

8

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL REVIEW AND BY-LAW REVISION

The Finance and Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, January 15, 2008, from the Chief Administrative Officer:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council receive this report as confirmation that York Region has completed all the necessary requirements of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and Ontario Regulation 380/04.
2. The Regional Solicitor update the current Emergency Management Program By-law to reflect administrative changes to the emergency plan.
3. The Regional Clerk send Attachment No. 1, being a list of the Emergency Management programs requirements and dates of completion to the Commissioner of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Emergency Management Ontario.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the actions taken by York Region to comply with the annual requirements of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and Ontario Regulation 380/04.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 York Region Emergency Management Meets Regulatory Compliance

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and Ontario Regulation 380/04 require Ontario municipalities and provincial ministries to develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive emergency management program. These programs must be premised on a risk management approach and ultimately incorporate a full range of measures to reduce risks, including prevention/mitigation; preparedness, response, and recovery measures.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Region has undertaken the following actions to maintain and ensure compliance with these mandatory requirements.

4.1 Regional Emergency Plan Undergoes Administrative Updating

The Plan is premised on the Incident Management System (IMS), a standardized, all-hazard system and international best practice that defines the basic command structure and roles and responsibilities required for the effective management of an emergency or disaster.

The Plan has been updated administratively to ensure the accuracy of contact information and general procedures and to conform to *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* requirements and terminology.

Emergency Management have created a standard template compatible with IMS for Departmental Annex updates in 2008.

Following up on comments from past exercises, improvements were made to the Seminar Room in the fall of 2007 to accommodate the new Regional Emergency Operations Center. The new REOC has increased capacity and connectivity (including wireless) and can be configured for the implementation of the Incident Management System.

4.2 Completed First Generation Business Resumption Plans

Emergency Management also provided oversight for the Business Continuity Program. Although not a requirement of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, business continuity is a cornerstone of any effective Emergency Management Program.

In 2006 and 2007, Emergency Management facilitated the development of 32 departmental Business Resumption Plans for critical businesses, including a crisis communications plan.

These first generation plans identify the people, location and resources that need to be in place to guide resumption of critical services and operations in an alternate location.

4.3 Updated Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment (HIRA) and Critical Infrastructure

The Region retained the services of the Zeta Group in early 2003 for the purpose of conducting a Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment (HIRA) to serve as the rational foundation for the York Region Emergency Plan and the basis for risk mitigation strategies and emergency preparedness programs and services in York Region and its constituents. Since hazards and risks are not constrained by municipal boundaries, the

approach of the study was to perform a region-wide risk analysis including the nine area municipalities in the Region.

The HIRA and Critical Infrastructure database and maps are updated annually in the fall in conjunction with our municipal partners and key external stakeholders. Geomatics will make the new data available in early 2008.

4.4 Conducted Regional Emergency Operations Center Training and “Operation Rising Waters” Exercise

The *Emergency Management Act and Civil Protection Act* requires that the emergency management program contain training programs and exercises for York Region employees and other persons with respect to the provision of necessary services and the procedures to be followed in emergency response and recovery activities. The Region provides training in partnership with our emergency management stakeholders and conducts exercises to support the Region’s emergency plan.

The Regional Emergency Control Group, along with key Regional and Municipal Control Group staff were trained in Emergency Operations Center – Level 2 course from October 1-5, 2007. This was followed by an emergency tabletop exercise “Operation Rising Waters” on October 29, 2007 based on a hypothetical flood scenario. It included departments, York Regional Police and partnerships with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Towns of East Gwillimbury, Newmarket, Aurora, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

4.5 Delivered Public Education and Awareness Program Products and Presentations

The Public Education and Awareness Program must include public education on risks to public safety and on public preparedness for emergencies. Key regional activities in this area include:

- Updating and publishing the *Emergency Preparedness Guide* in partnership with the local area municipalities. This is a practical guide on what you can do to prepare for emergencies in York Region. The guide is available on York Region’s website, at municipal offices, and at the Community Safety Village.
- A refresh of the Emergency Management website creating a one-stop location for information before, during and after an emergency.
- Presentations ranging from Emergency Management 101 to Business Continuity and Personal Emergency Preparedness to internal departments and private sector and community organizations.
- Public service announcements on 9-1-1, Emergency Preparedness, and general public safety issues were circulated to the residents of York Region via the *Seniors Directory* and *Being Well* magazine.

4.6 Emergency Management Program Committee Conducts Annual Review of the Program

The Act requires an annual review of the program and a statement of completion signed by the Head of Council. The purpose of this staff committee is to develop recommendations for the enhancement of the Emergency Management Program with a goal to build a disaster resilient York Region.

4.7 Next Steps

Emergency Management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters, thereby saving lives, protecting public health and safety, property, and the environment and reducing economic and social losses.

Key initiatives for 2008 include:

- Working with Departments to update the departmental Annexes to the Regional Plan using a standard template;
- Proceeding to the next phase of the Corporate Business Continuity Program involving the testing and maintenance of the 32 Business Resumption Plans;
- Continuing to provide the public and regional employees with information on emergency preparedness; and
- Continuing to partner with area municipalities and external stakeholders in public education, emergency training and exercises.

4.8 Relationship to Vision 2026

The Emergency Management Program represents another initiative towards achieving the goals in *Vision 2026* through supporting safe and secure communities and enhancing our human resources and partnerships. The emergency management program best protects public safety and creates disaster-resilient communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with implementing the key Emergency Management Program initiatives planned for next year have been identified in the proposed 2008 Regional Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

In 2006, the Region partnered with municipalities in emergency training and exercises, public information, and critical infrastructure database maintenance. These partnerships

will continue in 2008. The Region and all municipal partners will benefit from coordinated emergency response and increased disaster resiliency.

7. CONCLUSION

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* requires municipalities to develop and implement an Emergency Management Program including the Emergency Plan by Council by-law. As a result of the actions take by the Region to comply with the legislative program requirements, it is recommended that Council approve the Emergency Management Program By-law and revised Emergency Plan.

The Region will continue to play a key role as a service provider and a partner to the local municipalities by assisting them to increase their emergency management capacity through a joint emergency management process.

For more information, contact Loretta Chandler, Manager, Emergency Management, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer at 905-830-4444 ext. 1229.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the February 7, 2008 Committee meeting.)