry its being monitored. They should have actioned it sooner.

Province – There is a lot of factors involved, sometimes the CO, is over-ridden and told there are other priorities to be monitored.

Question – I'm talking about Island Lake.

Province – It was 17 kms to the north, looking at the water in between, weather conditions, it was a weather event that we didn't expect for that fire to turn and do what it did. There were other fires in near different communities being monitored, so assessing all at the same time. If it was that far out and had to make priorities.

Question - Can you have representative from First Nation communities, that directly deals with these issues someone specific to work with. We had to call Garden Hill as they have the equipment, we don't have in our community.

Province – That can be put forward.

Question – In Poplar River, there was a similar situation, fire burned 12.5 kms away from our community. It was being watched and a week later we were evacuated. The fire should have been put out sooner. I have a question, why no action? due to the green zone?

Province – The community protection zone takes priority over the green zone, could have been the other fires.

Question- Could the water bombers have helped?

Province – Misconception, the bombers can direct but don't solve, it's those on the ground, the bombers are a support for us.

Question – Look at policy for First Nation, we like to protect our forest.

Province - We met and reviewed the fires, community protection zones, are reviewing them.

Question – Can you share that?

Comment - What does a First Nation do when they are only funded for \$38 – 40,000 to service their community of 1700 and 2x4 miles. Who is going to foot these costs and authorize that? I've been told in the past, we are told you know your resources and make a plan for yourselves. They don't live there, they've never even touched the land or tell us what to do and what we need. We know our priorities, when they set the priority lists in that map of Manitoba. First Nation views are different, when a life is involved that is a priority. Our First Nation leaders know that. They vow to fight for us. Costs money to keep an office open. How many bands are in control of funding or co-management or in third party management? when you are in that financial situation you cannot do what they expect you to do. You can't do things with limited funding.

It makes me sad when I see the news, where a fire burned, and lives lost because a First Nation didn't pay a bill to a municipal fire department. We are told we are the responsibility of the federal government. We are passed back and forth between federal and provincial jurisdiction. My community is 300 kms on east side of Lake Winnipeg, can you tell me if I am accessible or isolated? No way to bring in the resources to fight a fire, I am an isolated community. Should continue to build the road from Berens River to Poplar River, as soon as there was a change in government it was not a priority to the provincial government. That's the only way things will change is if we do things for ourselves. We will be presenting our experience, we will answer any questions.

We have to find a common goal for First Nations that are a priority in fire safety. I encourage you to ask questions on how to make your community better and be effective for fire safety for your community.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Comment – Situation of when we don't pay a bill it will still be deducted by ISC. Lack of funding means there is insufficient funds to purchase or upgrade equipment. Need fire training like what was provided years ago.

Comment – Need to refocus the Province program mandate to action of fires, how fast a fire moves. What did it cost for both government to action the fire in Poplar River after the fact, could have costed less if actioned earlier.

Comment - We trained our personnel and crews over the past 5 years, and not once were they called up to assist the Province. What is the use of all that training if they are not being used?

Province – Can't comment on that. I try and use as much as I can. That is a provincial HQ decision.

Saad Jalili, Senior Environmental Health Officer, First Nations and Inuit Health, Department of Indigenous Services Canada

The Environmental Public Health Program works with First Nations to identify and prevent environmental public health risks that could impact the health of community residents. In Manitoba, the EPHP Regional Health Manager is Rick Orto, with a Senior Environmental Health Officer and 16 Environmental Health Officers (EHO) assigned to Manitoba First Nation communities. (11 FNIHB EHO's and 5 Tribal Council EHO's). EHO's work with First Nation communities and provide advice, training, and inspection services from an environmental public health perspective in all areas of:

- Drinking water
- Food safety
- Public facilities
- Health and housing
- Wastewater
- Solid waste disposal
- Communicable disease control
- Emergency response

The EPH plays an important role as second responders during emergencies (primary responders are boots to the ground working with First Nations). Provides expertise and guidance to community leaders and other stakeholders on public health issues and risks. EHOs provide environmental public health services and Sr. EHO/REHM participate in discussions with stakeholders (ISC – emergency response, MB Health, PHAC, Red Cross, other provincial and federal governments). Environmental public health services during emergencies may include:

- Assess drinking water quality
- Sampling drinking water
- Public health inspections of emergency shelters
- Providing environmental public health guidance
- Providing training to food handlers
- Assessing food safety
- Facilitating proper solid and liquid waste disposal

- Housing health inspection on request
- Public facility health inspections

Evacuations – boil water advisories and operation with water treatment plant when they are evacuated. Go to the community when returning, to ensure enhanced monitoring of drinking water. Conduct inspections to ensure they meet standards and housing inspections upon request.

Paula Ewan, Nursing Operations, First Nations and Inuit Health

Paula Ewan is the Acting Manager of Nursing Operations and has worked in nursing for 34 years. She shared information on the role of nurses and priority lists. Priority lists identify people with medical conditions, chronic lung disease, asthma, etc. people aggravated by smoke in the air. They are the first to be evacuated, also people on dialysis, prenatal, and the little babies and young children. There are priority lists as 1, 2 and 3. One is the most problems if exposed to forest fires smoke.

Nurses are the last people standing in the community to ensure medical service to those fighting fire and evacuating, ensure people have their medications with them. Enough to do them for 2-3 days till they reach Winnipeg and connect them with pharmacies, so they know they are arriving and available. With dialysis they work in collaboration with the Red Cross to ensure everyone has their medical service needs met.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – In Poplar River as part of the evacuation last year. Our nurses did leave once the full evacuation was in order they didn't stay with the community they were assigned to different communities. We had to look after ourselves with medications, no one in Winnipeg to direct our people, no medical support.

Answer – Once individuals leave the reserve, we don't have capacity to do it, then it goes to the Red Cross to do that. Nurses work on federal government land.

Question – What policies if there are for evacuations, how long does the nurse stay? The nurses left before the full evacuation. Who has authority for our First Nation community members if we don't have access to nurse files for medications. The nurses in Poplar River should be looking after our own people in Winnipeg, nurses to stay with the community. When people came back, we didn't get our nurses till 2 days after our people came back. What kind of policy is in place?

Answer – We don't have a policy for when nurses leave and come back.

Question – The nurses stated that they had a policy.

Answer – When deemed its safe they will return.

Recommendation – Nurses should be first to come back in case something happens, our people are not trained to deal with medical emergencies.

Answer – There is no policy when nurses leave and come back. What will happen is when it is safe the community members will return to the community. Unsure of the 2-day delay, water and power is on etc. they will return. I will ask that question. The nursing station should be open when people come back.

For care provided off-reserve, Red Cross will ensure that. Like a nurse that works in health sciences cannot come up and work in the community, needs a certain license.

Question – Now that FNIH is part of ISC and hearing the Poplar River situation, one of the things I find concerning, often when there are referrals, people seeking medical treatment. In times of evacuations there

First Nation Questions and Discussion

is no time to transfer medical information. No coordination, yes Red Cross takes over, does FNIH ensure the medical documentation with underlying health conditions that the information is taken with the individuals, so Red Cross can share that information with off reserve. Need better collaborative working partnership and part of our emergency preparedness.

Answer- We cannot release information with 3rd parties. Can only give a summary that you can share on your own. It's a breach of confidentiality, can't give this to the CRC. In Split Lake there is an electronic medical record, then able to access wherever they are. i.e. can access at any hospital. That is what will be happening with FNIH, easier access via electronic and not just paper. Moving over different regions over the course of the year. Those on satellite and trying to determine with their limited connectivity.

Question – With the summary is FNIH using that as part of their emergency preparedness to provide that one-page sheet?

Answer – Not everyone has the opportunity to provide that.

Comment – I like the electronic, but internet not reliable. Weather affects our internet. FNIH has to do better, we all have to do better coordination. It's a huge frustration with First Nations, when it becomes to a jurisdiction divide and First Nations are caught in between. Have to do better for the sake of First Nations people.

Question – Clarify during evacuations can an individual with a chronic disease, can they carry their own medical information?

Answer - They can have a copy, it's your file and belongs to you.

Question – Can you identify that through local emergency management plans – x number are type 1 or type 2 etc. can you meet with coordinators for this.

Answer – Priority lists are done. They are not shared with leadership previously because it discloses medical information. Can provide a list but not the medical condition. Usually one sheet that goes with them, the DPIN – drug profile any pharmacy can pick this up.

Comment – Our First Nation has annual flooding. We don't put individual names on a list, there's just a number there. In the past we did that before CRC. It's up to each community to have this information and pass that onto CRC or whomever and they can take care of your people there. Don't have to recreate the wheel that people can use.

Question – In Wasagamack during the emergency evacuation, we didn't have time to prepare. We had our priority 1 and 2 list ready to go. We kept asking the Conservation Officer to ask of the situation. When the fire came quickly, and power went out, no time to say priority 1 goes first. We had to have our boats ready to go to the neighboring community. Imagine 2000 plus community members being evacuated by boats, while this thick black smoke is hovering. We didn't have time, people were traumatized by it. They tried to take care of the people that needed to go.

We didn't have anyone looking after us, our neighboring community did a good job hosting us, but not enough equipment. Sending planes to evacuate members that needed attention. We only had a couple of planes that came in. They could have had more to fly out the people with chronic diseases. We were told we would be impacted afterwards from the smoke, long term impacts. We weren't given any programming on how to take care of ourselves when we came back. We had one guy from environment office that checked our water, and he said it was okay. Back home we had containers and not all of us have the water lines. We were told it was safe to go home. Today we have people getting sick from the water, children with rashes, people with diarrhea. We were just sent home, told it was okay because the fire was gone.

When is the word given for priority 1 and 2? Had to ask, can we have nurses check on the people in the hotels and shelters? People sick with coughs etc. The impacts of last year's wildfire have had long lasting health impacts.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Answer – Thank you for sharing that, in the future we will all do better. The nurses don't say or make the call for evacuations. We record when we see people come to the nursing stations, and we advise with leadership and ISC. Nurses feed into the decision making, falls with leadership and ISC.

Comment – Little Saskatchewan is one of the flooded communities. In 2011, there was no representation from anyone and the First Nation had to start own evacuation list at the health centre. There was no guidance from any department, felt we were left to fend for ourselves. Today we are disconnected from our people. Things need to change, yes you have to take charge of our own community, issue is always money when asking for help. Evacuees are under responsibility from the CRC and communication is needed. We need support from our front-line workers, nurses that come to our communities. Our Elders are shy people, they won't talk to just anybody. When you get a new nurse, takes time to build relationships. I ask this of FNIH, we had no help.

We need to come together as First Nations people, when we make headway with these people, they get moved and we go back to square one (speaking of ISC). I come across these same people with different jobs, we need long standing relationships.

Recommendation – We need to put issues on paper and give to Carmen to advocate for us with higher ups. I think he can make a change for us, he has worked with us for many years. We have AMC conducting this right now, document and see what happens.

Comment - Who makes the decision for evacuation? We do, as First Nations, as an emergency planning committee (internal resources), then assess and give recommendation to leadership. Then they contact the government, declaring a state of emergency, only based on what information given to them, need to be organized internally. No one will come to your community (externally) they use satellites etc. to assess and monitor. ISC, FNIH, the Province doesn't make that decision for you for evacuations. We had a manual in place that helped with our evacuations, we had our ups and downs but took care of ourselves.

Sara Budowski, Senior Regional Program Officer, Emergency Management, Indigenous Services Canada

The roles and responsibilities for First Nations during wildfire emergencies are:

- Provide on the ground information related to the wildfire;
- Call ISC Duty Officer to inform of any risks to the community and discuss the state of the emergency; and
- Engage ISC and the CRC to determine whether or not to declare a state of local emergency and determine whether or not to evacuate (partial or full).

The roles and responsibilities of ISC are:

- Duty Officer calls;
- Work with First Nations to provide information where necessary to aid in decision making (i.e. declaring a SOLE, Shelter in Place, Activate CRC);
- Work throughout the emergency with First Nation and CRC regarding approvals of eligible costs; and
- Provide funding to First Nations for eligible costs related to the emergency.

The roles and responsibilities of the CRC are:

- Communications;
- Responsible for evacuation and repatriation process; and
- Care of evacuees during emergencies (shelter, food and incidentals).

ISC Emergency Management team works with First Nations who have incurred costs related to emergencies. For damaged infrastructure, Headquarters requires inspections related to all damaged infrastructure related to an emergency event. Inspections are required within 60 days after completion of the event. A detailed submission package allows ISC the opportunity to work with First Nations regarding expenditures incurred during wildfire emergencies and provide funding for eligible items in a timely manner.

Detail required for eligible employees/coordinators during a wildfire emergency includes: description of role during evacuation, timesheet, rate of pay, signed by supervisor, and proof of payment. For new employees, regular wages and overtime will be considered. For band employees, regular wages will not be covered, overtime hours will be considered. For equipment, will need an invoice that includes rates, timesheet and proof of payment.

Submission packages can be sent to Indigenous Services Canada via email, mail or dropped off at the Regional Office on Hargrave Street.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question - Do we have to declare a state of emergency in order to get reimbursed? Is there a format similar like the flood issue? When can we start claiming?

Answer – If there is a fire close by, we want to know. Please call our Duty Officer at 1-855-850-4647. We need to know about the emergency before we can consider approving any costs.

Question - We've attended fires and who do we bill? When a neighbouring town comes to our reserve, they charge us 10,000 a pop, so who do we bill?

Answer – That would be a minor capital issue, we like to work with a team, when you meet with minor capital invite is on how to address that.

Comment – Our First Nations are already restricted in what we can do for ourselves, we are expected to get funding from that limited budget.

Question – We are not mandated or no funds to look after ready tables? Will you cover those costs?

Answer – Send us an email or letter requesting that and we can look at that.

Question – Our fire season starts in next few weeks, they will want money up front to rent.

Answer – If that is an approved eligible expense before the emergency occurs then once paid for, we are able to flow the funds to the First Nation to reimburse. It's not something that we cover, but there are gaps where our program works. Carmen will talk to you right after lunch on this, see what we can come up with.

Question – In Fort Mac, homes with extensive smoke damage, individuals not allowed to come home when that happens, that precaution does not occur on First Nations. And potential long-term impacts to their health, need those assessments done. Seems to be dual standards for people on reserve and off reserve. Doesn't matter where you live, should have houses totally assessed for safety prior to their return. Should have processes in place like this. If they wanted to have someone come do assessments – is all that eligible expense under this program?

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Answer – Yes

Question – Who clears when community members can go back? CRC say they can go back, and the period of when homes are assessed.

Answer – The safety is the priority of everyone. Making sure the houses are okay, when we asked at the repatriation meetings to have the CRC get someone to go into the homes. Sometimes we had people looking at the houses throughout, others had clean-up kits sent in to clean the smoke. We have these conversations as a group.

Question – What is the amount to send people back at home? We had a call saying that CRC put out all the hotels a sheet saying that everyone has to be at the airport by a certain time. We didn't even have names, on that day we had 12 or 20 planes that went home to our community, and 5 charters – we didn't feel safe or treated fairly. We had our list we wanted to use, then decision made for us.

Answer – I will take that information back, we did miss something, we can do better, lessons learned and having these conversations. I don't want people to feel like they were forced.

Question – Why do we need Red Cross? Can't we be trained to do the same functions as Red Cross, we can bring the customs, culture and philosophies into this, having an Elder present, our way to communicate, is with Elders. Why can't each community develop own emergency management policy? When only have minutes to evacuate and Why does each submission have to be different from each community, have a standard publicized.

As discussion ran well into the lunch hour, questions from the participants were to be posed and answered after the lunch hour by Carmen Kardoos, ISC.

Lunch Break

Carmen Kardoos, Indigenous Services Canada Response to Questions

He stated that ISC agrees with First Nations and to improve the program. There have been small but significant changes on the flood side, things not eligible before are eligible now. There are activities that can be worked on together? Thinking about those ready tables, ISC would like to consider how to get them for the communities. It does not solve all problems but can help one issue. People need the tools to respond when required, doesn't pay for the labour required to deliver the services, but its step one. Now need to know how to use them, who can deliver and pay for the training.

He is open to having these conversations, and that the department cannot pay for everything, and won't get a yes to everything. With good ideas and voices of people in the room to do the work, he sees suggestions, what can be done to get little things accomplished and build some goodwill across the country and keep working on it. He agrees that ISC does not want to send people home if the house is not safe, they will ensure assessments.

On the question of why do we have the Red Cross in the first place? Not led by First Nations? ISC is not saying it can't, it's just the solution available today. ISC can build a First Nations led response organization, led by Indigenous communities. He stated he talked to the CRC and this arrangement is not forever, they want to see an Indigenous led organization. ISC will take that back, where can they help build that capacity. He noted that First Nations can do the building, and ISC can help take down some of the barricades to get it going. He stated as Indigenous Services, what does service mean? It means help and getting something done. If there are few

things and ideas to share, that discussion can happen right now. On the question of a template? There is a possibility so as not to re-create each year.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – Wildfires in the First Nation itself when we got a wildfire or grass fire or house fire, we lose hydro. Manitoba Hydro will come replace, it's a hidden cost that affects the capital for the pole and hourly rate to replace the cost. I lose between 4-10 hydro poles due to grass fires. I asked finance and she said \$3800/hydro pole to be paid to hydro. In the north \$7800/pole to replace.

Answer – Haven't heard that before. Have to talk to Hydro, there are some things and partnerships to deal with. I'm working on an emergency project and poles came up, I learned a little more. Hydro makes First Nation pay for the service going through those poles. We resolved the issue in that First Nation. Hydro needs to take responsibility for this issue.

Question – We do pre-forest fire measures, clear cutting the reserve line. Or so far from the reserve.

Answer – Wasn't long ago we had no pre-flood prep, but through push and change we do. We will bring that forward.

Comment – In our area of Sagkeeng, poles have steel girders around and filled with pebble stone to stop the burning. Hydro did this on one side of the road and not others.

Comment – Now that FNIH and ISC are together, hopefully more-smoother for First Nations. With people being evacuated outside the First Nation, the big divide for the medical information and services needed by people. A lot of our Elders have aides, the Elders are being evacuated but not the aide to help them. No assistance with the Red Cross. There are people that are sick but don't know if they are on a list and what number?

Work with FNIH to find an acceptable form for people who are priority 1, 2 or 3 – when people are being evacuated it allows the nursing station to release files. This will minimize the stress on the community people. The issue of mental health, PTSD after affects, always an increase when people come back, the massive increase with addictions, drugs, etc. Our First Nations want mental health supports, it seems the easiest thing is to medicate the people rather than provide proper therapists. The people become more addicted to these prescription drugs. It is a lack of therapy vs drugs.

People need identification, ISC needs to have their doors open and people need access to status cards.

Answer – There were a lot of things that weren't the best, Island Lake and gaps and services between FNIH and ISC and areas including province and city. Now that the departments are together, there is more opportunity for discussion. We are gathering information to look at lessons learned, what worked and didn't work. We as services should provide the same services as non-Indigenous, should be no difference. I will take that back.

Comment – Individuals evacuated out, they left their First Nation for a little over a month. Comparing to Fort Mac, where wages were still made because people had bills to pay. Could Wasagamack continue paying their employees, could that be eligible, would that be flagged if they did that? Theoretically would still be providing services to the community people.

Answer – Difficult answer, depends on role of the employee and what they do. Historically it wouldn't be a reimbursable piece due to the emergency. Not something normally considered, but band governance in some form still works. Not an easy answer depending on the role of the people. Case by case basis it might be considered, but it's not an eligible cost at this time.

Question – Would that be loss of wages for fishermen? Happened in September during fishing season.

Answer – Can be claimed but not considered an eligible expense. For band employees, the band is still getting funded for that, those employees would be getting reimbursed. When doing anything that is not band related i.e. private fisherman, that is a situation that I imagine it might fall under insurance? Not sure.

Question – What about carpenters?

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Answer – That was a CMHC project, more of a contract. In our program, it's not considered a band employee.

Question – Band housing employees?

Answer – Something to discuss later.

Question – Services needed after evacuations, if the band had to hire someone to do the work as a replacement worker? Loss of income promised by the province. Told it would be covered and people evacuated.

Answer – Tricky question, the 2011 flood events, back before EMAP then INAC. That was provincial financial assistance program, we were executing and advancing until 2013. Reimbursement of wages discussion with the province, decision they had to make on their program. It's different then and now. Band is still getting funding, individuals getting evacuated i.e. water treatment plant operator and have another individual filling in for that person, this could be a new hire and putting in for that income as an extra cost. Have to address this on a case by case basis.

Question – Lake Winnipeg was compensated, what's the difference? Fishermen were compensated.

Answer – Anytime there is lost wages, we will take under consideration. A 30-day evacuation vs the 2011 flood.

Question – Could Service Canada be part of situation or solution?

Answer – We should look at working with other departments

Question – When a house fire occurs with no injury or fatalities, they provide short term emergency management financial assistance. A grass fire is a wildland fire.

Answer – This will be a first for ISC, we need to talk about this. It's an emergency event are eligible and then we work from there. If you had a wildfire event that burned down houses you need to call us, we don't know unless you call us.

Question – We're volunteer firefighters, we have nothing to fall back on if we are injured, where do we go?

This guy here has insurance for his guys, how do you get insurance?

First Nation Participant – We negotiated with the band and we used band funds through group insurance. By rights should be insured by the federal government.

Question – Ongoing concerns, there is also PTSD that comes into play. What they deal with and witness and see as front-line workers. That has long term psychological effects that impacts their families. What is the federal government doing to support mechanisms to be put in place for therapists. Someone mentioned earlier traditional values and philosophies, we need more Aboriginal representatives at your department to speak with us to understand where we come from? They should be there talking to us.

Cailin Hodder, Senior Manager, Disaster Management, Canadian Red Cross

Cailin began by stating there is no mandate that the CRC has to work with First Nations, they only come in when asked. If a First Nation wants to manage the evacuation that is their choice. Why use the CRC? There are a few reasons: it is what they are trained to do, work all over the world in trained disasters. The CRC will fit the bill and be the ones when the federal government doesn't pay, they take the hit and wait for that money. The CRC battles for funds, that is the most important thing.

Watching the presentations today in particular FNIH, they will say that's the CRC responsibility. To be clear on the role of the CRC, it is to support First Nations. The agreement with ISC is for five years and 1.1 million/year to manage First Nations emergency services. Half goes to being prepared, ensuring volunteers, and equipment and

materials. The CRC has full time logistic support, operations and emergency operations centre, travelling to the community and developing and emergency response plan. She stated that the 5.5 million is not enough to do that work, so the CRC committed 2.9 million as they are a charitable organization to this project and program.

Talking about community emergency management, their model is community first. The CRC role is to ensure the community has all the information and having discussions with community. She noted that community first is challenging, and the CEC needs information and if they don't then they run blind. As an example, in Wasagamack they did not have information for 12 hours.

The CRC has an Indigenous framework to guide their staff and volunteers: commitment to reconciliation; cultural sensitivity awareness and respect; collaboration with Indigenous leaders; and community-based service delivery. Following the fires, the CRC went to every community and did a full briefing. The debrief is something to implement for every response, information was crucial to building practices.

Collaboration and feedback is important to meeting needs. She noted that during the flood forum, they received recommendation to purchase emergency kits, and now they are looking at implementing that. The CRC wants to develop these good ideas and find the funding to do that.

The fire in 2017 was largest evacuation in Manitoba and was tough to manage four communities. Part of their preparedness and mitigation strategy. There are different processes between flood and fire, and she stated they need to get better with fires. This year it is determining who are the community players? Is there a change in leadership? She stated that this year they have already travelled to 30 communities and have other teams that go into the community and build relationships.

In 2017, the CRC responded to support evacuations in 5 First Nation communities to due wildfires:

- Red Sucker Lake First Nation – 662 evacuees;
- Poplar River First Nation – 838 evacuees;
- Wasagamack First Nation – 1479 evacuees;
- St Theresa Point First Nation – 1244 evacuees; and
- Garden Hill First Nation – 2915 evacuees.

There were lodged at 56 sites between Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and Winnipeg, and with two set up shelters. There were lessons learned with Fort Mac, the CRC managed that response, 80,000 evacuees spread out. Their capacity was stretched out and they learned from that.

The CRC does not own airplanes, but they use every plane in Canada and can also activate the military to pull people out faster. She stated they can only get faster with better communication. She noted that health services are the number one gap right now, especially when moving to a different province. Health services has to come from somewhere and they will work to push for this.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Comment – In the Island Lake area, fire northwest and smoke going towards St Theresa Point and to Garden Hill. Planes couldn't land at one airstrip. Need more communication from the CRC. The major role is wind direction.

Answer – Part of issue when using many airlines, we'll give you a flight schedule i.e. 12 flights, with Garden Hill none showed up on time or had to be diverted. Pilots have final decision on whether they can land. We want to ensure tele-communications in the community, strategy for this year.

Question – When you have a lot of community people that are vulnerable. Huge issue with child exploitation, what measures does the CRC have to ensure safety?

Answer – FNIH stood up here and said we have a list of vulnerable people but they can't give it out. We have to ensure that information is provided to us, need a community coordinator that we can work with. To trust us with the info, we have a new safety and wellbeing team to ensure that services are provided, different lodging site etc. will work with our partners to ensure extra support. We had 3 autistic children, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itawa Centre Inc. came and did work with the children. They can monitor children and gave caregivers the time off. CRC can't do that due to liability. We are trying to grow those partnerships.

Recommendation – Regarding communication, need a representative from your office to ensure what is happening on a specific date. Ensure proper flow of information, recommendation for this position.

Answer – if we can get access to your Facebook page, if leadership approves a message we can post. Something to consider in working with First Nations and your plan.

Question – During evacuation process do you have a liaison person that can work with you? To experience and know what is going on.

Answer – We ask who is our community contact? We try and ensure one person in the community and one person outside the community. We pay this position. Feedback from Island Lake and Poplar River, developed this briefing letter as a constant update and a press briefing to the Chief, they know exactly the numbers and where they are located.

Irma Hudson and Ernest Bruce, Poplar River First Nation 2017 Wildfire Experience and Lessons Learned

The Poplar River First Nation Emergency Response Team consists of various internal resource people and volunteers. A chart was developed that outlines flow of authority and communication from Chief and Council to Emergency Coordinator to Deputy Emergency Coordinator and Emergency Response Team to the Fire Chief, Security, RCMP, Head Nurse, Airport Manager, Communications, Northern Store Manager, Bus Drivers and Cook. Planning in the community began in May 2017, developing the team and contact information. The community discussed steps to be taken in the event of an emergency, command center, medical and priority lists.

Priority lists were created with 1 being high risk those with respiratory, kidney disease, cancer patients receiving treatment, heart disease, mental health issues that may worsen with stress. Priority 2 being high risk including Elders, anyone with mobility issues, 3rd trimester prenatals, people who require special and supportive care. Priority 3 being increased risk including newborns, infants, toddlers, children, prenatals (1st and 2nd trimester), stable chronic illnesses based on individual review of patient chart, and women who have recently given birth.

The Emergency Response Team updated housing lists, people in homes, list of births, non-band members living in the community, transients and number of boats available in the community. Other discussions such as issues of heavy smoke, searching, emergency equipment inventory etc.

In August 2017 their Emergency Measures plan was initiated with the forest fire in the area. On August 10 after heavy smoke filled the community, the leadership declared an evacuation of all priority 1, 2, and 3's. In total 26 planes evacuated 251 people over approximately 14 hours. The ERT then went door to door to count all people left in the community and to advise to be ready in case of full evacuation. Daily meetings occurred between August 11 – 21 with Sustainable Development for updates. Several issues were raised throughout this time i.e. what if power goes out, with their short runway how long will it take to evacuate the remaining community members, when to declare a full evacuation.

On August 22nd, it was recommended that based on temperatures and winds to start full evacuation. The evacuation continued until August 24. Sixty-three people stayed in the First Nation including remaining ERT and volunteers, RCMP, OFC, Initial Attack Crews and Northern Manager. Sprinkler kits were put out on approximately 150 houses and buildings. Pets were provided for through the Norway House Animal Rescue which gathered donations for food and supplies and sent into the community through Sustainable Development. On September 1st, Sustainable Development deemed it safe to bring the evacuees home, the repatriation started on September 5th.

In the community's debriefing session, they noted flaws in their plan including:

- Choose the right people to stay behind (too many)
- Better planning with repatriation required – need nurses before community members return
- Northern store to restock the store before people return
- Essential services workers to return i.e. tank cleaners, homemakers, northern staff
- Require more people as back-ups on the Community Emergency Response Team (have 2 teams work in shifts)
- Centralized office in Winnipeg to coordinate
- Better communication with Red Cross
- Security at the airport
- Accommodating extended family when the initial evacuation was called
- Better planning for pets
- Better communication equipment i.e. radios
- Have a secretary to record all meetings and a photographer to keep list of any damages
- Not having a member from Council or an Elder in the community after the full evacuation
- Have a local coordinator at each hotel to act as a liaison with Red Cross and community members
- Ensure there is a cook for the CERT and volunteers
- Have van rentals for coordinators in Winnipeg to transport people to hotels and medical appointments

The Poplar River First Nation recommends that people be prepared for any type of natural disaster that may occur, be prepared for power outage, keep plans updated and offered to share their plan as a guide for others to begin developing their own community emergency response plan.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – How far did the fire go to your community?

Answer – Came within 2 kms

Recommendation – Next time we have an evacuation, just get out of there, don't do what we did, trying to calculate and estimate, and let people come in to deal with the fire. Why put people at risk and let professionals take over? They have resources and equipment, take care of your people.

Question – How come the Chief and Council did not action it while still small?

Answer – The Fire Chief made the call and reported the fire, discussion of what will happen as it was south of Poplar River, it was near muskeg marsh area. The Sustainable Development people were wrong, in the future we will deal with things differently.

Comment – Similar situation with flooding, we were told in January 2011 that we wouldn't flood, but when water came we were first ones hit. Still not addressed, we feel what you guys went through.

Question – Did you go for training?

Answer – No training for most people, worked together as a team. We took the old plan and revised it. Recently we did some training with Red Cross, I encourage you to ask CRC to come provide some training.

CRC – Commend Poplar River, worked tirelessly. Just shows that emergency management is best coordinated by the community. Also commend Berens River and Norway House for helping, taking those evacuation funds and put into these communities. A good mark to where to go next.

Question – Regarding the smoke, was there a time when it was so extreme it was a concern?

Comment - Suggestion to FNIH and health to do air quality samples when there is a forest fire close by. In our reserve we have soil contamination and right away Manitoba Hydro and FNIH put up air quality on poles because they contaminated our territory. So now, because of the quality of life and quality of air to protect our people – would it be possible to have air quality samples during fire events?

Question - When a whole community is evacuated, certain people stay back.

Answer – We chose to stay behind at first 63 people then 24 people. We worked with people there, fire commissioner's office. There should be a media person point of contact.

Question – How did you manage your funding?

Answer – We worked as a group through conference calls with all parties. Once a full evacuation is called, ISC is obligated to pay the bill or Red Cross. We haven't received our money back we are still waiting. Money is the last thing on your mind, take care of the bill later. We submitted in November and it is now April, so hopefully soon with interest.

Day 2 – April 18, 2018

David Diabo, Special Advisor, Emergency Management, Assembly of First Nations

David shared that he helped ISC develop their program and ran it for them. When funding was cut to indigenous organizations, he worked as the Emergency Management Coordinator for INAC for 3 years. AFN recently got funding and asked him back to resume the position, in this role since last August. He is a Mohawk of Kahnawake, and a former safety inspector, with a degree in emergency management.

The provision of emergency services to meet the needs of all First Nations continues to be a national issue. The AFN is engaged in ongoing work for new investments, improved programs and services as well as policy changes and respectful working relationships between First Nations and all levels of government. Their work is guided by resolutions from Chiefs and Councils.

There is a Chiefs Committee on Emergency Management and appointed technical advisors. Regional Chiefs chose individual Chiefs and they in turn pick the technical advisor. AFN has a new portfolio holder, Regional Chief Marlene Poitras, Alberta.

The AFN works directly with ISC in cooperative and collaboration to monitor First Nation disaster and emergency events under the four pillars of emergency management which are mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. To review and comment on the development of emergency management policies. At last count there was 9 policies in various stages of development, some looked at recovery costs, evacuations, and anything under the 4 pillars.

The Emergency Management program is trying to get away from project-based funding to 5-year program funding, still in negotiations. Any region with assigned emergency agreement are not eligible, such as Alberta. Has two EMAP project proposals submitted, one in development includes working on an AFN emergency management forum.

The AFN and Public Safety Canada are cooperating and collaborating on the development of an Indigenous Inventory. The objective is to work closely with Indigenous representative organizations and communities to develop an inventory of emergency management capabilities in Indigenous communities across Canada in an effort to strengthen emergency management and increase community resilience. The inventory will help to inform how partners can collaboratively focus on the emergency management needs and priorities of Indigenous communities. Key to this will be the establishment of an emergency management tool, an emergency risk profile for communities and compendium of hazards; as well a better understanding of the existing assets, resources and emergency management plans to support those communities.

In looking at the state of Indigenous capabilities, this initiative will also examine the critical issues plaguing First Nations such as wildland/interface fires, and flooding, and how these issues can be mitigated against, and included in the National Emergency Management Strategy.

The EM Strategy for Canada, new initiative for Canada, will include a gap analysis of what First Nations have and don't have in terms of emergency management regimes. This national strategy must include Indigenous communities.

The Public Safety Broadband Network is trying to get everyone connected. Search and rescue is also included, the AFN has been to a few of their meetings. The emergency management program for Indigenous Services will fund search and rescue for compassionate basis and once it has been terminated after RCMP closes or ends a formal one. Refer to website to see what it is it about.

AFN collaborates with Public Safety Canada on development of a project Charter. The objective of this initiative to work closely with First Nation organizations to develop emergency management capabilities in order to strengthen Indigenous communities, requested by Minister Goodale:

- Phase 1 – Indigenous Capabilities Inventory
- Phase 2 – Community Engagement Sessions, AFN is helping to facilitate this, there will be community engagements in every region. Initiative will look at what is out there, for Indigenous communities, when it comes to your region, urge people to get involved in this and ask how will they do this?
- Phase 3 - Data collection and storage: questionnaire to list and determine gap analysis
- Phase 4 – Creation and use of data tool – ensure they meet OCAP – community specific

Partners for Action Advisory Committee

Partners for action is an applied research network advancing flood resiliency in Canada in the face of a changing climate and extreme weather. Primarily designed for applicability to Canadian municipalities, AFN is participating in this initiative to review potential applicability to recurrent First Nations flooding issues. Damaging floods are occurring with increasing frequency and severity, wild unpredictable weather is becoming the new normal. P4A was created to address this urgent problem. We are an applied research network based out of the University of Waterloo's Faculty of Environment, with seed funding support from The Co-Operators and Farm Mutual Reinsurance Plan. The goal is to protect the health and prosperity of Canadians by building resiliency to flooding.

He stated that our ancestors adapted and learned to live, and that adaptation became their resiliency. When you learned to handle your problems that became your sustainability. Indigenous people lived like that, and to explain that in that way. Getting a lot of requests to expand this theory.

Catastrophe Indices and Quantification Inc. (CatIQ)

AFN attended the CATIQ's Catastrophe Conference in Quebec in January 2018. Participated in the conference discussion on flooding and insurance, and to foster collaboration before, during and after catastrophic events. This conference provides a content driven overview of catastrophes, discusses strategies in catastrophe management and explores sector perspectives. Overall themes are on preparedness and resiliency, available tools, and impacted stakeholder and policy makers working together for the greater good of all Canadians, including Indigenous people.

AFN also participated in the Interactive Workshop: The workshop invited stakeholders to provide their perspective, and valuable input was gathered from the participants of the Conference. The outcome was to gain a better understanding of the state of disaster prevention, mitigation and risk reduction in Canada, as shared by a panel of knowledgeable speakers, and through sharing ideas at smaller breakout tables. In addition to gaining knowledge, they would also be able to share their input, thoughts and ideas to inform policy decisions made by Public Safety Canada.

Public Safety Canada has a big idea and these forums gain information from the grassroots, he noted it is a good way to get involved if it comes to your area. Insurance and lack of ability to get in First Nations, asking them to look at through and indigenous lens, how it is applicable to First Nations.

AFN monitors the regional floods. AFN is not a service provider, but other regions have opportunity to apply to ISC's EMAP program under the four pillars of emergency management.

- Mitigation/Prevention – through the EMAP's Non -Structural Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness funding stream.
- Prepare – through the same program.
- Response – through cooperative and collaborative processes with provincial emergency management organizations.
- Recovery – through cooperative and collaborative processes with both provincial emergency management organizations and both the regional ISC office and ISC's Emergency Management Directorate at headquarters.

AFN monitors all this through ISC notifications and repackages and sends to networks and the Chiefs Committee.

He concluded with best and wise practices:

- Apply for EMAP funding in your region;
- Develop an organizational Emergency Management/Services component (organization should have this component with capacity and capability);
- Demonstrate emergency management knowledge, skills, and abilities (complete a hazard risk vulnerability assessment, develop emergency management and preparedness plans, provide and take appropriate preparedness training, exercise your plans, review and revise your plans, development cooperative and collaborative municipal, regional and provincial MOU's etc.); and
- Combine your efforts with other First Nations.

AFN is not involved in community emergency management plans but can offer advice, guidance and recommendations through its emergency services sector and annual emergency management forum (pending funding approval). He encouraged First Nations to get involved in negotiations for emergency management in Manitoba, can have a say in what you want, and the funding component attached. Interlake Reserves Tribal Council is developing a good program for emergency management, if First Nations bought into that and participated it would have a strong voice in this emergency management agreement with Manitoba and demand a seat at the table in the negotiations. It has been done in Nova Scotia and being done in British Columbia.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – How does that work with search and rescue?

Answer – You only have a certain amount of time to do that. EMAP does search and recovery, will get their attention as they apply for it.

Comment – AFN initiative and effort to address these issues in this area. Does it make more sense for AFN to recommend to federal government that First Nations have this need – does it make sense to make it part of regular funding and develop own regimes. We would end up spending money hiring outside professionals and consulting services unless we have those people in our community. Some have this education already with skills and we can't hire them because we don't have the money, that will continue as long as there is a middle person i.e. ISC, FNIH. We can't speak for ourselves politically we always have to go the funding proposal process, makes sense to give to First Nations directly.

Question - You mentioned no capital dollars re: ATV well what is point if you don't have that equipment. We need capital dollars to start the program for First Nations, give us the tools and skills and we will do it.

Answer – I agree with you and AFN with their advocacy efforts agree with funding directly to First Nations. They are funding agency, like a bank, you have to prove something to them especially ISC. They have regional officers and it gets rated then sent to headquarters then they rate again and take out pieces that don't fall in program. They don't entertain capital and acquisitions rather rentals.

Question – Rentals versus purchases, we've been doing this for a while. At the end of the day, that rental could have bought items and kept as our community assets.

Answer – They don't consider that; no capital or acquisitions and they will pull from the proposal. If there is another way to be entertained and proposed to them, it may satisfy other requirements. The new director is open to things and the new vision that is guiding this department is from him. They only have a certain amount for their funding envelope. While I was there, a few proposals asked the same thing, according to their policy not included because it is elsewhere so sent to them, and their money might already be allotted for that year. The earlier you apply the better. We can advocate for this stuff but don't control it.

Question – The slide on Public Safety Canada and the AFN cooperating on an Indigenous inventory. We have one department working with First Nations, and funding department where we apply for, everything that is developed often does not include key stakeholders. ISC is developing policies and procedures in absence of Public Health Safety and Indigenous people. Working in siloes, will there be more collaboration in the future? Will ISC keep these other initiatives in mind?

In our area it's a lot of wildfires and some flooding, often when we look at construction in communities, a big divide in communication. First Nations are at whim at what ISC and CMHC tell them. When you talk about eligible criteria it is in absence of First Nation needs. Brought up yesterday and building homes that include materials that are fire retardant and CMHC not in the room to hear their needs. We're identifying our needs and trying to be pro-active, but we don't have all the players in the room.

Many First Nations know where to build homes, but decision is left with engineer and CMHC and their studies. Big disconnect when it comes to the planning and identifying what the needs are. Would help us for more collaboration to streamline to ensure programs are meeting needs of people. Will there be a streamlined process for Indigenous people? We're tired of dealing with the same issues year after year.

Answer – When it comes to the strategy with Indigenous inventory, Public Safety, AFN and ISC, we keep pulling them back in. Even though the Minister of Public Safety called for this, they need to have ISC there, all information will be shared with them. The gap analysis that comes out will be given to them to deal with it.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Part of development of Indigenous communities, their mandate to develop Indigenous communities so they are able and capable to the rest of society. Cannot have a level playing field with no tools. That project will bring that to their face and should deal with it. You can tell them over and over and nothing gets done, have own requirements for funding.

With split in funding, ISC relations and services and program delivery, that new vision for the program, delivery is what you are talking about via Minister Jane Philpott to solve the problems before they dissolve the department completely.

Dr. Danny Blair, Co-Director, Prairie Climate Centre

Dr. Blair began by stating we have to adapt to something that is coming that will be challenging to all parts of this country that is requiring your attention. Dr. Blair is part of a vibrant team at the University of Winnipeg trying to get this message out. The climate is changing rapidly, and Manitoba is on the front lines. There is a lot of change coming no matter what is done politically, his role is to explain to people to know what is coming and how to adapt.

There has been a 1.1 degree warming since 1880, but from a global climate point of view it is rapid especially since the 1970's. He shared that this will continue through our children and grandchildren lifetimes and there is a need to adapt and try to prevent it.

There is a lot of evidence historically stored in the earth, via ice, trees that provide data. Natural rhythms in the climate and next glaciation has been cancelled by humans, resulting in change of the general trend. Green houses gases are the main reason, the burning of coal etc. The changes in concentration of carbon dioxide, over the last 800 years it was never over 280 ppm, we are now at 410 ppm.

The scale of change is remarkable and worrisome. Changes include a 40% loss of sea ice since the 1970's and rising sea level that will impact cities around the world that live on the shoreline.

Manitoba is a small emitter – 20.8 million tonnes. If we continue to burn the way we are, at 2100 it will be 8.5 watts/square meter. Following 8.5 watts/square meter scenario – will have very different climate. 8.5 watts/square meter = 4 degrees warmer. Imagine what world will be like with this change. Feed your imagination here with data. Started the Prairie Climate Centre and the Prairie Climate Atlas, it is an important tool to show people what climate change means for them.

The prediction for the southern prairies will be 7 weeks of plus 30 is the average – means major impacts to agriculture, forestry, wildlife, cities etc. If Winnipeg goes to 49 days of plus 30 in 2015-2080? That is similar to Oklahoma and northern Texas climate. Oklahoma will then become like Vegas, then they become like Bahrain in the Middle East. The message is that we cannot keep burning. Cape Town is the poster child for world problems and their reservoir is dangerously low – people are reducing but may run out of water by July.

In the north there will be hotter days and precipitation will stay the same, this will mean less water available at the surface, so a drying across Manitoba. On top of that is natural climate variability. Once in a while there will be a really warm winter and a really dry winter etc. this means threats for fires and more drought. Water management will be a huge issue and the need to store up when you have it because there may be times when you need it.

Flooding is another issue, lots of precipitation in April and less in later summer, always prepare for droughts. Their office is requiring input and feedback from people on data being provided. The data sheet he provided can be made online.

He concluded that everything will be impacted, culture, health, and wellbeing. He encouraged participants to: lower emissions, reduce our exposure to risk, make communities more resilient, take advantage of new opportunities, invest in the future, green our economy and work together, now, with urgency. First Nations are doing solar, wind power and we can green our economy.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion
Question – Is there also a change in winds in the prediction you have? Answer – Yes winds will change on a large scale and a local scale as well. You hear of the jet stream on the news, the strong winds in the upper atmosphere that steers the storms and air masses. One theory is that as the arctic warms the jet stream becomes more-wavy, that is the polar vortex, it was always there, but new changes, if you are in the cold part you get a bad winter. The gross pattern of winds will change, and less understandable of the wind change at the surface etc.
Question - How high will it go? Answer - If we continue to burn oil, coal, natural gas and making cement, every year 37 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
Question – How do you get countries like China to reduce? Answer – China can get them to do this and they can if they choose to. Their economy has grown they want same lifestyle and benefits as US and Canada. Comment - Even though China has a high % we have to look at ourselves and we buy from China – we are contributing to what they are putting out, they don't have to follow the same rules and regulations. Supply and demand. Answer – We're all in this together, our choices contribute to this. Some are greener and we are all consumers and following the cheapest price. We have to transform our thinking.
Question – Does recycling help? Answer – Everything helps, it more efficient and uses previous materials. The less often we use raw materials the better, less stuff in our landfills. It won't save us, have to stop burning fossil fuels. Need to be serious about greener energy.
Question – Global participants and what they are doing – there was a Kyoto Protocol and some have opted out of it. Paris Agreement that Trump opted out of. From a political perspective there are these climate deniers still out there. They have a scientist that says climate change doesn't exist. Answer – Small fringe that deny but 98% agree with climate change science. Scott Pruitt head of the EPA in the US is cancelling climate change programming etc. The longer the US drags it feet they are contributing.
Question – What does that mean in English?

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Answer – Will try and show you, we have a filmmaker that helps portray what this means. We have a story teller part of this, you can be part of this and tell your own story. Call me and we will get you on film to do this. If the earth warms up at 4 then we warm up at 4, prairies gets double. Due to geography and susceptibility to change from the jet stream etc.

Question – The climate change has effects on people are studies done? On wildlife?

Answer – Yes huge changes in the wildlife world, the biomes and ecosystems are migrating rapidly, species are moving. The change is so rapidly that they can't move enough, exceeding their ability to adapt and seek refuge in more climate friendly areas.

Question – Have you shared this with Manitoba Education to get info to the schools?

Answer – We have had discussions with Manitoba Education and curriculum to develop teaching lessons to get to the schools. We released this website 2 weeks ago, we want to have impact locally. The Climate Atlas has 12 climate models and translated into graphs and projects per area.

Question - Recycling trying to do this in my community, very little support from our leadership on both sides of the fence. As a consumer we buy bottle of water and paying a levy but nothing going back to the consumer. Why can't we do that here?

Answer – We haven't yet convinced government that that is important. We need 1000 people to say we can do this, to create this incentive, the change comes from you. In favor of the carbon tax, need incentives or disincentives to change ways and emissions. But will only work if 284 million is invested back to us, this is a work in progress, but tax is a good start.

Question – Thank you for the presentation, very knowledgeable. With our temps going up 1 degree and you see the difference and extremes just in Canada as a whole but then 4 degrees and 8 degrees and Winnipeg becomes next Oklahoma. We will still have potentially floods and wildfires. Will we have tornadoes? And the dynamic of what is down the line, that is dangerous. There is already major situations happening – I think your presentation was fantastic.

Answer – Precipitation may not change much, it will come down in buckets more often with an energized hydrological cycle. Rainfall every 10 years than every 50 years, impacts on emergency preparedness. We will see more storms but big debate on tornadoes.

Question – I live by Lake Winnipeg I used to fish commercially, I noticed algae at places where there was none. Is this due to lots of farmer activity and chemicals? Does your group make any progress to learning about Lake Winnipeg?

Answer – Lake Winnipeg under threat and with the warmer temps, will impact the algal outbreaks, fish species will change and pesticides from agriculture will continue to impact unless we change agricultural practices. It's slow to change ways. Talked to farmers who are wanting to change the ways of producing, using nutrients more carefully or not at all. Change what we grow. I was encouraged by this young farmer's voice and his proposed practices.

Dr. Blair concluded his presentation by showing videos from the Climate Atlas Website, one on Garden Hill First Nation and ice roads and an Alberta First Nation on solar energy.

Cailin Hodder, Senior Manager, Disaster Management, Canadian Red Cross

In partnership with community members, the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Team creates an emergency response plan that is tailored to each community. The steps include: meeting with community members, facilitating exercises and information gathering, reviewing past emergency response plans, compiling all data

and creating a new emergency response plan, editing and finalizing with community and exercising and updating the plan.

Before she came into this role, most evacuations are precaution and are smoke impacts. She has never evacuated a community due to smoke, it was always fire and flooding. There was push back on the request for early evacuation, the CRC said we can't get everyone out in one day and would prefer to do it earlier. DRR is to understand what those impacts might be in your community, to know you have the smallest run way in Manitoba and to help develop a strategy.

The CRC went to ISC and asked for a longer term of 5 years. Some may have wanted this agreement, and some may have not wanted. It's a solution right now, a team was quickly built, and this is the DRR component. There is one indigenous person and they do the DRR work. One person who has experience with flood evacuations, and someone with a degree in emergency management planning.

The CRC developed a strategy to go into indigenous communities. Giving First Nations a template is not an emergency plan – a true emergency plan needs the right people at the table. First Nations will come to the CRC and ask for this, then they will come to meet with leadership and will do for free and the process will take approximately a year.

The 7 steps to creating a community engagement response plan include:

- Assess the risks
- Map the community
- Collect and review existing plans
- Develop roles and responsibilities
- Create a community specific plan
- Review and exercise plan
- Educate the community's households

The deliverables include: a hazard and risk analysis, vulnerability assessment, capacity assessment, mapping, community emergency response plan, exercise tool kit, and personal preparedness information and kits.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – All of these areas you pointed out fall under the EMAP program. Any community can apply to do that for themselves. ISC is giving you money to do this service for the communities. CRC has been named as a contributor to the Canadian data, you will have to ask them to share that data.

Answer – I have never seen anyone else say stats like what we keep. We send daily situation reports to AMC, MKO, SCO, AFN and First Nations.

Comment – The AFN does not get those reports. There is an MOU in place but not receiving those.

Answer – The information goes to Regional Chief Kevin Hart.

Comment – The AFN has a new portfolio holder all that information should go to that person.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Question – You talked about the 5-year agreement, includes training for communities. At times we don't have that proper training. Will CRC provide this to react to an emergency? Once we have an emergency management plan – will it be recognized by the department that we were trained by the CRC?

Answer – Because ISC is funding the project – that information should be shared.

Question - I am looking at the funding that communities will see themselves to prepare a package.

Answer – We are looking at working with groups or with Tribal Councils i.e. DOTC

Comment – After 5 years, don't leave us with nothing.

Answer – We use Poplar River as an example, he said they own it, it is theirs, you wouldn't have known we were there. We're talking about 400,000 to do this, you don't need to get us to do this work.

Question – Once CRC provides the training to the First Nation, will that community be able to certify their own people to be instructors and provide instruction?

Answer – Not certified training but ISC working with province on a training pathway. We're always there in a capacity to provide guidance.

Question – Is there enough time to train all the First Nations in Manitoba? Will ISC take over after the contract is done?

Answer – In 5 years' time, there will still be a level of CRC involvement. We can build up trust at that point. We had 9 evacuations in 14 communities. For 63 First Nations, it can happen in 5 years. We had one potentially decline.

Comment – To be clear, the CRC is not a training organization, you can give it, but it's not certified. What the previous speaker is asking is if First Nations can be trained and where can they get it?

Answer - We are not the everything. We need to identify the gaps and find solutions. I will ask ISC to find where do we find that certified body?

Question – Is ISC negotiating an agreement with Manitoba Emergency Services to provide training?

ISC – ISC is not negotiating with the Province of Manitoba. ISC decided at the national and regional level after listening to First Nations in Manitoba that is not the way to go. We are listening to all of you over the last few years, to have you guys do your work and us as a support. The province has not been interested in helping, that is why we have taken over and have the CRC as our service provider to manage this. Over last year, working with the province in some of the evacuations and hearing their recommendations to evacuate or not, that is not the service that First Nations deserve.

Comment – An emergency management plan is a living entity, in 5 years after the CRC steps out, we want to ensure our people are trained and it is ongoing.

Answer – The CRC will be around after 5 years and will continue to help maintain without an agreement.

Comment – Need training on search and rescue.

Answer – Proposing to have an emergency management forum within two years to focus on issues such as training, capacity and critical incidence stress debriefing.

Comment – Based on previous experience with flooding and evacuation, there was minimal support from the Province, they are cost-sharing but provide little direction or feedback. With proposed channel development, need to have them here along with Manitoba Hydro.

Comment – The purpose and information from the forum was positive. Where is this going – will it go back to AMC and will Grand Chief see our feedback and recognize the importance of the forum. Need leadership to see this is a priority. Need sense of satisfaction that I didn't come here for nothing, I want to see a result for this effort, I want to make sure our time is appreciated. Need to see a plan of action from AMC and the report is addressed and not sitting on a shelf somewhere. A resolution and implementation would be good and not just a report.

Comment - The end product is for each First Nation to have a manual as a guide to use, perhaps a universal guide or template to help First Nations develop. Back in the MANFF days, we took advantage of their work, provide us with the tools.

Comment – First Nations need to start our own group and make our own team to carry on the work.

First Nation Questions and Discussion

Comment - Invite to Manitoba Hydro for the future sessions, my community impacted by the Nelson River. Since people were talking about evacuating people by boats, my concern is the rise and fall of the river and the lack of safety on the waters. Even though we have knowledgeable people on the rivers, the changes of hitting reefs can be there, don't want to lose people when evacuating.

The AMC First Nation Fire Preparedness Forum concluded with closing remarks from the Chair Melissa Hotain, the information would be rolled up and compiled into a final report for AMC and participants. An evaluation component was included to receive additional feedback from participants for future topics and ways to improve a follow up forum in the future. A closing prayer was provided by Elder Parry Francois.

APPENDIX A

Participating First Nations

Berens River First Nation
Black River First Nation
Dakota Tipi First Nation
Ebb and Flow First Nation
Garden Hill First Nation
God's Lake First Nation
Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation
Lake Manitoba First Nation
Little Saskatchewan First Nation
Long Plain First Nation
Mathias Colomb First Nation
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Opaskwayak Cree Nation
Peguis First Nation
Pimicikamak First Nation (Cross Lake Band of Indians)
Pinaymootang First Nation
Poplar River First Nation
Sagkeeng First Nation
Sandy Bay First Nation
Shamattawa First Nation
St Theresa Point First Nation
Tataskweyak First Nation
Wasagamack First Nation
Waywayseecappo First Nation
Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation
York Factory First Nation

Tribal Councils:

Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council
Interlake Reserves Tribal Council

APPENDIX B:

Evaluation: Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Fire Preparedness Forum

Participants were asked to provide feedback through an evaluation form on the presentations and information provided, what was most helpful, suggestions to improve and topics for a future fire forum. Of the participants that attended, 38 completed evaluation forms, the information below contains the evaluation findings. Note: due to the length of some presentations, the small group sessions did not occur, however opportunity was provided after each presentation for First Nation Questions and Discussion. Feedback received in these two sections, was based on the larger group discussion and a few noted that because the small group did not occur it was left blank.

70% of participants agreed and strongly agreed that the Fire Preparedness Forum met their expectations, and 76% of participants agreed and strongly agreed that the information received was sufficient and useful.

Table 1: Presentation Feedback

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. The Manitoba Sustainable Development Wildfire Program presentation was helpful and informative.		8%	24%	47%	21%
b. The First Nations and Inuit Health Branch presentation was helpful and informative.	11%	8%	29%	34%	18%
c. The Indigenous Services Canada presentation was helpful and informative.	2.5%	2.5%	26%	53%	16%
d. The Canadian Red Cross presentation was helpful and informative.		2%	22%	35%	41%
e. The Small Group Session on Day One was helpful and informative.	8%	4%	42%	33%	13%
f. The Assembly of First Nations presentation was helpful and informative.	5%	3%	24%	42%	26%
g. The Prairie Climate Centre presentation was helpful and informative.	5%		16%	32%	46%

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
h. The Small Group Session on Day Two was helpful and informative.	5%	10%	33%	38%	14%
i. The Fire Preparedness Forum met my expectations.	5%		24%	43%	27%
j. The information received was sufficient and useful.	8%		16%	41%	35%

This section asked participants to provide feedback on what they found most helpful about the forum, some of the main feedback heard included:

- Allowing time for question and answers
- Climate change presentation
- Sharing of First Nation experiences

Table 2: Participant Feedback – What did you find most helpful?

What did you find most helpful about the forum?
Prairie Climate Centre presentation
Information gathered would greatly help in planning for EMO on any event
I found all useful except Inuit Health branch
The listening to the experiences of other communities
How to apply for funding and who to contact
Poplar River
About preparing ourselves for the emergency preparedness
Other First Nations sharing their experiences dealing with natural events i.e. flood and fires
I found the Q and A when the presentations were given was helpful
Online info
Lots of online info
Red Cross
Funding format for AFN
Found different avenues for funding sources
Question and Answer period. PowerPoint handouts made it easy to follow the presentations. Climate Change presentation should be incorporated into education.
Climate change, Red Cross offers additional programs for the communities (first aid, bullying etc.)
All of the above
Information
All good. Hope that recommendations are taken seriously.
The most helpful was Poplar River experience, a lot of info on that experience
Information I wasn't aware of
Discussion – question and answers

What did you find most helpful about the forum?
Everything was helpful – I am going to share
My first attendance and I found all informative
Sustainable Development Wildfire Program
All of the presentations – new to all this
Communities sharing
Having Red Cross info that they can help with our emergency plans
Info on emergency planning and testing
The forum was very open for feedback, questions answers promptly. Recommendations to take back to our communities. The forum shared different government parties, policies which First Nation also have to follow. Questions about funding issues, where to go, responsibilities our community have to work on. Our emergency planning preparedness. Climate change presentation was awesome.
All was helpful

This section asked participants to provide feedback on ways to improve the forum, some of the main comments heard included:

- Need more information on best practices in community planning
- More information on funding
- Manitoba Hydro representatives to be in attendance to answer questions

Table 3: List any suggestions to improve the forum

List any suggestions to improve the forum
Communication with all parties
More videos, presentations from other communities on emergency planning
More community presentations on their experiences
Invite Manitoba Hydro
Email PowerPoint presentation to all people here
Hoping to leave here with a plan of what we should do on emergency measures?
What will be funded and what not will be funded in the programs
None
We need more forums like these
More forums in future
More info on funding
Fix your computer
Maybe Manitoba Hydro and the Province should be at the next forum if possible
Suggest having the Hydro involved in these workshops, keep presenters around for additional questions, perhaps throughout 2 days. Solar Energy presentations
Everyone that had questions/recommendations ensure they are answered and documented
Invite Hydro
Invite Manitoba Hydro reps to speak on programs and offers and provincial legislators
No suggestions
More information throughout to each community
More discussion on solutions for the First Nations – day to day problem
No
Couldn't think of any – overall good forum

To provide contacts, such as numbers, address of the organizations that presented. Structural authorities who to contact when a disaster happens
None, it was good
No info on community involvement i.e. education on evacuations
Having Manitoba Hydro present at the forum along with Elders from each community invited. Diagram of each headquarters department hung in the forum for both federal and provincial governments. Smudge area. More time for lessons learned experiences. Questions and Comments box
There is nothing to improve the presentation was helpful

This section asked participants to provide feedback for topics at a future fire forum, some of the issues heard included:

- Invite Manitoba Hydro to future forums
- Ensure issues and concerns go back to AMC for follow up at the Chiefs Assembly
- More information on training

Table 4: Participant Feedback: Future Topics

Please suggest topics for a future forum
Planning awareness with in and out of communities
Include Manitoba Hydro
More input from FNIH – they left right after their presentations. More info on emergency planning. A more central location for all of Indigenous communities in Manitoba to attend
Presentations from local fire chiefs and as to what hinders our efforts to assist public
Open forum for discussion
Emergency planning forum
Tornado, search and rescue, how to make proposals that fit for different areas. What funding is available. Manitoba Hydro come to the forum.
None
Testimonials. No government response
Flooding
More on how to find funding and more info on where to go for funding
Not sure?
First Nation Solar Energy presentations such as Prairie Climate Centre
Service Canada, more videos, Manitoba Hydro
Hydro presentations
Manitoba Hydro, Provincial Legislation
In ? community
Make use of discussed concerns/issue and recommendations to go back to AMC Chiefs for proposed resolution for action. And ensure not to get shelved.
Hydro
Addressing post-traumatic stress
More in depth end add a day or two longer
Line of authorities' contacts for First Nations to have in their government buildings
Where can First Nation go for training on emergency
Emergency plan testing
Presentations done by sector bosses and crews with their line of duties in forest fire situations. Presentations on knowing our lands by each community

