

AGENDA
REMO COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 18, 2019
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Council Chambers
1:30 p.m.

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. 2.1 REMO Advisory Committee Member Changes
2.2 Nomination & Election By Ballot – Chair & Vice-Chair
 [Inter-Municipal Emergency Services Agreement – Section 9(d)]

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, RECOGNITION
3.1 Health Exercise1

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Added Items

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 21, 2019 (circulated)

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES - NIL

7. NEW BUSINESS
7.1 Hurricane Dorian – After Action Report 2-16
 7.1.1 If Approved, Proposed Letter to NS EMO 17-18
7.2 REMO Workplan.....19

8. REMO COORDINATOR UPDATES
8.1 Nova Scotia Power Government Relations
8.2 Community Outreach

9. ADDED ITEMS - NIL

10. IN CAMERA - NIL

11. NEXT MEETING – Monday, January 20, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

October 23, 2019

Municipality of Lunenburg

007 3 1 409

RECEIVED

Alex Dumaresq
Deputy CAO
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
210 Aberdeen Road
Bridgewater, NS B4V 4G8

Dear Mr. Dumaresq,

On October 2, 2019, the Nova Scotia health system, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College Lunenburg campus, the first responders (police and fire services) from the Town of Bridgewater, 33 & 35 Field Ambulance of the Canadian Armed Forces, Emergency Management Office NS, Regional Emergency Management Organization, Public Safety Field Communications, St. John Ambulance, and Emergency Health Services participated in Exercise HEX 19 in Bridgewater. The exercise simulated a mass casualty incident with over 80 people suffering injuries from a motor vehicle incident at the South Shore Exhibition Grounds. This exercise provided an excellent opportunity to enhance relationships, practice our people and test our plans. It also enabled local and provincial organizations to operate together to enact an emergency response in a safe, controlled environment.

Our success was in large part due to the combined efforts of all participating organizations involved with both the planning of the exercise and the response to the emergency. I would like to highlight the leadership and planning efforts of Angela Henhoeffler. Her participation and commitment ensured the success of the exercise.

Please convey to Angela our appreciation for her outstanding contribution to the success of Exercise HEX 19. We look forward to collaborating with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Marrie, MD
Interim Deputy Minister

c: Angela Henhoeffler, Regional Emergency Management Coordinator



AFTER-ACTION REPORT

HURRICANE DORIAN

September 7-8, 2019

Prepared by:
Angela Henhoeffter
Regional Emergency Management Coordinator
Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization

Date Presented:
October 15, 2019

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1 Introduction

This report was prepared by collecting information from various internal and external partners within the Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) for Lunenburg County relating to Hurricane Dorian on September 7-8, 2019. The Regional Emergency Management Organization provides a coordinated response to an emergency occurring within Lunenburg County, and includes the Municipality of the District of Chester (MODC), the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL), the Town of Bridgewater (TOB), the Town of Lunenburg (TOL), and the Town of Mahone Bay (TOMB).

An event debrief was conducted via anonymous survey and an in-person debrief was held on September 24, 2019. Chief Administrative Officers, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinators, and Fire Services Coordinators from the five municipal units were invited to respond and attend. The observations and accompanying recommendations were identified and documented in this After-Action Report (AAR).

2 Event Summary

Amid a high number of predicted hurricanes for the 2019 hurricane season, Hurricane Dorian was being watched as it hit Bahamas and the Eastern Seaboard of USA, before making landfall in Nova Scotia on September 7, 2019. Hurricane Dorian was the largest hurricane to ever make landfall in Nova Scotia resulting in unprecedented numbers of power outages affecting almost 80% of the province. Nova Scotia Power (NSP) lost power to more than 411,000 customers during the storm and throughout the following days, another 50,000 outages were reported due to weakened trees. Thankfully no injuries or fatalities occurred as a result of the hurricane.

The first weather briefing notification was sent by Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization (NS EMO) from Bob Robichaud, Warning Preparedness Meteorologist with The Canadian Hurricane Centre on Tuesday, September 3, 2019. After a brief discussion between Angela Henhoeffler, Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC), and Alex Dumaresq, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), it was decided that following past incidents, a virtual activation would be sufficient and no Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) would be physically activated. The REMO Coordinator (REMC) would lead the response in order to facilitate issues surrounding Hurricane Dorian and the Assistant Emergency Management Coordinators (AECs), Fire Service Coordinators and the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) from the five municipal units would provide input specific to their unit.

2.1 Condensed Event Chronology

DATE	TIME	DETAILS
2019-09-03	11:51	Notification of pending hurricane, Weather Briefing #1
2019-09-06	15:00	REMO conference call and Situational Awareness
2019-09-07	07:00	Activation of the Provincial Coordination Centre

2019-09-07 08:21 PCC schedule announced – Conference calls daily at 11:00 and 20:00
 2019-09-07 10:13 Situational Report - SitRep #1
 2019-09-07 13:22 REMO schedule announced – Conference calls daily at 12:00 and 21:00
 2019-09-07 22:49 REMC recommended a second person to assist
 2019-09-09 14:00 Transfer of Command to Rachel Hiltz
 2019-09-10 07:00 Transfer of Command to Angela Henhoeffter
 2019-09-11 12:14 Municipal needs assessment from NS EMO
 2019-09-12 13:00 Wellness check conference call
 2019-09-13 22:00 All units reported back to normal business operations
 2019-09-14 15:00 Evening conference calls with PCC ceased
 2019-09-16 12:15 SitRep #54
 2019-09-16 16:30 PCC de-escalated to normal monitoring

2.2 Event Location

The swath of damage endured by Hurricane Dorian covered the province of Nova Scotia. From Yarmouth to Cape Breton, each county was affected to varying degrees. Lunenburg County was spared severe damage as witnessed by other parts of the province. The critical infrastructure damage and priorities for the region included:

Mahone Bay	Water treatment plant, 8311 Highway 3 in Oakland
Bridgewater	Scotia Business, 426 King Street, Bridgewater
	King Street Sewer Lift Stations 8 and 9: 1397 King Street, Bridgewater and 1639 King Street, Bridgewater
	Pump Station #4, 400 King Street, Bridgewater
	Town Hall 60 Pleasant Street, Bridgewater
	Hebbs Lake Pump Station, 290 Century Drive, Hebbville
MODL	Tancook Island – power restoration
	<u>Wastewater Priorities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Riverside Road, Conquerall Bank New Germany Lift Stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift station #6 does not have an overflow to the LaHave 121 Highway 208, New Germany • 4716 Hwy #10, New Germany • 4774 Hwy #10, New Germany • 44 Zwicker Mill Road, New Germany • 5380 Hwy #10, New Germany
	Treatment Plant, 23 Chelsey Lane, New Germany
	Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre, 135 N Park St, Bridgewater
T. Lunenburg	Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was partially flooded with seawater

Other reported damages included the Chester wharf, Sawpit wharf, Rose Bay wharf, a variety of road washouts, tree debris, and damage to parks, and trails. NS EMO provided three pallets of water that were delivered to Town of Lunenburg and Chester.

3 Emergency Management Phases

3.1 Mitigation

Various mitigation steps in the years leading up to Hurricane Dorian included an all-hazards plan which included hazard risk analysis, contingency plans, public awareness mailouts regarding sheltering in place and what to have in a preparedness kit.

3.2 Preparedness

Resident preparedness begins with the awareness of emergency events occurring and information on the 72hour preparedness from the Government of Canada was shared with residents. A week before the hurricane, Post-Topical Storm Erin was being watched as possibly making landfall, so residents were on higher alert and awareness as Hurricane Dorian made its way closer to Nova Scotia. Having witnessed the destruction left behind by Dorian in the Bahamas and USA, it was a storm monitored by many.

From an organizational perspective, a few years ago, a Hurricane Contingency Plan was created and approved by the REMO Advisory Committee which includes elected officials of all five units. Prior to the event, the Plan was forwarded to all AECs and CAOs for review and refresher.

All weather briefings sent by NS EMO were shared with a variety of municipal partners and stakeholders with ways to contact REMO as well as a request for information to be shared with REMO if anything was witnessed.

3.3 Response

NS EMO was the lead agency and Nova Scotia Power had a representative in the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) along with many other Nova Scotia provincial departments and industry partners. Since the REMO ECC was not activated, the REMC shared information with the AECs and CAOs. The AECs and CAOs shared the information outward. The REMC remained in close contact with local representatives from RCMP, Bridgewater Police, the Fire Services Coordinators who shared information to the Fire Departments, NS Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Nova Scotia Power, Nova Scotia Community College, West Nova Bulk Fuels, Canadian Red Cross, and others.

3.4 Local Authority Recovery

Recovery of power was needed by the local authorities for its critical infrastructure. An assessment of critical infrastructure without power was obtained and prioritized by each municipal. The REMC and CAOs then had a conference call to prioritize the list of damages among all five unit. The list was sent back to NS EMO for submission to NSP for power restoration for the County.

3.5 Community

Community members, especially those on the NSP critical customer list or identified to the REMC via community/council members, were supported in the best way possible. NS EMO

approved a funding request for Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) to complete door-to-door visits for any residents without power that had critical care issues. GSAR was provided a standard list of questions/observations for the visits and a request for follow-up was offered. For those who provided a phone number, a follow-up call was made by the REMC to provide support or referrals where possible. There were some instances where GSAR could not make contact, therefore the RCMP was contacted for a Wellness Check.

4 Incident Emergency Management Review

4.1 Emergency Management

The following are observations from the incident and accompanying recommendations to make improvements for future response and recovery. These recommendations are in alphabetical order not priority order.

4.1.1 Observations – Business Continuity

Power was restored quickly to Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre (LCLC) to provide showers to residents in the County. This was done quicker than originally scheduled by NSP as power was restored to the Municipal Activity and Recreation Complex (MARC) for the sheltering of Hope Landing residents. In a similar response, it is unlikely power would be restored this quickly. The Town of Bridgewater office was also without power and although there is a generator for some departments, key departments like Finance was not accessible without power.

Recommendation 1

It is recommended each municipal unit evaluates all municipal-use and resident-use buildings for a generator or portable generator and budget recommendations are presented to Council for consideration.

4.1.2 Observations – Comfort Centres

There were many kinks with comfort centre use during the event. Some comfort centres were without power and did not have a generator or proper supplies thereby not allowing them to provide comfort to residents. Many comfort centres were not providing their information of opening/closing times to the Provincial Coordination Centre or REMO so residents and partners were unaware of where to go for assistance. The new comfort centre procedure created in 2018 was not used and some comfort centres were unfamiliar with the procedure.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the REMO Advisory Committee write a letter to NS EMO asking to provide a solution to the public alert system allowing municipal units to be trained to use Alert Ready or an alternative system to alert residents in local areas of event-specific information, including comfort centre locations.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that a Crisis Communication Plan be written/updated to include key messages surrounding comfort centres, included how to get the message out of which location are open should there be a telecommunication failure.

Recommendation 4

Is recommended the REMO Comfort Centre Policy be revised to reflect clear guidelines and a standardized approach across all municipal units and should include items such as when a comfort centre should open, a checklist of general supplies to open a comfort centre. The comfort centres that follow the guidelines will be posted on the REMO website for viewing

at any time, not just during events.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended the AECs maintain, and update annually, the list of comfort centres with civic address, phone numbers, email addresses of three contacts for the site, capacity and a site profile be completed by the AEC of services generally offered at the Centre.

4.1.3 Observations – Communications

While residents have begun taking the 72-hour preparedness messaging seriously, there is still education to become more resilient citizens, communities and County. Social media was not monitored during the incident and posts were not active until regular business resumed as staff were not assigned to monitor social media, and some staff had limited telecommunication ability from their homes. Examples of public messaging includes, what to do after 72 hours, where local comfort centres and shelters are located. Contact lists for the municipal units and stakeholders were outdated during the event. It was observed that each municipal unit shared different information with council and managers, and the fire departments felt out of the loop for communication.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended to create a Crisis Communications Plan with input and supported by the municipal units' communication staff to include communications before (prevention and mitigation), during (response) and after (recovery) and event to enhance awareness to residents with one location to look for all incident-related information.

Recommendation 7

It is recommended a letter be written to NS EMO requesting their website be reinstated to offer information to all Nova Scotians on a variety of topics as it relates to emergency management as it is the premier source of provincial information.

Recommendation 8

It is recommended to amend existing contingency plans to include options for the first 72 hours, after 72 hours, shelter in place, comfort centres, shelters, and staffing the centres.

Recommendation 9

It is recommended the municipal units identify staff who may be a Public Information Officer (PIO) during a response. The PIO will be required to take the NS EMO or ICS Information Officer position training. These individuals will be scheduled as the REMO Public Information Officer in the Emergency Coordination Centre to monitor/post to social media, coordinate with news agencies and ensure information is being consistently shared among all units. Keeping in mind that not all residents have access to the internet so radio interviews or paid spots may need to be considered.

Recommendation 10

It is recommended that the internal and external contact lists for REMO are updated a

minimum of twice per year to ensure and ask Information Technology to provide a location for the contact lists to be housed electronically for all those that may be in the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) and do not have access to the MODL server such as a cloud-based solution in case the ECC is evacuated or unavailable during a response.

4.1.4 Observations – Critical Infrastructure

There were several Critical Infrastructure from all units that experienced long term power outages or damage due to Hurricane Dorian. While Nova Scotia Power (NS Power or NSP) and NS EMO were in excellent communication seeking to restore power as quickly as possible, there were some gaps for the REMO units. Historically, REMO has not provided NS Power with a list of prioritized critical infrastructure for Lunenburg County.

Recommendation 11

It is recommended that each municipal unit create a critical infrastructure list including name, complete civic address, type of generator (if applicable), how long generator will run on a tank of fuel, how long the infrastructure can run on a generator before it becomes critical prioritized per unit. After information is received from all units, it is recommended the CAOs meet to prioritize all units within the County for future power outages.

4.1.5 Observations – Emergency Coordination Centre

Although virtual activation has worked in the past for smaller responses, the decision to not activate the Emergency Coordination Centre was likely one that should have been re-evaluated. The REMO Coordinator worked alone for over 30 hours with no shift recovery and all decisions and tracking was completed by one person. Without power and working in the office for such a long period, there was a lack of food and the power outages made it difficult to purchase food at restaurants without long delays. The currently plan indicates the Chief Administrative Officers, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinators, and Fire Services Coordinators would fill the positions in the ECC should it be activated. The conference calls went very well to keep everyone informed; however the conference call system needs to be able to host up to 25 people especially if calls get dropped.

Recommendation 12

It is recommended to create/update the contingency plans levels of activation triggers (e.g. Monitoring, Partial, Full), and create a schedule including backups for each position for the operational periods. Additional training will be needed to fill the positions with two shifts therefore training should be extended to municipal staff to ensure coverage.

Recommendation 13

It is recommended a conference call system be established that can host up to 50 participants to allow for partners and stakeholders to be invited and to accommodate if calls are dropped.

4.1.6 Observations – Essential Services

Some staff were dealing with event-related issues at home and unable to come in for work. In other cases, staff were extended, working many long hours and some not able to attend to their regular job duties as the response lasted several days. Consideration can be given on how to support families whose family member is working during the response – e.g. encouraging family plans for workers required for essential operations during a response.

Recommendation 14

It is recommended HR Policies are reviewed in each municipal unit and if desired reflect what services are considered essential, how to get staff to their shifts, as well as compensation requirements for responses. Creating cross-training opportunities (within the municipal units as well as between REMO units) may be considered to ensure coverage is adequate and accounts for vacation, sick or other time off.

4.1.7 Observations – Exercises

Staff have commented that there have been lack of exercises in the past to test some contingency plans outside of how to activate the ECC.

Recommendation 15

It is recommended that more exercises be created to test realistic scenarios of events that could occur in our region and to test the existing contingency plans.

4.1.8 Observations – Fuel Shortage

There was a fuel supply/demand issue prior to the hurricane, and with the event and power outages, fuel shortages were beginning to crop up. Some fuel stations ran out of gas prior to the storm, others lost power and did not have generator back up. West Nova Fuels was contacted prior to the hurricane and was on standby for first responders should fuel be required until power was restored.

Recommendation 16

It is recommended a REMO fuel shortage contingency plan for municipal requirements is created and a Memorandum of Understanding be considered with Public Works, gas stations that have generators, provincial departments and private or other partners that have fuel supply tanks. It is further recommended municipal units investigate multiple supplier accounts in case the primary supplier cannot supply fuel during an event.

4.1.9 Observations – Hardware Support

Working without proper office equipment supplies is a challenge when away from one's normal office environment. Consideration for ergonomically comfortable workplaces in the event of an activation should be considered.

Recommendation 17

It is recommended that Information Technology assist in a telephone and computer

hardware needs analysis and recommendations brought to a future REMO Advisory Committee meeting.

4.1.10 Observations – Municipal Elected Officials

Council needs to be aware of its responsibility to during a response including but not limited to declaring a state of local emergency, where it obtains information, and not coming into the ECC.

Recommendation 18

It is recommended NS EMO be invited to provide Municipal Elected Officials training and a checklist be created with information pertinent to elected officials.

4.1.11 Observations – Power Outages

The greatest risk to Lunenburg County was due to power outages and most outages occurred due to fallen trees. While many believe it is the Power Company's responsibility to cut trees, many trees are on private property affecting the power lines.

Recommendation 19

It is recommended residents are provided information regarding vegetation management and which trees are the customer's responsibility. Additionally, information about how residents can assist such as planting a distance from power lines, cutting the trees before they grow too close to a power line becoming a danger therefore requiring the Power Company's assistance due to energized lines.

4.1.12 Observations – Purchases and Payments

Staff who were working during the storm were required to make purchases on behalf of their municipal unit in some cases as accounts were not set up, in other cases with cash due to power outages and not all staff have personal credit cards that are willing to use them for work purposes.

Recommendation 20

It is recommended municipal units investigate ways to support staff who are working during the response such as open accounts at a variety of vendors, Purchase Cards or cash on hand for response purposes for power outages or use another unit's account. These options should be clearly defined, shared with staff and refreshed at the beginning of a response.

4.1.13 Observations – Shelters

The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Lunenburg campus serves as REMO's Shelter facility in contingency plans. That facility lost power throughout the entire campus and was not able to be a shelter location as outlined in REMO plans. Although they have a generator, it does not cover the whole campus: only three classrooms are connected to the backup power source which would not provide Lunenburg County with adequate shelter as outlined in the MOU and

REMO contingency plans. In addition, there are other community organizations that list the NSCC as an evacuation shelter meaning there is the potential for conflicting demands for limited shelter facilities. While there are other facilities that may have been able to assist with shelter needs (e.g. the Town of Lunenburg's Fire Hall and Community Centre Auditorium,) it is important that REMO contingency plans are accurate and based on realistic expectations of facilities and resources.

Recommendation 21

It is recommended the MOU between REMO and the NSCC be reviewed and that the REMO Advisory Committee write a letter to ask NS Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, as landlord, to expedite the installation of a generator which is planned in future years. Additionally, evaluate other regional infrastructure for possible alternate shelter locations and secondary offices within the County and clearly define priority usage for shelter requirements.

4.1.14 Observations – Telecommunications

Telecommunications failures often follow power outages and in the case of Hurricane Dorian, there were several telecommunication failures. Staff did not have access to communicate among themselves or with outside parties. Those units with satellite phones had a hard time obtaining a signal. Cellular service was down or very spotty and unreliable at best. Communication with Bell Aliant and Eastlink was non-existent as there is no local contact identified and neither company had a representative in the Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) to be able to ask questions via NS EMO.

Recommendation 22

It is recommended the REMC requests Public Safety & Field Communications provide a satellite phone to the Town of Bridgewater. Each municipal unit should consider installing wiring to the satellite phone, so the signal is unobstructed and ready for use at any time.

Recommendation 23

It is recommended all municipal units as well as REMO review their contingency and business continuity plans to incorporate telecommunications failures.

Recommendation 24

It is recommended the REMO Advisory Committee write a letter to NS EMO requesting greater support from Bell Aliant, Eastlink, Rogers and Telus a representative physically located in the PCC throughout the duration of the response activation.

4.1.15 Observations – Vulnerable Sector Residents

Vulnerable Sector residents (those living outside of a special care facility) may have a greater need for power for medical devices as well as heat. Educating residents of the importance of their own personal preparedness as well as education of Power Company's Critical Customer list is essential as they may experience power outages that could impact their health. Educating

council members on the Power Company's Critical Customer list is equally important as well as their awareness to residents who may need assistance during an emergency. Encouraging Neighbour-to-Neighbour support and check-ins is an additional educational tool that can occur. While Ground Search and Rescue was hired by NS EMO to assist with wellness checks, awareness of those vulnerable residents is the first step.

Recommendation 25

It is recommended an education campaign be created to advise vulnerable sector residents the importance of personal preparedness and the Power Company's Critical Customer list if qualified.

Recommendation 26

It is recommended REMO observe the King County Vulnerable Sector Program which was launched October 2019 to judge interest and if there is interest and support from all first responders, evaluate starting a program for Lunenburg County if services can be offered and expectations met.

Recommendation 27

It is recommended partnerships be created between REMO with Lunenburg County Senior Safety Coordinator, Home Care Support agencies and other organizations that support vulnerable sector residents to encourage personal preparedness and education.

5 Recommendation Items Follow-Up

All recommendation items identified in this report will be managed and monitored by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator. The REMC will send out the action items report every two months where all municipal units in this incident will be able to view and check the status of all action items.

Please advise the REMC when a recommendation item has been completed. The REMC will review and assess the status of all the action items and send out updates to all groups involved and include in the REMO Advisory Committee if policy changed are required.

All groups will be notified when all action items are completed.

6 Conclusion

The Hurricane Dorian event was a real-life exercise of where we are and where we are headed and can improve. With responses being so few and far between, it is easy to be less prepared than when events occur on a more frequent basis. The increase of hours for the REMC will be able to increase to work needed to get REMO more prepared for future events.

7 Acronyms

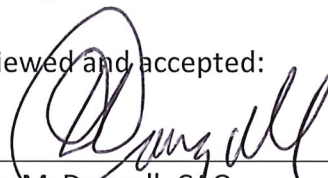
AAR	After-Action Report
AEC	Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CC	Comfort Centre
CI	Critical Infrastructure
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
GSAR	Ground Search and Rescue
LC	Lunenburg County
LCLC	Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre
MARC	Municipal Activity and Recreation Complex
MODC	Municipality of the District of Chester
MODL	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NS EMO	Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization
NSP	Nova Scotia Power
PCC	Provincial Coordination Centre
REMC	Regional Emergency Management Coordinator
REMO	Regional Emergency Management Organization
SitRep	Situational Report
TOB	Town of Bridgewater
TOL	Town of Lunenburg
TOMB	Town of Mahone Bay

This After Action Report was written by Angela Henhoeffler, Regional Emergency Management Coordinator for the Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization. The information was submitted with the input from the Chief Administrative Officers, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinators, and Fire Services Coordinators from Municipality of the District of Chester, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, the Town of Bridgewater, the Town of Lunenburg, and the Town of Mahone Bay.

Reports presented to CAOs:

First Draft	October 16, 2019
In-person discussions	October 21, 2019
Second Draft	October 23, 2019
Third Draft	October 30, 2019
Fourth Draft	November 4, 2019
In-person discussions	November 6, 2019
Final Sign-off	November 6, 2019

Reviewed and accepted:



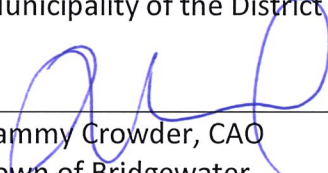
Dan McDougall, CAO
Municipality of the District of Chester

Date: Nov 6, 2019

Verbal Approval, awaiting signature on November 14, 2019

Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Date: _____



Tammy Crowder, CAO
Town of Bridgewater

Date: November 6, 2019



Bea Renton, CAO
Town of Lunenburg

Date: Nov 6/19



Dylan Heide, CAO
Town of Mahone Bay

Date: Nov 8/2019

Submission of the final report submitted to the REMO Advisory Committee on November 14, 2019.

RMEO Advisory accepted the motion to accept the After Action Report on _____.



November 18, 2019

Honourable Chuck Porter
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Department of Municipal Affairs
14th Floor North, Maritime Centre
1505 Barrington Street
P.O. Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

Dear Minister Porter,

RE: Hurricane Dorian Recommendations

The Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) provides a coordinated response to an emergency occurring within Lunenburg County through an inter-municipal agreement between the Municipality of the District of Chester, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, the Town of Bridgewater, the Town of Lunenburg, and the Town of Mahone Bay.

Following Hurricane Dorian, the REMO Coordinator hosted a debrief with the Chief Administrative Officers, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinators, and Fire Services Coordinators from the five municipal units. The observations were reviewed and appropriate recommendations submitted in an After Action Report. The After Action Report was presented to the REMO Advisory Committee from the five municipal units and the Report was approved through a motion on November 18, 2019.

There were three recommendations that relate to Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization (NS EMO) where communication can be more open and encompassing.

1. It is our opinion that telecommunications are an essential service and therefore more effort needs to be gained from telecommunication partners during an emergency. The REMO Advisory Committee requests greater support from the telecommunications companies such as Bell Aliant, Eastlink, Rogers and Telus during an emergency response. It is requested that NS EMO collaborate on an ongoing basis with the companies on the importance of having a representative from each telecommunication company physically located in the Provincial Coordination Centre throughout the duration of the activation. This will positively assist all municipalities and residents of Nova Scotia. Ongoing exercises with these companies is important to maintain an active understanding of the Incident Command Structure as well work through scenarios before future emergencies.

We appreciate that telecommunications partners were available during the more minor weather activation on October 17, 2019. However, we are concerned that because their



presence was underutilized for that event, they may believe there is a lesser need for assistance on their part during major events.

2. The REMO Advisory Committee questions why the National Alert Ready was not utilized during Hurricane Dorian as hurricanes are one of the approved criteria for the application. The established Alert Ready program to update residents across the province during power and telecommunications outages would have been an invaluable tool to keep residents informed, especially those in rural areas with limited or no internet in regular times, making them even more vulnerable during an emergency.

To take the burden off of NS EMO, a solution could be to use a model similar to Alberta to train municipal staff on the application requirements and terms. In doing so, municipalities could create and send the alerts to update residents and tourists of pertinent and up-to-date information during an emergency. The onus would be on the municipality, not the province, to provide the local updates, while utilizing the existing Alert Ready Program.

If using the National Alert Ready program is not viable, it is requested the province provide an alerting feature for all municipalities to use and send alerts. Each municipality should not have to carry the burden to purchase their own alert system during emergencies.

3. The existing NS EMO website is inadequate to provide any information to the public. It is our recommendation that NS EMO revert to a website that provides information to municipalities and residents about all pillars of emergency management. The previous website offered information to all Nova Scotians on a variety of topics as it relates to emergency management as it is the premier source of provincial information. The current website has very limited information posted and all previous links that are searchable on the internet are broken links as it appears everything has been removed.

In closing, NS EMO led the Hurricane Dorian response and was in contact with municipalities; however, more resources are required in the Emergency Management program. Without additional resources we will be unable to mitigate the risk to change the system for future response and emergencies.

Sincerely,

***, Chair
Lunenburg County REMO Advisory Committee

cc: Rhonda Matthews, Emergency Management Planning Officer, Southern Zone

REMO Workplan

Following the After Action Report, as well as introduction discussions with CAOs, AECs, Fire Services Coordinators, and some REMO Advisory Members, the information was compiled into a workplan and proposed to the CAOs.

The following is the list of priorities for REMO to work toward.

Theme	Priority		
	High	Med.	Low
Comfort Centres	x		
Shelters	x		
Emergency Coordination Centre	x		
Communications	x		
Critical Infrastructure	x		
Contact Lists	x		
Vulnerable Sector Residents	x		
Agreements / Clear Definition		x	
Contingency Plans		x	
Exercises		x	
Planning Committee		x	
Roles & Responsibilities		x	
Business Continuity / Essential Services		x	
Fuel Shortage		x	
Municipal Elected Officials		x	
Public Alerting		x	
IT <i>not</i> REMO		x	
Logo and Acronym			x
Power Outages			x
Stakeholder Engagement			x
Telecommunications			x
Fire Services <i>not</i> REMO			x