
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Justice

Planning resource for special events in B.C. now available

VICTORIA – A diverse group of B.C. partners, co-led by the Government of British Columbia and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, has developed a new set of user-friendly guidelines to assist communities with hosting safe and successful Major Planned Events.

The BC Major Planned Event Guidelines are the first of their kind and include a number of templates, checklists and advice. They were developed, in part, as a response to lessons learned experienced in previous special events in the province, including the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, recommendations coming from a review of the 2011 Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver, and major music festivals like the Squamish Valley Music Festival.

As the first step in a developing suite of planning resources, the guidelines will assist event planners, host communities and agencies, health professionals, security personnel, volunteers and emergency personnel help reduce the potential for public disorder. They are designed to proactively assist with the prevention and management of emergencies and disasters resulting from mass public gatherings.

The BC Major Planned Events Guidelines complement existing emergency plans, policies and regulations and can be used as a guideline and reference tool for local authorities, communities, event organizations and other groups with a vested interest in major planned events.

Quotes:

Suzanne Anton, Attorney General and Minister of Justice –

“Special events are held throughout the year all around the province. They benefit communities, attract tourists, promote arts and culture and help grow our economy. To have a successful event, we must ensure the people who attend are kept safe and secure. Through lessons learned from previous events and collaboration with various agencies and groups across the province, we are taking steps to help communities get started early with their planning and ultimately hold safer events.”

Ryan Wainwright, Emergency Program manager, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District –

“The BC Major Planned Events Guidelines are a first step towards safe and successful planned events in all areas of B.C. As the emergency manager for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, I see the guidelines as a place to start a conversation about safety and security with all stakeholders involved in major planned events in my jurisdiction.

“As co-chair of the BC Major Planned Events Working Group, I see event organizers, local

governments, and provincial agencies using the guidelines as a basic reference tool when considering what a Major Planned Event means to their community. While the guidelines alone won't fully mitigate the impacts introduced by Major Planned Events – there remains a lot of room for further evidence-based study – they are a common sense tool that will be useful to event organizers and communities.”

Quick Facts:

- EMBC is responsible to British Columbians for leading the management of provincial level emergencies and disasters and supporting other authorities within their areas of jurisdiction.
- Following the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, a recommendation was made to develop guidelines, based on best practices and lessons learned from the Olympics, to help plan for future major planned events in the province.
- Recommendations from the review of the Stanley Cup riot included the need for the Province to collaborate with stakeholders in development of public safety guidelines.
- Including these guidelines, the B.C. government has committed to support the development of tools and plans designed to help prevent events involving public disorder and emergency and disaster events associated with mass public gatherings.
- The Major Planned Events Committee was formed in 2012 to address a perceived gap in guidance for local authorities and event organizers and other public agencies that have an interest and/or influence planning for Major Planned Events in British Columbia. These events can bring added risk to communities, including impacts on emergency services, local health systems, and infrastructure.
- The committee will continue to work on these guidelines which will be updated on an ongoing basis.
- The Major Planned Events Committee is a multi-stakeholder group comprised of 28 representative groups from government, health, fire, police, ambulance, local authorities/districts, First Nations event organizations, rural and urban communities and others from across British Columbia, in the interest of mass gatherings and major events planning. It is co-led by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District and B.C. government.

Learn More:

- BC Major Planned Events Guidelines: <http://www.embc.gov.bc.ca/em/Community/planningtk.html>
- Emergency Management BC: <http://www.embc.gov.bc.ca/em/index.htm>

Media Contact:

Ministry of Justice
Government Communications and Public
Engagement
250 213-3602

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