



// INTRODUCTION TO RECEPTION CENTRES

August 2015



JIBC

EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

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by

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// INTRODUCTION

Welcome

- Housekeeping
- Forms and paperwork
- Introductions
 - Your name
 - Your community/agency
 - Something I hope to learn
- Participant Guide
- Icebreaker



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Introduction

- Course
 - Description
 - Goal
 - Learning outcomes
 - Prerequisites
 - Agenda



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Course Introduction

If a community is evacuated due to flood, toxic spill, wildfire, earthquake, or similar calamity, where do people go? Who will provide food and temporary accommodations for them when it is unsafe for them to be in their home or community? How will family members find each other? Where will people get the necessary information and support they need?

During a disaster response, each of the emergency response agencies will be activated to carry out their specific emergency roles. The community emergency plan outlines the emergency roles of local law enforcement, fire and rescue, ambulance, emergency social services (ESS), transportation, utilities, and others.

**This guide
may be
used in
conjunction
with the
Reception
Centre
Operational
Guidelines
and ESS Field
Guide as
references at
the reception
centre**



For ESS, the specific emergency role is providing care for evacuees and in some cases, responders.

When an evacuation is ordered, people will need a safe place to gather to receive vital information about the disaster (e.g., how long they can expect to be out of their homes, how to access services, are there any health implications to be aware of, clean up procedures, etc). This safe place for evacuees to gather is called a reception centre.

Course Description

Learn about the basic functions of a reception centre during emergencies or disasters. This three and a half (3.5) hour course covers the fundamentals for ESS responders who may be called upon to work in, or support the activities at a reception centre.

This course replaces the Reception Centre course.

Course Goal

The purpose of this course is to prepare ESS responders for working in local facilities designated as reception centres.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe the services in a reception centre
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of the functions in a reception centre
- Outline how to set-up and work in a reception centre
- Plan for self-care

Prerequisites

The prerequisite for this course is:

- Introduction to Emergency Social Services

It is strongly recommended that the ESS in a BCERMS Environment Presentation be reviewed prior to participating in the course (see Appendix B for the JIBC ESS website)



// **MODULE 1**

Reception Centre Services

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Explain what a reception centre is
- Describe the types of services provided at a reception centre
- Outline when a reception centre is opened
- Describe the other types of emergency response centres that might be opened during a disaster

Reception Centre Services

- What are Reception Centres?



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What is a Reception Centre?

ESS provides short-term services for individuals and families affected by disaster so they can begin to plan their next steps following a disaster. Reception centres (RC) are locations designated by the local ESS team, in cooperation with the local authority, as safe gathering places for people displaced from their homes as a result of an emergency or disaster. At the RC, individuals can register and receive these short-term services as well as information about the emergency situation.

Reception centres have sometimes been referred to as evacuation centres, registration centres, disaster relief centres, or family centres. The term *reception centre* describes the initial function of the centre — to receive evacuees who have been forced from their homes as a result of an emergency or disaster.

In order for an ESS team to effectively respond to a disaster, considerable planning must be completed in the pre-disaster phase by the ESS team. The ESS plan is part of the local emergency management plan and usually includes lists of local suppliers who have agreed to provide resources in the event of a disaster. Sites to be used for RCs will also have been identified during the pre-disaster planning phase, as well as contingency plans to deal with potential issues such as power outages, water shortages, and lack of resources.

Reception Centre Services

- What services are provided?
- When is one opened?
- What are other emergency response centres?



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SERVICES PROVIDED AT A RECEPTION CENTRE

ESS requires management and administrative skills balanced with a great deal of understanding, caring, and empathy in order to provide both evacuees and ESS responders with the needed resources. Services may be provided at the site for small-scale events or at a RC for larger responses and may include those described in Table 1.

SERVICE	PURPOSE
Family Reunification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registers evacuees, takes inquiries about people's safety and whereabouts, and assists in reuniting families
Referrals for Food, Clothing & Lodging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Referral Forms (see Appendix B: Reception Centre Operational Guidelines) for groceries or meals to evacuees who are without food or food preparation facilities • Provides essential clothing, blankets and personal hygiene items for evacuees • Provides safe, temporary accommodations for those who are forced from their homes and who are without insurance or unable to immediately access their insurance policies and unable to stay with family or friends
Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides and coordinates emotional support for evacuees and responders, and provides referrals to appropriate human services agencies when needed
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that accurate, up-to-date, relevant information and print materials are available for evacuees and responders



SERVICE	PURPOSE
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arranges transportation for evacuees to hotels, motels, or group lodging facilities as required
Volunteer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinates assignments for trained volunteers and trains walk-in volunteers to assist where needed
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the effective flow of key information in and out of a RC
First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides basic first aid support and makes referrals to appropriate health care facilities as necessary
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists in dealing with public health issues, such as communicable diseases, as well as ensuring safe water, food, and sanitation
Pet Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists with the care of domestic pets while their owners are waiting for services in the RC
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes and provides activities for all ages and special-needs groups
Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arranges for qualified child care workers to provide activities in a supportive environment for young children who have experienced a disaster. Some RCs may provide a child care area for parents to care for their own children Oversees children who arrive at a RC without a parent or guardian
Multicultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides multicultural services as needed, such as translators, ethnic foods, clothing, etc.

Table 1: Reception Centre Services

ESS is generally available for a maximum of **72 hours**. During these first 72 hours evacuees should immediately plan their next steps by contacting their insurance agents, families, and friends or accessing other possible resources. Should further assistance be required, only under extenuating circumstances, a request is sent through the local Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to the provincial or territorial ESS organization (in BC it's EMBC) authorizing an extension of the services.

**Short-term,
usually
maximum
72 hours**



WHEN IS A RECEPTION CENTRE OPENED?

During an emergency response, the ESS plan is activated under the direction of the local ESS Director (ESSD), Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC), or designate. Whether or not a RC will be opened is dependent on many factors including the size of the emergency, the number of evacuees, availability of facilities, and the availability of trained ESS responders.

A RC is usually activated during a moderately-sized or complex event, or at an ESS Level 2 response. The number of evacuees generally exceed 12 and the event typically involves multiple dwellings (e.g., neighbourhood or apartment block).

OTHER EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRES

During a disaster response, additional emergency response centres may be opened to provide support:

■ **Comfort Centre**

As a result of extreme weather events, members of the public are often finding themselves without power, sometimes for extended periods, or otherwise affected by the climate. While these events fall outside of traditional ESS response activities, and such events do not warrant the activation of a reception centre, there may be a need to open a facility whereby citizens can find respite from adverse weather conditions. Services provided may include shelter from weather, nourishment, companionship or information.

■ **Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)**

The focal point for the community's overall management of the disaster. Coordination and direction for the entire community response is provided by senior representatives from each of the key agencies involved in the response and may include law enforcement, fire and rescue, ambulance, engineering, utilities, ESS, health, public works, Office of the City Manager, or the Chief Administrative Officer. Information from the RC is important to the EOC group. It will inform them as to the needs of evacuees and the assistance the RC has provided to the people who have experienced the disaster.

■ **Group Lodging**

A group lodging facility provides emergency shelter style accommodations for persons affected by the disaster, either evacuees or emergency responders. It could be co-located with the RC or at a separate location.

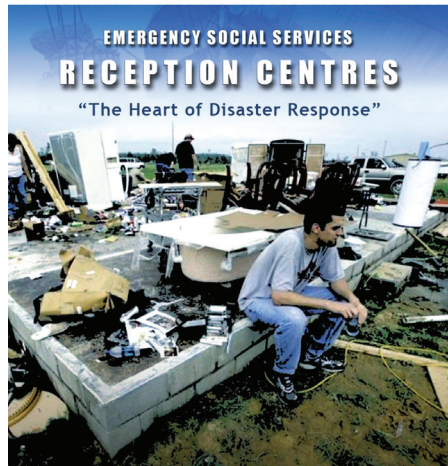
■ **Volunteer Services Centre**

When a disaster happens in a community, many people will simply walk in or phone the RC to offer assistance. The ESS team can set up a Volunteer Services area within the RC or they can set up a separate facility designated strictly to manage walk-in disaster volunteers.



Reception Centre Services

- Module 1 review – Reception Centre Video



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Reception Centre Services

Activity – Services Scavenger Hunt

- Participant guide – end of Module 1
- Answer the questions in the table
- 5 minutes



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Activity: Services Scavenger Hunt

Answer the following questions.

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. Who can activate the ESS plan?	
2. What type of facility provides shelter style accommodations for persons affected by a disaster?	
3. What service provides emotional support for evacuees and responders?	
4. What service manages walk-in disaster volunteers?	
5. What service ensures the effective flow of key information in and out of a RC?	
6. What service ensures safe water, food, and sanitation?	
7. How long is ESS generally available for after a disaster?	
8. What service oversees children who arrive at a RC without a parent or guardian?	
9. What is the focal point for the community's overall management of the disaster?	
10. What service provides food and meals to people who are without food or food preparation facilities, including both evacuees and ESS responders?	
11. What specialized service assists with the care of domestic pets?	



// **MODULE 2**

Reception Centre Structure

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between the five primary management functions
- Describe the reception centre structure
- Describe the role of each reception centre section and responsibilities of each function

In ESS, the provision of food, temporary accommodation, clothing, etc., is based on activating the functions necessary to meet the immediate needs of evacuees based on the overall impact from the incident. In some situations, one or two responders can handle all of these functions, however, in some larger or complex disasters, 20 or 200 ESS responders may be required to provide these same services. In order to ensure that all of the necessary functions and services are carried out, the number of ESS responders can be decreased or increased. It is important to note that not every function will be filled in every emergency. The situation at hand will dictate the functions required.

Reception Centre Functions

The RC is organized around five primary functions based on the incident command system (ICS): Management, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance. The management function, led by the RC Manager, is responsible for the overall decision-making and smooth-functioning of the RC and includes the functions of Information, Liaison, and Safety. The Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance sections are responsible for overseeing the internal functioning of their individual Sections and interacting with RC management and others to ensure an effective ESS response. A diagram of this RC structure is provided in Figure 1.

**Not every
function
will be filled
in every
emergency**

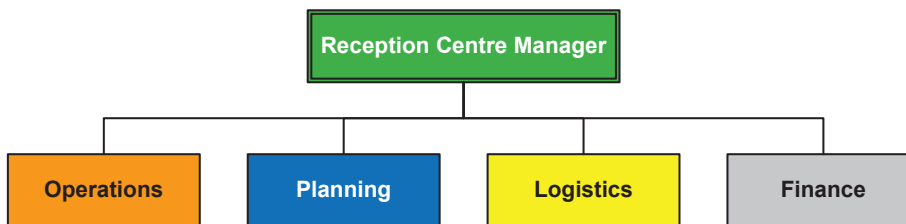


Figure 1: Reception Centre Organizational Structure — Five Primary Management Functions (PPT slide 8)

Reception Centre Organizational Structure

Only those functions that are needed should be activated. Generally, when activating an RC for a smaller event and/or smaller communities, the following four functions (denoted with red stars in Figure 2) must be activated:

1. RC Manager
2. Registration
3. Referrals
4. Documentation

**One
responder
can perform
several
functions
— THINK
FUNCTIONS,
not # of
positions**

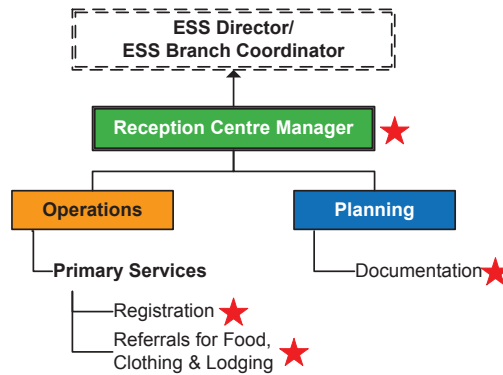


Figure 2: Reception Centre Organizational Structure — Four Key Functions (PPT slide 9)

Other functions will be activated as needed. It is important to note that one responder can perform several functions. The RC Manager, along with the management team (could be the first 3-4 people in), will determine clear actions for the first operational period such as the services and set-up required.

The smallest elements in these organization charts are referred to as *units*. If more than one individual works within a unit, a Supervisor may be appointed to the unit (e.g., Meet & Greet Supervisor). When the number of units in any particular section exceeds seven (maximum span of control), functional *branches* should be established. Each branch will have a Branch Coordinator (e.g., Primary Services Branch Coordinator). Each major function (Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance) is referred to as a *section*. The title for each head of a section is Chief (e.g., Operations Section Chief). The head of a RC is referred to as the RC Manager, and this position may appoint Officers (e.g., Information Officer) to address the management functions of Information, Liaison, and Safety, or the RC Manager may take on some or all of those duties. The fully expanded RC organizational structure is shown in Figure 3.

The ESSD is shown as a dotted line because he/she is likely located at the local authority EOC as the ESS Branch Coordinator within the Operations Section.

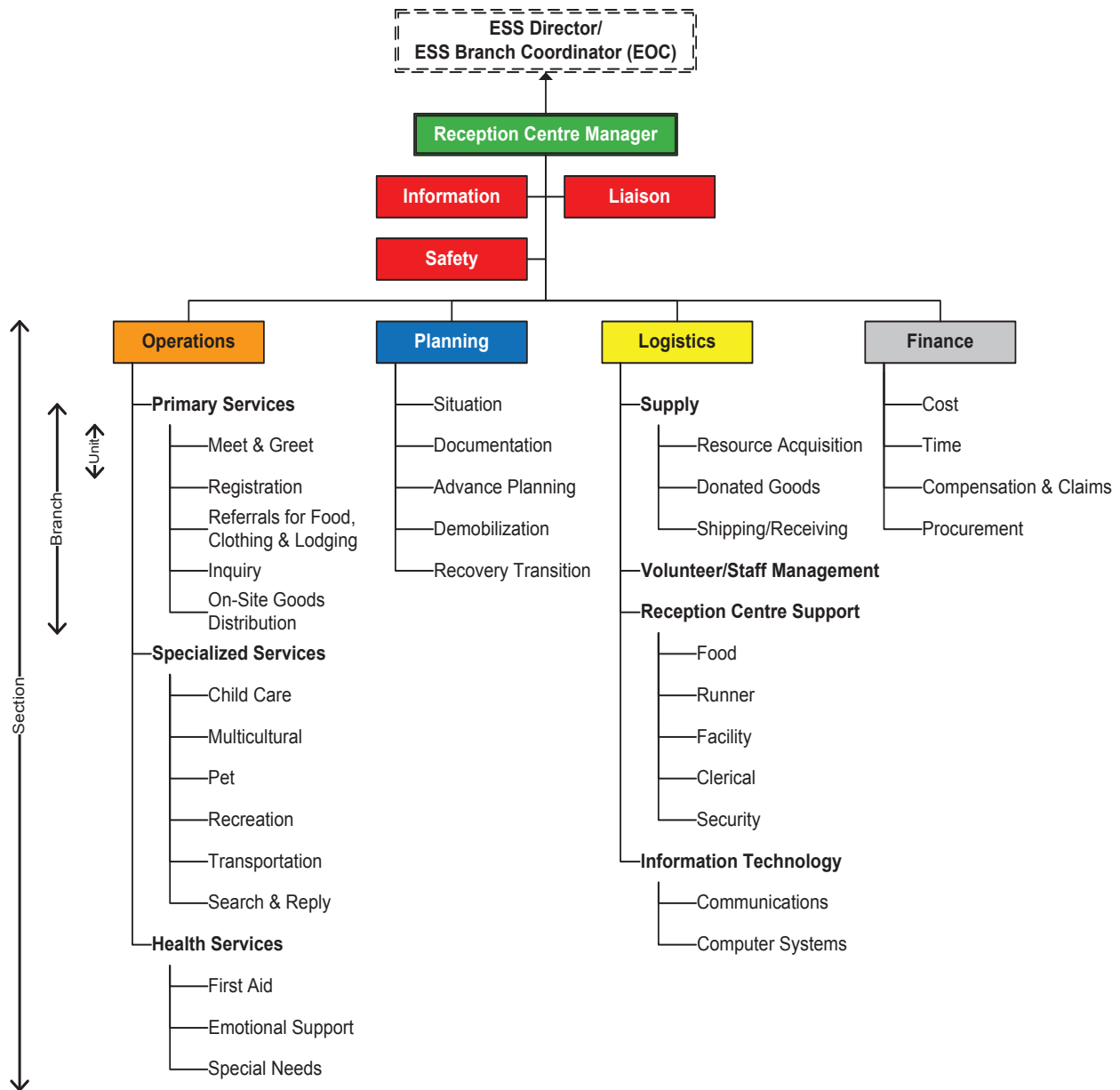


Figure 3: Reception Centre Organizational Structure — Fully Expanded (PPT slide 10)

**These
function
descriptions
can be
found in the
Reception
Centre
Operational
Guidelines**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary roles and responsibilities of each of these functions are described in Tables 2 to 7. The full function descriptions with a corresponding checklist of tasks to be completed during activation, operations, and demobilization, can be found in the RCOG (see Appendix B).

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
ESS Director/ ESS Branch Coordinator (EOC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for overall coordination for ESS Works with other key response groups in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

Table 2: ESS Director Function & Responsibilities

Management Staff

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
RC Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes responsibility for the overall management of a RC and the safety of its responders Ensures all required functions are activated and carried out
FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works under the direction of the EOC Information Officer to ensure the RC receives complete and accurate information Coordinates any media visits with the RC Management Staff and EOC Information Officer Coordinates public meetings and media releases that are approved by the EOC Gathers and disseminates information
Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts as the point of contact for representatives from external agencies
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively ensures safety of facility for evacuees and responders in the RC Implements worker care measures

Table 3: Management Staff Functions & Responsibilities



Operations

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Operations Section "The Doers"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes overall responsibility for the coordination of activities within the section and delivery of direct services to evacuees
Primary Services Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the set-up and operations of the primary services to evacuees
Meet & Greet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomes evacuees coming into the RC Directs evacuees to the appropriate service area according to their physical and/or emotional needs
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registers evacuees
Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews evacuees to determine immediate needs for food, clothing, lodging, etc. Provides referrals to community suppliers for assistance
Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes inquiries about the safety and whereabouts of evacuees
On-Site Goods Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes on-site goods such as comfort foods, comfort kits, phone cards
Specialized Services Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the set-up and operation of any specialized services provided to evacuees
Child Care (should be qualified/ certified appropriately)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides care and activities for children in a safe, secure and nurturing environment while their parents or guardians are receiving services in the RC Works with the provincial or territorial organization responsible for children's services (in BC it's the Ministry of Children & Family Development [MCFD]) for the care and release of children not accompanied by their parents or guardians
Multicultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides multicultural services as needed such as translators, ethnic foods, clothing, etc.
Pet Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides care for domestic pets while their owners are receiving services in the RC
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides suitable and safe recreation and leisure activities for evacuees in the RC

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consults with EOC to organize and provide means of transportation for evacuees to the RC or from the RC to a place of lodging
Search & Reply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to reunite families and friends by matching inquiry forms with registration forms
Health Services Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the arrangements for setting up and providing health services as required for first aid, emotional support, and special needs
First Aid (should be qualified/ certified appropriately)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides first aid to evacuees and responders in accordance with their level of training Makes referrals to appropriate health care facilities when needed
Emotional Support (should be qualified/ certified appropriately)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides emotional support for evacuees and responders, and provides referrals to appropriate agencies when needed In some areas, organized Disaster Psychosocial volunteers may fulfill this role
Special Needs (should be qualified/ certified appropriately)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides assistance to evacuees with special needs, e.g., pregnant women, nursing mothers, elderly, dependent adults, and special needs children

Table 4: Operations Functions & Responsibilities



Planning

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Planning Section "The Thinkers"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes overall responsibility for the coordination of all planning activities within the section which includes gathering and analyzing statistics, planning for future RC needs as well as for demobilization of the RC and the transition from response to recovery
Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the preparation, distribution and display of Situation Reports (data/information)
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that RC ESS forms are distributed, collected, organized, duplicated, filed and/or archived Records information on Statistics Record and distributes them to the Situation Unit
Advance Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews all available information to anticipate RC future needs and develops an advance plan for RC response
Demobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates a Demobilization Plan for the closing of the RC
Recovery Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists evacuees with the transition from the immediate emergency period to the longer recovery process where the community and individuals will begin to regain former stability or to build a new future In larger events, a recovery centre may be established by the local authority and the Recovery Transition Unit can help in the transition from the response phase (reception centre) to the recovery phase (recovery centre). Recovery centres are separate and distinct from reception centres and are outside the mandate of ESS

Table 5: Planning Functions & Responsibilities



Logistics

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Logistics Section “The Getters”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assumes overall responsibility for providing support and resources to meet the needs of the RC
Supply Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Arranges for and oversees the functions dealing with supplies used for the effective operation of the RC:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Resource acquisitionDonated goodsShipping and receiving
Resource Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assesses needs, acquires, distributes, and tracks material resources, supplies, and equipment for use by evacuees and ESS respondersContacts existing suppliers to confirm availability to provide needed goods and servicesEnsures RC kit is ready for redeployment to next event
Donated Goods (A local authority EOC responsibility)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Receives solicited donated goods for evacueesForwards unsolicited donations as per EOC direction
Shipping & Receiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Manages the process of receiving and shipping of supplies and equipment to and from the RC
Volunteer/Staff Management Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Manages and supports existing ESS team members as well as new walk-in volunteers
RC Support Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensures the set up and oversees food services, runners, facility, clerical, and security functions
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">With consideration for special diets:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensures that comfort foods for distribution to evacuees by on-site goods distribution unit are availableEnsures that meals, snacks, and water for ESS personnel within the RC are availableWhile pets are not normally allowed in RCs, registered assistance animals are permitted, so consideration should be given for having extra food and water for registered assistance animals that accompany people with disabilities (BC Coalition of People With Disabilities, 2012)



FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Runner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transports paper and other small items within the RC • Accompanies evacuees or visitors within the RC if Meeters and Greeters are not available
Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures RC has needed furniture, space, accessibility, etc. • Ensures maintenance and cleanliness, including restrooms and garbage collection
Clerical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures clerical services (scribes, receptionists, minute-taking, word processing, data entry, etc.) are available as required
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures security of individuals at the RC • Provides security and parking lot traffic control for the RC
Information Technology Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the following information technology services are carried out at the RC as required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communications – Computer systems
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets information in and out of the RC by the most appropriate means (telephone, media, written, internet, amateur radio, etc.)
Computer Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees the installation of computers and internet for the RC, as available • Provides technical support for personnel working in the RC

Table 6: Logistics Functions & Responsibilities

**Finance**

FUNCTION	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Finance Section "The Payers" (should be staffed by local authority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes overall responsibility for the maintenance of financial and time records Determines spending limits Assists with setting up new supplier contracts Handles any workers' compensation or damage claims
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures provincial or territorial organization responsible for ESS (in BC it's EMBC) has provided a task/tracking number Documents cost information and maintains records of all financial transactions
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps all time records and travel claims for ESS personnel
Compensation & Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the claims process for both personal injuries and loss or damage at the RC
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees the setting up of new supplier agreements and the procurement of new supplies and equipment

*Table 7: Finance Functions & Responsibilities***Reception Centre Structure****Activity – Matching Functions & Roles**

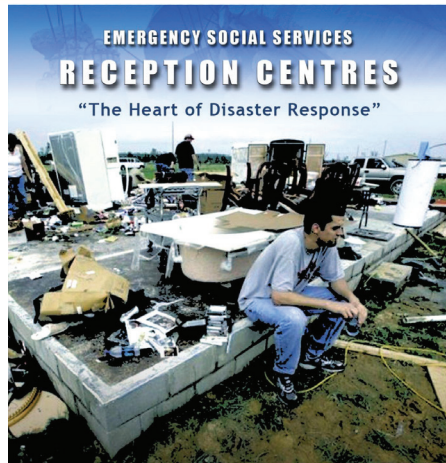
- Review task cards
- Post tasks/activities below the most appropriate RC function
- **Hint:** Reference Tables 2 – 7 in the guide
- 15 minutes
- As a larger group, review functions and make adjustments as needed





Reception Centre Structure

- Module 2
review –
Reception
Centre Video



12



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// **MODULE 3**

Working in a Reception Centre

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Outline how to set-up a reception centre if you are the first one on-site
- Differentiate between one-stop and two-stop registration and referrals
- List the function/service areas that may be set-up in a reception centre
- Identify the function/service area that arrivals to the reception centre should be directed to

It is very important that ESS responders each have a personal preparedness plan. When the ESS plan and team have been activated, you will need to activate your own personal preparedness plan to ensure your needs — family, pets, home, work, etc. — are addressed. Once your plan has been activated and your needs have been taken care of, you can feel confident that you can report to the RC and focus on the disaster response and the tasks at hand.

Working in a Reception Centre

- Personal preparedness plan
- Call out
- Reporting to work
 - First-in



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ESS Call Out

During a call out, ESS responders may be contacted by any of the following means:

- Telephone call
- Email
- Text message
- Community Alert Network message
- Commercial radio

ESS responders may also be alerted for a standby situation, e.g., a severe weather event where there may be a potential for RC or GL response. In case there is a major disaster and the ESSD and/or RC Manager is unable to communicate with ESS responders, some local authorities may have pre-identified a location for ESS responders to report to.



Reporting to Work

Once you have been called out, there are a number of things you need to do before proceeding to the RC:

- Communicate with your family and employer — tell them that the ESS plan has been activated and how you will maintain contact with them
- Dress casual and in layers— wear appropriate clothes for the job, season, and work
- Take your grab and go bag (See the Introduction to ESS course)
- Take a cell phone if you have one, wall/vehicle charger, and contact lists
- Bring ID — vest, hat, t-shirt, jacket, name tag, photo ID card (local and provincial or territorial)

FIRST-IN

If you are the first ESS responder on-site (or one of the first) and can access the RC area, you are in charge. There are a few things that you can do to get started no matter what your designated role is (your local authority's ESS plan will have more details specific to your community and RC facilities):

- Report in to the ESS Director/ESS Branch Coordinator in the EOC, if activated
- Wear your ESS identification (green vest, name tag, local and/or provincial/territorial ID card)
- Check for any on-site instructions, e.g., legend, ESS floor plans, locations of ESS kits and equipment, how to make coffee, etc.
- Display the task/tracking number (if known)
- Locate RC kit (see section on RC Kit)
- Put out the (EMBC) Task Registration Form (see Appendix B: RCOG) & sign in
- Put up RC organization chart (not in view of the public)
- Locate chairs and tables and if able, set-up waiting area, functions by section or primary functions workstations based on the RC site plan
- Once an ESS responder with more knowledge/experience arrives, discuss with them if it would be more appropriate for them to take over until the RC Manager or designate arrives
- If another ESS responder takes over, then give them a situation update

All ESS responders:

- Sign in on (EMBC) Task Registration Form (see Appendix B: RCOG)
- Confirm work assignment and find out who you report to

- Introduce yourself to your co-workers
- Set up workstation
- Buddy up with a co-worker to watch out for each other's well-being
- Listen for the call to the briefing and attend
- Take the time to sit down and review the checklist (see Appendix B: RCOG) for the function and/or functions you have been assigned to

Working in a Reception Centre

- Reception centre set-up
 - Reception centre kit



- Function/service areas



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Reception Centre Set-Up

Taking the time to set-up the RC can help to lessen or avoid problems. Furthermore, proper and timely set-up will ensure that the RC is ready to provide services to evacuees when they arrive.

Depending on many variables, including the size of the disaster and response expected, the entire facility may or may not need to be set-up. The RC Manager, along with the management team (could be the first 3-4 people in), will determine clear actions for the first operational period such as the services and set-up required. After the management team has determined the services to be provided, equipment, supplies, and a floor plan that is suitable for this response is identified. Each coordinator or supervisor is responsible for ensuring the set-up of their required workstations. Each area of responsibility will dictate the supplies and equipment needed, but generally, you will need the following items:

- Signage and communication boards
- Tables and chairs
- Cots and blankets — for both Emotional Support and First Aid
- Stationary items — pens, pencils, stapler, file folders, etc.

- Forms and paperwork
 - Function checklists (see Appendix B: RCOG) — these are checklists used in BC. Each position has a checklist for activation, operations, and demobilization along with a list of function aids required in order to be able to perform those duties
 - Function aids (see Appendix B: RCOG) — these are brochures, instruction sheets, forms, and templates used in BC

RECEPTION CENTRE KIT

In the pre-planning stage, the ESS team will have put together a kit for each RC. Ideally, there would be one RC kit within each RC. In some communities, however, one mobile RC kit is shared between the RCs. The mobile kit would likely be located off-site and at a central location such as a municipal hall, fire hall, or school. During an event that would require an RC opening, the RC Manager would be responsible for making arrangements for the delivery of the kit to the RC.

Contents

Possible contents for RC kits include:

- ESS Identification
 - Colour coded vests (e.g., orange for Operations Section Chief and personnel)
 - Name tags with first name only and blank name tags
- Sign Set
 - Large signs to identify the service areas (e.g., RC outdoor sign, Information, Emotional Support, etc.)
 - A sign reminding to protect the privacy of evacuees (e.g., 'To protect the privacy of evacuees within this reception centre, please DO NOT use video recording devices or photography devices of any kind including cell phone cameras. Thank you.')
- Stationary Items
 - Office items (e.g., pens, pads of paper, filing boxes, etc.)
- Equipment
 - Flashlights, cones, AM/FM radio, extension cords, batteries, solar powered calculator, 24-hour clock, pre-printed, laminated numbering system with ESS logo on the back, request flags (used by Registration and Referrals Workers to get the attention of a supervisor or a runner, which saves a lot of arm-waving and noise) etc.
- First Aid
 - Various sized bandages, gauze, cold packs, etc. or a basic or level 1 first aid kit



- Miscellaneous
 - Supplier list with contact numbers, hand sanitizer or wipes, disposable gloves, plastic barrier tape, a few pairs of flip flops, etc.
- Function checklists and function aids (see Appendix B: RCOG)

FUNCTION/SERVICE AREAS

The following is a list of the function/service areas that may be set-up in a RC. Depending on many variables, including the building itself, the size and complexity of the disaster, the number of evacuees and the staffing capabilities, you may need some or all of these identified areas.

- Meeters and Greeters — entrance, exit, and waiting area
- Security
- Information — desk area, bulletin boards, television, internet
- Waiting Area for Services
- Registration Only
- Registration & Referrals for Food, Clothing, Lodging, and Other Needs
- Inquiry About Family & Friends
- Distribution Area — clothing, blankets, personal care items, comfort foods, refreshments, etc.
- Child Care
- Multicultural Services
- Pet Services
- Health Services/First Aid
- Emotional Support — evacuee quiet area, private counselling services
- Special Needs
- Recreation
- Transportation
- RC Manager's Office
- Documentation & Situation Units
- Advance Planning, Demobilization, Recovery Transition Units
- Resource Acquisition
- Shipping & Receiving
- Volunteer/Staff Management — sign-in/sign-out, orientation/training room, staff quiet area
- Amateur Radio Area or known as Emergency Radio Communications area



Working in a Reception Centre

- Reception centre set-up
 - Registration and referrals area set-up
 - Pros/cons



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School of Public Safety & Security Emergency Management Division

The recommended model for providing services to evacuees is the One-Stop option

REGISTRATION AND REFERRALS AREA SET-UP

There are two basic models for delivering registration and referral services within a RC — one-stop and two-stop. Although the recommended model for providing services to evacuees is the one-stop option, there may be times when you want to move to a two-stop process. This decision may be based on the size of the community, the number of evacuees, the number of ESS responders, the number of walk-in volunteers, the RC floor plan, etc. Your ESS team will need to decide which method will be the most effective, given the circumstances of the incident. Either option is viable. In larger events, there may be an option to use a phone-in registration system, though this is not a preferred model.

Option 1: One-Stop



When evacuees come to a RC, they are greeted by a Meeter and Greeter who will assess their needs and send them to the appropriate station in the RC.

If an evacuee or family requires registration and referrals (food, lodging, and/or clothing), a Meeter and Greeter will send them to Registration and Referrals, who will register them on the ESS File — Registration and Services Record (see Appendix B: RCOG) and complete the appropriate ESS Referral Forms as needed. One responder, for Registration and Referrals, completes both the Registration and Referrals functions at one station or one-stop.

If the evacuee or family does not require any assistance with food, lodging, and/or clothing, and only needs to register, then the Meeter and Greeter may send them to the Registration Only station. Registration Only is an express line, which can fast-track evacuees who only need to register.



Option 2: Two-Stop



There may be situations when a community ESS team decides to move to a modified version of the one-stop service delivery. This two-stop option works as follows:

Stop One: All evacuees will be sent to the Registration station to register their safety and whereabouts.

Stop Two: Following registration, only those evacuees requiring assistance with food, lodging, and/or clothing will be sent to a second station to be interviewed by Referrals, who in turn will provide ESS Referral Forms (see Appendix B: RCOG) to be taken to local suppliers. Completed ESS File — Registration and Services Record Forms (see Appendix B: RCOG) need to be promptly delivered to Referrals Workers to keep the process flowing.

A list of pros and cons of the One-Stop versus Two-Stop options are summarized in Table 8.

REGISTRATION & REFERRALS SET-UP OPTION	PROS	CONS
One-Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal staff required Minimal physical space required Evacuees do not need to repeat themselves Beneficial for mentoring new ESS responders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long line-ups for large events Staff will need to be trained in both roles
Two-Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces wait time for evacuees Converging volunteers could be trained quickly to do the Registration Form only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more staff Requires more space Evacuees may need to repeat themselves Higher chance of service gaps from transfer of information or repeated services

Table 8: One-Stop/Two-Stop Model Pros & Cons



SAMPLE FLOOR PLAN — MINIMAL SERVICES

If the minimum services of a RC Manager, Registration, Referrals, and Documentation for an RC were set-up, the floor plan may look like Figure 4.

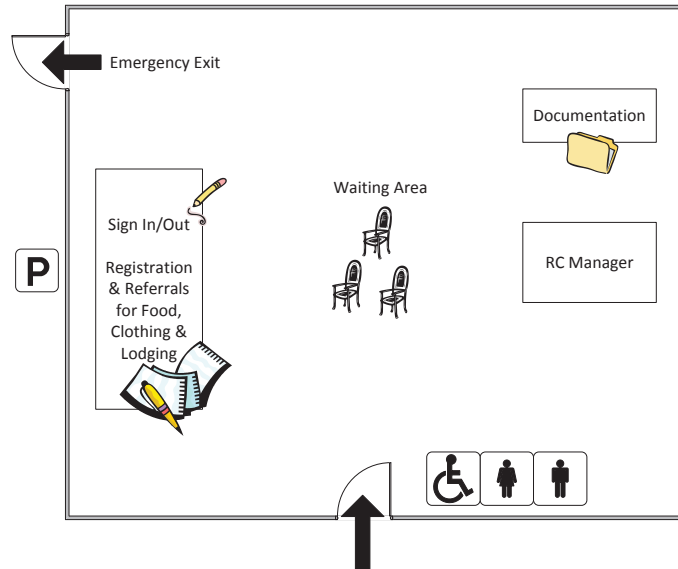


Figure 4: Sample Reception Centre Floor Plan — Minimal Services (PPT slide 16)

SAMPLE FLOOR PLAN — FULL SERVICES

If all of the services for a RC were set-up, the floor plan may look like Figure 5.

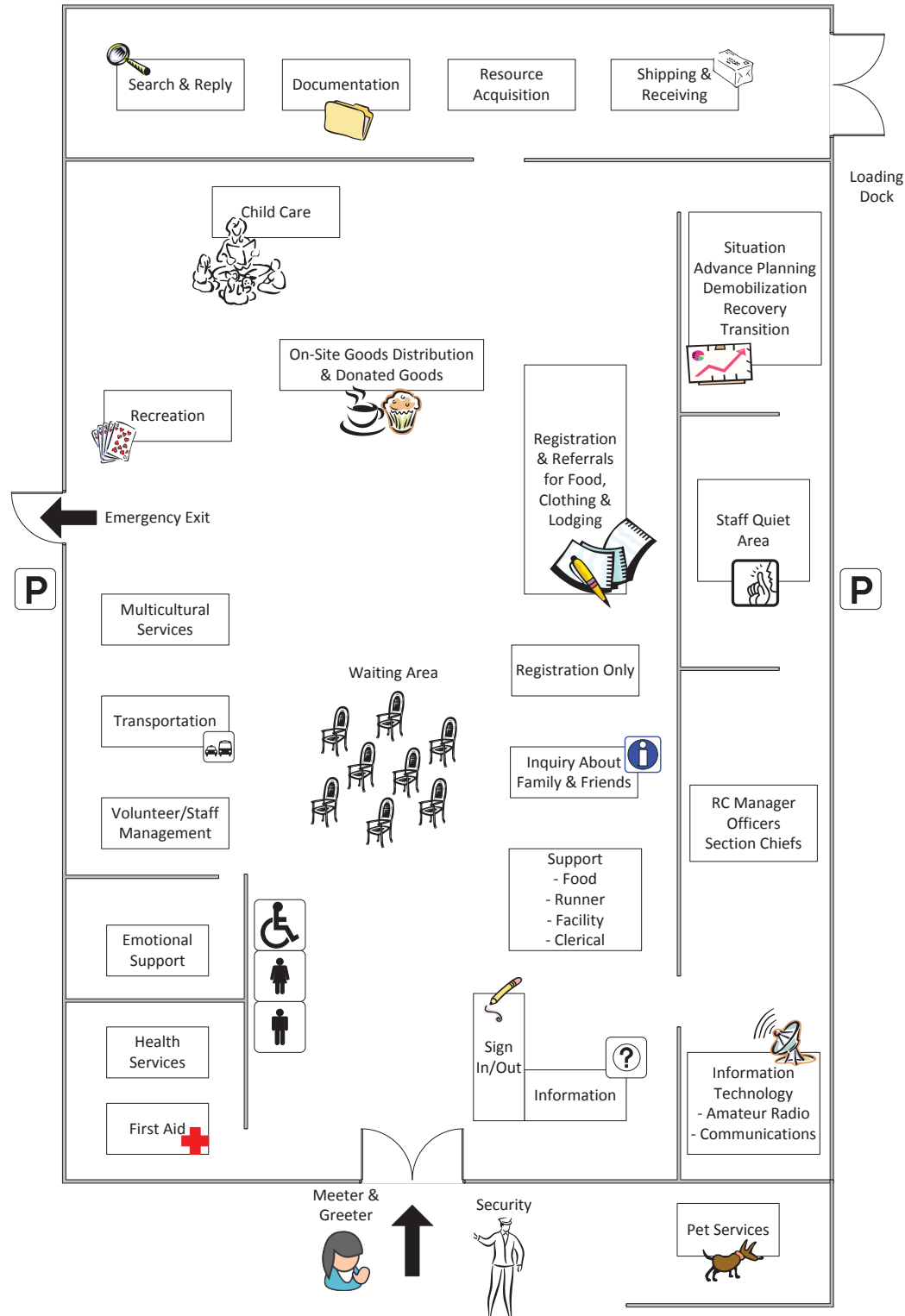
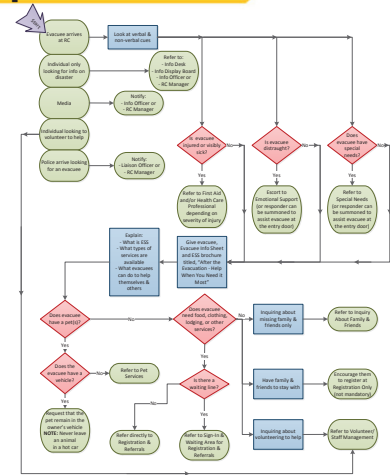


Figure 5: Sample Reception Centre Floor Plan — Full Services (PPT slide 17)

Working in a Reception Centre

- Guidelines
- Directing arrivals at the RC
 - Visitors to the RC
 - Flow chart
- Demobilizing



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JIBC School of Public Safety & Security Emergency Management Division

Guidelines for Working in a Reception Centre

Below are sample guidelines for ESS responders when working in a RC, which were adapted from the policies and procedures developed by the City of Richmond, North Shore Emergency Management Office, City of Vancouver (2010).

BELONGINGS

Security of evacuees' belongings is the responsibility of the evacuees. Recommend that valuables be locked in evacuees' cars and out of sight. If that is not possible, keep valuable items with them.

CALLING 911

It is appropriate to call 911 in the event:

- An event that involves an immediate threat to person or property: screams, attacks, gunshots, fire, accident with injuries or any other medical emergency
- A substantive, in-progress crime. This includes fights, break and enters (if there is a suspect on scene) or a report of an impaired driver
- A serious crime that has just occurred (e.g., sexual assault or robbery)
- A suspicious circumstance that may indicate an immediate criminal act (e.g., prowler, vandal)



Take note of the suspect/individual's descriptors:

- Height/weight
- Hair/eye colour
- Ethnicity/race
- Clothing
- Distinguishing features
- Name (if known)
- Vehicle descriptions/plate (if used)
- Weapon (if used)
- Suspected drug/alcohol/mental health issues

Please note that when you call 911, they will ask you the following: full name, date of birth, address and contact numbers. It is for the file and will not be divulged to the suspect/public.

CALLING NON-EMERGENCY

Call the appropriate non-emergency number for police/fire ambulance for all events not described above, but still require emergency personnel attendance, examples include:

- Reporting a crime with no suspect (e.g., theft)
- Reporting a crime with suspect, but suspect is not on the scene (e.g., fraud)
- Reporting a serious crime with suspect, but with a lengthy delay (e.g., assault that occurred last night)
- Non-emergency in-progress (e.g., drug use)
- On-going crime issues or crimes that are not in-progress (e.g., graffiti or ongoing drug dealing with no suspect on scene)

REGISTRATION

Evacuees can register at the Registration table. Registration is strongly recommended but not required, as it assists the ESS responders to meet evacuees' needs. Keep registration information confidential.

In addition to registration, ensure that evacuees sign in and sign out when they come and go from the facility. The primary reason for requiring sign in/out is for the safety and security of the evacuees. It allows staff to know that those in the facility belong there and also provides for accountability of the evacuees should the facility need to be evacuated. In some areas, sign in/out is required by the local fire departments in order to keep track of who is in the building.



CHILDREN/YOUTH SEPARATED FROM THEIR CAREGIVERS

Ensure that unattended children have appropriate supervision and care at the RC until they can be reunited with their family or until a social worker from the provincial/territorial children's services office (in BC, it's the Ministry of Children and Family Development [MCFD]) makes an alternative plan. Children/youth may arrive at a RC unaccompanied by their parents or other caregivers — advise your supervisor, who will consult with the RC Manager and/or the ESSD, who may contact the provincial/territorial children's services office since they have the legal responsibility for unattended children (anyone under the age of 19; in BC, call the Ministry's 24-hour After Hours Office for assistance: 310-1234 — no area code needed). All unattended children are to be registered with name, birth date, address and the name of parents or caregivers. The ESS file should be marked "restricted" — only social workers are responsible for releasing information regarding unattended children.

Children Under 13

A separate space within the RC should be set aside for child care. This space should be sufficiently open to allow outside observation. At all times there should be a minimum of two licensed and qualified child care providers looking after the children. If children arrive under the care of a teacher or day care provider these persons are expected to remain with the children at the facility. Children can only be released to their parents, adult siblings, foster parents, or legal guardians — not to neighbours, friends of the family, or other relatives. Check ID before releasing a child to the care of an adult.

If a caregiver must leave, first ask for confirmation regarding who has the authority to pick up the child.

Youth Aged 13 to 18

Adult support is required but ongoing supervision is not mandatory. Care should be provided in an area sufficiently open to allow outside observation. Youth may be encouraged to become volunteers. If a youth is a client of the provincial/territorial children's services office, a social worker should be involved. Youth are to be encouraged to remain at the RC but if they are determined to leave, responders should not attempt to stop them. If a youth leaves the centre, responders should attempt to learn where they are planning to go and how to reach them.

A social worker from the provincial/territorial children's services office should be requested for assistance. This social worker can generally assist in interviewing distressed children or help find childcare resources to augment RC staff.



CHILDREN/YOUTH — SUPERVISION

Parents are required to supervise their children/youth at all times. Children may not be left in the RC by their parents unless there are qualified and licensed child care workers on site. Responders can only look after children for short periods of time while their parents are completing paperwork. If no child care facilities are available, parents must take their children with them when they leave the RC. If children have been left in the facility inappropriately, talk to the parents upon their return and ensure they understand their responsibility for supervision of their children at all times.

CHILDREN/YOUTH — SUSPECTED ABUSE

Everyone who has a reason to believe that a child/youth has been or is likely to be physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited, or needs protection, is legally responsible to report the matter to a child protection worker. Notify your supervisor, who will inform the RC Manager and/or ESSD, who will then contact the provincial/territorial children's services office and determine what support can be provided to the family. The provincial/territorial children's services office will do a further assessment to determine what support is available.

DISPUTES

Everyone within a RC is to be treated with respect and dignity, without discrimination. There is equal access for all. Conflict between evacuees need to be dealt with immediately. Notify your supervisor and security. If you are not able to de-escalate safely, call the police.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Drugs and alcohol are not allowed in the RC. Keep in mind that this is a stressful time for evacuees and people may have had a drink or two and are not handling it well. Always ask for First Aid to assist, and assess the situation. There may be medical issues such as diabetes that may seem like an alcohol or drug issue. If the evacuee is quiet and can be helped to a cot there may be no need for anything else to be done except to remind the person of the no alcohol rule. If the evacuee is belligerent, ask security to assist. It may be necessary to ask the person to leave or to call the police to attend. Discuss the RC rules with the evacuee to ensure it does not happen again. If this involves children speak to the parents to have them stop this behaviour.

FIRST AID

First aid is an important element of a RC and should be available at all times. It is expected that the RC will do a certain amount of triage of evacuees as they are being interviewed and that evacuees with medical issues or special needs will be directed elsewhere.



FOOD DONATIONS

Health regulations do not make it possible for food donations to be accepted in a RC from the general public. If people show up on site with food donations, explain, as sensitively as possible that the food cannot be accepted. If people insist on leaving the food, accept it and it can be thrown out on site. Advise your supervisor, who will advise the RC Manager and/or ESS Director that this is happening so that the EOC or the municipal hall (if the EOC is not open) can ensure that appropriate media messaging is going out.

Restaurants are Foodsafe certified, therefore, food donations may be accepted from restaurants. Another option if restaurants want to contribute, is ask them for vouchers so that residents can be sent to the restaurant and/or take their information and if food needs to be ordered, it can be ordered from that restaurant. Ensure that the restaurant is not asking for compensation before accepting the food or vouchers.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Accurate, timely, and appropriate communications can help support the recovery of those affected by an emergency/disaster. Below are some examples of RC communication techniques and how they can be used to help the RC operate properly.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are a method of communicating with both the evacuees and staff. For evacuees, they can be used to post information such as news releases, messages from friends and family, and lists of available resources such as housing. Staff bulletin boards can be placed in the staff break area. They can be used for many of the same purposes: news releases, notes from friends and family, staff schedules, thank-you notes, and operational memos.

Operational Memos

Operational information may be communicated to staff by all levels of the RC management team. This information may be a directive, a thank-you for a job well done, or a staff schedule. These memos may be posted on a bulletin board or delivered in a staff meeting.

Shift Change Briefings

It is very important that the staff coming on shift be aware of what has taken place on the previous shifts. This is especially important in the Security and RC Manager functions. Each function should schedule about 30 minutes of overlap as the shift changes. This allows staff from both shifts to communicate with each other.



Staff Meetings

Communications with your supervisor must be two-way; otherwise, the relationship will eventually break down. Your supervisor will hold a staff meeting at least once per shift. Even if meetings last for only 15 minutes, they still provide a chance to communicate, relieve stress, and resolve problems.

Training

There will be times you will be asked to perform duties you have no experience in. Sometimes your supervisor will hold training sessions on the spot.

LANGUAGE/TRANSLATION

When needed, translation services may be provided to evacuees, if available. Usually, a youth or teen within the immediate family, other evacuees, or staff on site will have translation skills. As a last resort, a request can be made to the provincial/territorial ESS office (in BC, it's Emergency Management BC [EMBC]) to cover the costs of hiring a translator.

MEDIA

News media representatives may visit the RC. Politely but firmly direct the media to speak with the Information Officer or ESSD who may or may not be on site. If off site, provide a location and/or contact number. All media inquiries are to go through the Information Officer. If media are insistent that they wish to speak to evacuees, advise them that you will ask evacuees if they would like to speak to the media — outside the RC facility. If media are resistant to leaving, call security or the police if necessary.

MEDICAL ISSUES

A RC is a microcosm of society; behaviors that exist in the community will also exist in the RC. Expect to see behaviors related to mental illness, substance abuse, etc. Reported medically related information should be noted on the evacuee's registration card.

A Resident Behaving Strangely

Refer to Emotional Support unit if activated. If not activated, advise your supervisor who will contact the RC Manager and/or the ESS Director to request assistance.



Infectious Diseases

High standards for sanitation and hygiene are required to prevent the spread of disease in a RC. If viruses such as H1N1, Norwalk or norovirus are a concern at the time RC is being set up, it will be crucial to have health authority staff involved in the operation right from the start especially at the RC as it should be possible to screen people who have infectious diseases out of the ESS system when they arrive at a RC to register. Regular handwashing and sanitation procedures should be followed to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

PETS

With the exception of registered assistance animals, pets are generally not allowed inside the RC. It is the evacuees' responsibility to make provisions for their pet(s) prior to entering the RC. If evacuees need help locating a kennel or making other arrangements for their pet(s), direct them to the Pet Services area in the RC.

POWER

Facilities will only be opened up if they are suitable and have power. Very few RCs have back up power. ESS responders would only be asked to respond if it is safe or if safe transport can be arranged.

PRIVACY - SOCIAL MEDIA

Evacuees and responders must respect the privacy of others and limit any Facebook, Twitter and other social networking and internet blog posts to their personal experience only. It is not permitted to document and post the experience of other evacuees or responders.

SECURITY

Security is an important element of a RC and will be required for security patrols of the building and perimeter including parking area, traffic control, access to the facility, fire prevention, and control. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to request support from police or from a security agency. Priorities as the facility is activated include:

- Directing traffic
- Directing movement into the facility
- Identifying and clearing fire exits so they are unobstructed/easy to access
- Establishing security patrols and night watches

Continuing priorities include:

- Establishing regular security controls
- Ensuring security regulations are adhered to
- Maintaining security, fire and overnight fire watches (see the Security Function Checklist in Appendix B: RCOG, for further details)



The Security person will need to have the list of all evacuees who have signed in with him/her at all times.

The Security person will need to review each room where there may be people and must have the facility map with assembly areas, fire extinguishers, and exits labeled.

SMOKING

Smoking is permitted in designated outside smoking areas only.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

A list of expectations for evacuees should be posted in a prominent area. The Standards of Conduct sheet, sometimes referred to as the Evacuee Information Sheet, can be found in the RCOG (link to the RCOG is in Appendix B).

VANDALISM

If a minor is involved, address the issues with his/her parent(s) and make it their responsibility to stop the behaviour. Stress that this behaviour cannot continue and cannot reoccur. If necessary, contact security and/or the police. It is important to ensure the safety of your colleagues and evacuees and to make it obvious that we are aware of the behaviour and will address it.

VOLUNTEERING TO HELP

Encourage evacuees to help in the facility — there are many jobs that do not require special training. Evacuees who help maintain the RC can develop a sense of belonging and may take more responsibility for their actions.

WORKER CARE

Responders will be informed, educated, and supported in order to maximize their effectiveness as ESS responders while minimizing the risk of physical and emotional fatigue.

If you are having difficulty with your workload, please advise your supervisor. Worker care disaster response can result in working long hours helping people of all ages to understand and manage the many reactions, feelings, and challenges triggered by these stressful circumstances. ESS responders need to look after themselves in order to be able to help others. (See the Worker Care section in this participant guide)



Directing Arrivals at the Reception Centre

Upon arrival at a RC, evacuees should be met by a Meeter and Greeter. Meeters and Greeters do a rapid assessment of the evacuees by looking at both verbal and non-verbal cues and then refer them to the appropriate ESS.

If the evacuee is distraught, the Meeter and Greeter can escort the evacuee to an Emotional Support Worker. Any evacuees requiring an extra hand because of a special need such as a physical and/or mental disability, or seniors requiring assistance, etc., may be escorted to a Special Needs Worker. Alternatively, an Emotional Support Worker or a Special Needs Worker may be summoned to assist the evacuee at the entry door.

If an evacuee is injured or visibly sick, a Meeter and Greeter will escort them to First Aid. All serious injuries or illnesses should be referred to the hospital or clinic.

If emotional support, first aid, or special needs services are not required, they are given the Evacuee Information Sheet and ESS brochure titled “After the Evacuation — Help When You Need it Most”, which provides information such as:

- What ESS is
- What types of services are available
- What evacuees can do to help themselves and others

If an evacuee brings their pet to the RC, the Meeters and Greeters will request that while they are being helped in the RC, the pets remain in the owners’ vehicle (if vehicle is at RC) or be taken to the secure area established for pets. Depending on weather — never leave an animal in a vehicle even with a window cracked open, see Pet Services. Only registered assistance animals will be permitted inside the RC.

If an evacuee needs referrals for food, clothing, lodging, or other services, the Meeters and Greeters will refer them to the sign-in for service and waiting area. A numbering system (e.g., having a set of pre-printed, laminated numbers with the ESS Logo on the back) is helpful in keeping an orderly progression for each family unit to next available Registration and Referrals Worker. A place to sit, reading materials, and refreshments should be made available in the waiting area. Evacuees will be directed to a Registration and Referrals Worker when available. If there is no waiting line for services, the Meeters and Greeters can refer the evacuee directly to a Registration and Referrals Worker.

If an evacuee does not require any services (they have family or friends to stay with and have not lost their possessions) Meeters and Greeters will encourage them to register at Registration Only. Meeters and Greeters need to emphasize the importance of registering, however it is not mandatory.



Anyone not needing any assistance and only wanting to inquire about missing family or friends is to be referred to Inquiry About Family and Friends.

A mobile Registration and Referrals Worker's team can assist with the completion of the ESS File — Registration and Services Record (see Appendix B: RCOG) at the other areas within the RC, (e.g., for those people with special needs). Ideally, all ESS responders are cross-trained to provide Registration and Referrals to evacuees needing specialized services so that they do not need to be reintroduced to the mainstream waiting area.

A flow chart summarizing where the evacuee is referred to by the Meeter and Greeter after they arrive at a RC, is depicted in Figure 6.

VISITORS TO THE RECEPTION CENTRE

Individuals coming into the RC who are only looking for information on the disaster or the operation of the RC itself, may be referred by the Meeters and Greeters, to the Information Desk, and/or the Information Officer (IO) or RC Manager depending on the request. Having an information display board up can assist with lessening the need to engage the Information Officer or RC Manager, who will be very busy already.

Media should be provided with a *Media Visitor* tag and asked to wait in a secure area while the IO or RC Manager is notified of media being on-site. The IO or RC Manager will then proceed to the area where the media is waiting. This will reduce the risk of the media entering the RC and being able to hear confidential discussions/information, and potentially taking photos and/or video footage.

The RC Manager should contact the EOC for IO support. Whenever possible, the local authority should designate a trained IO to support the RC and, when necessary, speak with the media on behalf of the local authority.

Anyone coming into the RC to volunteer their services is directed to Volunteer/Staff Management. If there are a large number of walk-in volunteers, a table may be set-up outside where names and contact information can be taken for later use.

If police come in looking for a registered evacuee, notify the Liaison Officer or RC Manager, who will meet them at the door.



Directing Arrivals at the Reception Centre Flow Chart

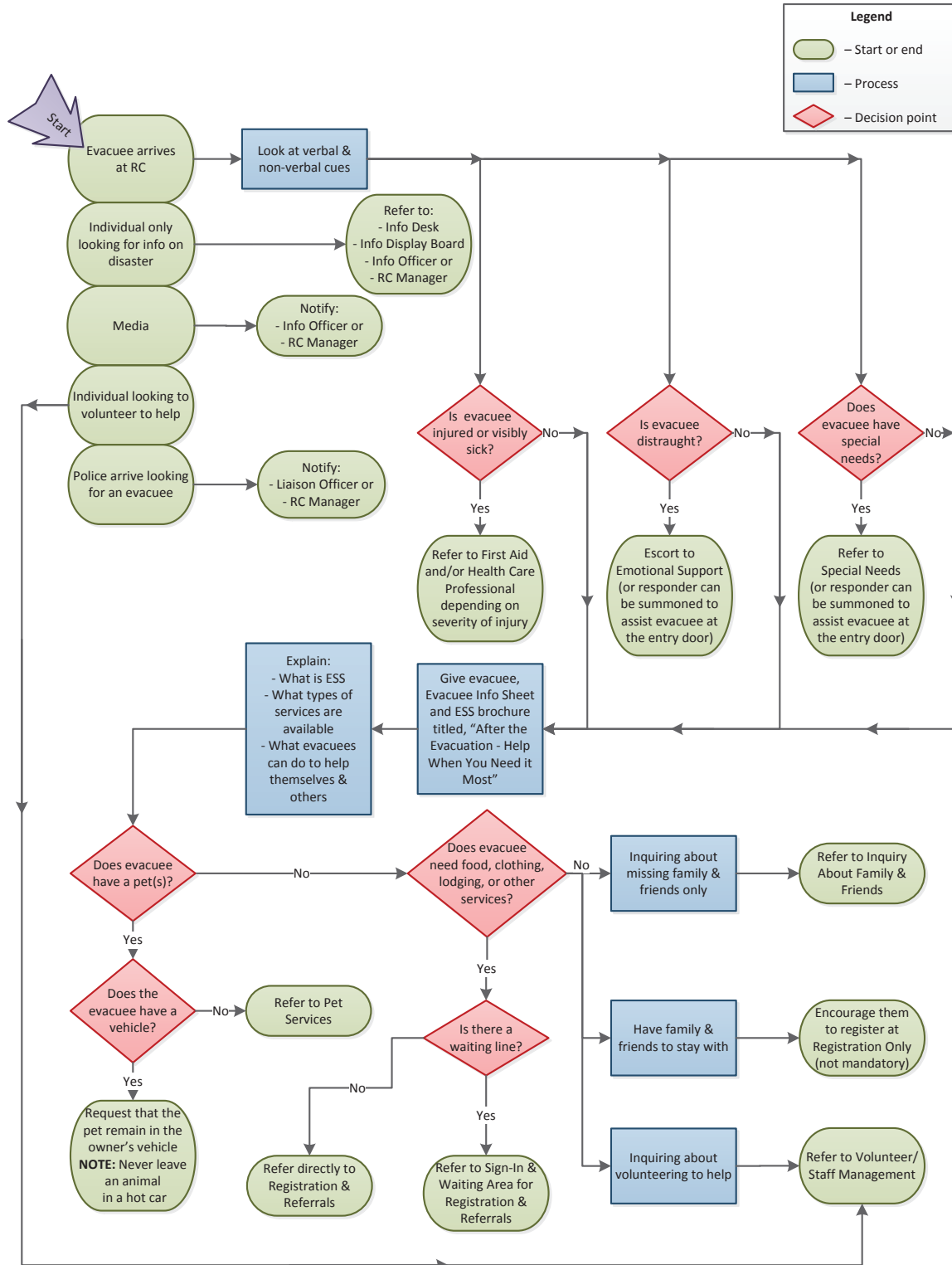


Figure 6: Directing Arrivals at the Reception Centre Flow Chart

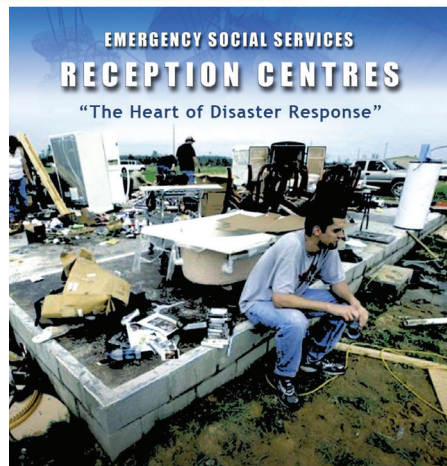
Demobilizing

When certain functions are no longer needed at RC, your supervisor will advise of when it is time to demobilize. Use the function checklist (link to RCOG is in Appendix B) to ensure you complete all of the demobilization activities before you leave. There are usually function specific activities as well as general activities such as the following:

- Identify/bring forward demobilization issues related to your assigned function
- Ensure incomplete/open actions are reported to your supervisor
- Complete all required forms, reports, and other documentation and submit all forms through your supervisor to the Planning Section, as appropriate, prior to departure
- Return equipment/supplies
- Clean up/organize your work area before leaving
- Participate in exit interview/debrief
- Sign out with Volunteer/Staff Management Branch
- Leave a forwarding number
- Access critical incident stress debriefing as needed
- Prepare to contribute to any post event processes (e.g., post-operational debriefs, after action reports etc.)

Working in a Reception Centre

- Module 3 review – Reception Centre Video





Working in a Reception Centre

Activity – Referrals Within the RC

- Participant guide – end of Module 3
- Assign a letter to the space for each situation
- **Hint:** Use guidelines & flow chart
- 5 minutes





Activity: Referrals Within the Reception Centre



When evacuees arrive at the RC, they should be met at the door by a Meeter and Greeter and be directed to the most appropriate station in the RC. Based on the information given in the scenarios below, which service(s) should the evacuee be referred to? Assign letter(s) to the space provided for each situation. Your choices are:

- a. Registration & Referrals b. First Aid c. Information d. Pet Services
e. Resource Acquisition f. Emotional Support g. Registration Only h. Inquiry
i. Special Needs j. Transportation k. Communications l. Child Care
m. Volunteer/Staff Management

- _____ 1. An evacuated family, who has already registered and received services returns to the RC to check on the safety and whereabouts of their neighbour who is a single mom of two preschoolers.
- _____ 2. A gentleman appears visibly shaken and anxious.
- _____ 3. A group of nine young teens (ages 13-15) approach the RC. They were told by the police to evacuate their community & report to the RC.
- _____ 4. A retired couple can stay with friends but is asking what they can do with their two golden retrievers.
- _____ 5. A young male approaches you, in obvious distress. He caught his finger in the car door as he was coming to the RC. He says his finger is throbbing.
- _____ 6. Two older women slowly approach the RC. When you greet them, they tell you they didn't get a chance to bring their pills.
- _____ 7. A young couple with an infant and a toddler indicates that if they can just use a phone, they can probably stay with a friend. If they can't reach the friend, they would need accommodation and food.
- _____ 8. A young couple heard about the evacuation on the radio and has just arrived to see if they can be of any assistance.
- _____ 9. A family wants to check out the rumour that there is a public meeting tonight regarding the disaster situation.



Working in a Reception Centre

Activity – Addressing Challenges

- Participant guide – end of Module 3
- Write your answers on a flip chart
- **Hint:** Use guidelines & flow chart
- 15 minutes
- Share with the class





Activity: Addressing Challenges



As a member of the local ESS team, you may encounter some of the following challenges. Answer the questions in the space provided.

1. As a new ESS responder, you accompany the RC Manager to the community's only RC. It is cold, dark and raining when you arrive. There are people already lined up outside the facility. The RC Manager tries to open the doors with her keys but cannot gain access. What will you do?

2. You are the only member of the Communications team responding to a call-out. The RC Manager seeks your assistance, as he has not received any communication from the Emergency Operations Centre. He is feeling isolated and uninformed and is becoming frustrated. How can you help him?

3. You are a Resource Acquisition Worker and as you pass the refreshments area, the Food Unit Supervisor summons you. The kitchen has suddenly gone dark just as his team is getting organized. He asks you to find someone who can help. What will you do?



4. Mavis, well known in the community as a person with mental illness, shows up at the RC. As a Meeter and Greeter, you are very uncomfortable with her outbursts. How might you handle this situation?

5. You take a quick break from your Registration Only station, when you notice an elderly couple sitting alone on a bench. They appear lost and sad and are comforting one another. Something inside tells you to approach them. They don't speak English. You are busy, but you don't want to leave them — what can you do?

6. As Pet Services Worker, you are concerned as most families are arriving at the RC with their pets. Your team has the capability of managing only 20 dogs and 20 cats. What should you start doing in preparation for more animals?

7. You are a female ESS responder who hears a frail call for help from the men's washroom. What will you do?



8. During a break, you are standing outside the RC where you witness several people passing a brown paper bag to each other and each person taking a drink. As a Meeter and Greeter, what action will you take?

9. Youngsters are chasing each other in the main reception area. Evacuees ask you to have them stop making so much noise and slow down as somebody may become injured. As a busy Registration and Referrals Worker how will you handle this?

10. A number of community residents show up at the RC with containers of home cooking. You know that a RC should not accept home cooking. As a Meeter and Greeter, how will you handle this situation?





// **MODULE 4**

Emotional Response

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- List factors that may affect people's reaction to loss
- List common reactions to disasters from adult and child survivors
- Explain how responders can help survivors cope
- Describe the sources of stress for ESS responders
- Identify common signs of stress in ESS responders
- Create a self-care plan

Emotional Response

- Effects of disasters on people
 - Factors affecting reaction to loss
 - Common reactions
 - Helping survivors cope



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Effects of Disasters on People

Disasters affect people in different ways. In some disaster situations it may mean loss of loved ones, including relatives, friends, neighbours, or family pets. In others, it means loss of home and property, furnishings, and important or cherished belongings. Sometimes it means starting over with a new home or business. The emotional effects of loss and disruption may show up immediately or appear many months later.

It is very important to understand that there is a natural grieving process following any loss and that a disaster of any size will cause unusual and unwanted stress in those attempting to reconstruct their lives. These may cause normal reactions.

FACTORS AFFECTING REACTION TO LOSS

Although there are similarities in our feelings and reactions to loss, human grief, like human pain, is highly personal. The following factors have been found to influence individual response to grief:

- The circumstances or extent of circumstances surrounding the loss
- Age
- Life experience
- Individual personality
- Value systems, beliefs, and coping style
- Available social and financial support



COMMON REACTIONS

Following the disaster, survivors will express a range of emotional reactions. Typical first reactions include (Ministry of Justice, n.d.):

- Disbelief and shock
- Disorientation and numbness
- Fear
- Reluctance to abandon or leave property
- Problems with concentration or memory
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Need for information
- Wanting to help other disaster survivors

Post incident responses may include:

- Frustration and anxiety
- Anger and suspicion
- Moodiness and irritability
- Apathy and depression
- Crying
- Fatigue, low energy
- Change in appetite
- Digestive problems
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Headaches
- Feelings of powerlessness and of being overwhelmed
- Guilt over being unable to prevent the disaster
- Disappointment with, and rejection of, outside help
- Isolation from family, friends, or social activities
- Domestic violence

Effects on children may include:

- A return to earlier behaviour, e.g., thumb sucking or bed wetting
- Clinging to parents, crying
- Reluctance to go to bed
- Nightmares
- Fantasies that the disaster never happened
- Inability to concentrate
- Withdrawal, immobility



HELPING SURVIVORS COPE

The fear of recurrence is a normal reaction that will usually subside as time passes. Explaining to survivors that fear is a normal adaptive reaction, a life-saving emotion, can be reassuring to them.

As mentioned earlier, a common first reaction is wanting to help other disaster survivors. Those who want to help can be referred to Volunteer Services.

Engaging survivors in their own recovery is one of the most effective ways to help them in their recovery (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008).

Responders can encourage survivors to give themselves positive instructions in difficult situations or talk through an event. Some examples of positive talk include, “It’s natural to feel anxious, to feel weak.” or “These feelings are natural! It’s okay to have these feelings even if they are uncomfortable.” By learning to give themselves permission to feel these emotions, they will gradually start to accept them as normal.


Responders can help survivors to see their anxiety as a normal part of their reaction to the disaster. As well, they need to realize that human beings are vulnerable and though they cannot control the situation, they are not helpless. A survivor’s responses to a situation can be controlled by being prepared or by using coping strategies.

Strategies that can be used with children may include:


- Encouraging parents to talk to their children about their feelings — they will find that many feelings are shared, regardless of age
- Encouraging the children to draw pictures of the disaster — this will help their caregivers understand how they view what happened
- Talking with children about what happened — provide factual information that they can understand, talk about their family’s preparedness, including the role the children can take
- Reassuring the children that they are safe — repeat this assurance as often as necessary
- Encouraging parents to hold their children — touch provides extra reassurance that someone is there to comfort their child
- Encouraging parents to spend extra time with them, especially at bedtime
- Encouraging parents to relax rules, and praise and recognize responsible behaviour

Emotional Response

- Worker care
 - Sources of stress
 - Signs of stress
 - Looking after yourself
 - Before your shift
 - During your shift
 - After your shift



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Worker Care

During a response, responders may be exposed directly or indirectly to heartbreaking devastation and loss, and to the related stress and trauma. How responders react to these emotional demands depend on several variables including:

- The circumstances of the disaster
- The nature of the response environment and their role
- Their level of preparedness
- Any pre-existing personal stressors or trauma

Even experienced responders may at times feel overwhelmed and experience difficult stress reactions during or after the response.

The Safety Officer implements worker care measures to ensure safety for evacuees and responders in the RC, however, the RC Manager is responsible for worker welfare and worker care at a RC, as is the EOC Director in the EOC. Ultimately, it is the response organization or agency's responsibility to see to the physical and emotional well being of their responders, however, all ESS responders are to be aware and look out for each other.

SOURCES OF STRESS FOR ESS RESPONDERS

The pace of an operation is accelerated to provide the most assistance to the largest number of people in the shortest possible time, so the lives of survivors are back to pre-disaster state as soon as possible. Stress resulting from disaster can come from many sources (Ministry of Health, 2007):



Event-Related Stressors

- Distressing sights, sounds, or smells from attending a mass casualty incident
- Prolonged exposure to the event
- Experiencing unsafe or unhealthy working conditions

Occupational Stressors

- Working under time pressures
- Working in a physically demanding environment requiring long hours, strength, stamina, or endurance in adverse conditions
- Being exposed to trauma stories from evacuees
- Dealing with limited resources and high expectations

Organizational Stressors

- Working with unclear, inadequate, or inconsistent supervision or leadership
- Lacking effective communication and information dissemination
- Unaddressed or acknowledged conflict

Environmental Stressors

- Working in extreme weather conditions such as heat waves, cold, rain
- Working in environmental hazards such as poor air and water quality

SIGNS OF STRESS IN RESPONDERS

Emergency responders may react to stress in a variety of ways. Following is a list of common signs of stress among responders (MoH, 2007):

- Loss of spirit, hope
- Grandiose beliefs or ideas in what you can or should do
- Recklessness, ignoring policies and procedures
- Cynicism, despair
- Loss of ideals, not caring
- Self-medicating (with alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, drugs)
- Isolating self
- Irritability, anger at the organization
- Mistrust of colleagues, supervisors
- Inappropriate behaviour with survivors



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

In order to look after others, responders need to look after themselves first. The following was adapted from *Stress Tips*, which were developed by the British Columbia Disaster Worker Care Committee as a guide for emergency responders on what they can do before, during, and after their shifts to relieve stress.

Before Your Shift

- Assemble grab and go bag
- Update your personal preparedness plan
- Complete a self-assessment
- Communicate with your family/friends/employer

During Your Shift

- Know when your shifts start and end
- Know who is in charge
- Check in with yourself several times during your shift:
 - How am I doing? What do I need?
- Take 5 minutes alone or with a colleague
- Get up, stretch and take a deep breath
- Drink water
- Take toilet breaks
- Fuel yourself — eat healthy, as close as possible to regular meal times
- Look out for each other — buddy system
- Talk clearly and calmly
- Take time to listen
- Address issues when they arise
- Remember to smile
- Ask for help if you need it



After Your Shift is Over

- Get together with colleagues
- Find some way to connect
- Get some sleep
- Get some exercise
- Fuel yourself — eat healthy
- Check-in with family and friends
- Do what is relaxing for you
- Talking helps
- If alcohol is used for relaxation, use in moderation

Emotional Response

Activity – Planning for Self-Care

- Participant guide – end of Module 4
- Write down the answers to the questions
- 10 minutes
- Share with the class





Activity: Planning for Self-Care

Write down the activities you would engage in to care for yourself before, during, and after a response.

Before a Response:

During a Response:

After a Response:



Course Wrap-up

- Review learning outcomes
- Course debriefing
 - Comments
 - Questions
- Course assessment
- Evaluation forms



Thank you!







// **APPENDIX A**

Acronyms



BCCPD	BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
BCERMS	British Columbia Emergency Response Management System
CRCS	Canadian Red Cross Society
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
EMBC	Emergency Management BC
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPC	Emergency Program Coordinator
ESS	Emergency Social Services
ESSD	Emergency Social Services Director
GL	Group Lodging
GLOG	Group Lodging Operational Guidelines
ICS	Incident Command System
JIBC	Justice Institute of British Columbia
MCFD	Ministry of Children and Family Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MST	Mobile Support Team
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSEMO	North Shore Emergency Management Office
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
PREOC	Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre
PSC	Public Safety Canada
RC	Reception Centre
RCOG	Reception Centre Operational Guidelines
SJA	St. John Ambulance
TSA	The Salvation Army





// **APPENDIX B**

Resources



Resources for Further Reference

ESS Documentation Unit Explained Videos — JIBC & EMBC

- a training tool that has been developed to assist ESS teams in the operation of documentation units. The video trilogy describes how to work in an ESS reception centre documentation unit before, during, and after a disaster. ESS teams are encouraged to make use of the video for in-house training and review
- Part I: Before a Disaster www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGhZ12fIrdM
- Part II: During a Disaster www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OF0XIFaq-U
- Part III: After a Disaster www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnATx-4Earo

ESS Field Guide — EMBC

- provides information regarding the BC structure for the provision of ESS and clarification on the various procedures and guidelines for use by local authority ESS teams
- www.ess.bc.ca/ under *Publications*

ESS Mobile Guide iOS (iDevice) & Android Apps, ESS2go — JIBC & EMBC

- designed for RC and GL management team members, this App can be used during an emergency or disaster as a practical tool. Create and store your team contacts, use function checklists, refer to guides/standards, plan with interactive maps, and more!
- available for free



ESS Office — EMBC

- provides resources such as field guides, operational guidelines, forms, templates, etc. to support ESS for communities
- www.ess.bc.ca

ESS Quick Reference Guide — JIBC

- provides those on the management team who are learning about and working in the RC and GL, with some basic prompts and reminders of the RC and GL operations, tasks, and activities
- full-colour, UV coated, and customized copies of this quick reference guide are available for purchase from the JIBC
- an electronic version can be freely downloaded from the My EM Resources site (see My EM Resources)

ESS Training Program — JIBC & EMBC

- provides information regarding ESS courses that are offered by the JIBC in partnership with EMBC
- www.jibc.ca/ess

**My Emergency Management Resources — JIBC**

- a free-access portal created and maintained by the JIBC Emergency Management Division. Designed to meet the needs of all communities, agencies and private businesses across Canada, My EM Resources is of particular benefit to remote organizations and those with limited access to funding for training or exercising
- view, download, save, and print training videos, virtual interactive training tools, dynamic forms/charts, exercise packages, course materials, documents, posters, and quick reference guides
- www.myemresources.com

Reception Centre Operational Guidelines (RCOG) — EMBC

- a comprehensive manual that provides the BC organizational structure, function checklists, and function aids (e.g., forms, instructions, templates, etc.) to assist ESS responders in the operation of a RC during all levels of response, from a small scale incident to a large complex evacuation
- www.ess.bc.ca under *Publications*

Reception Centre Video — JIBC & EMBC

- a training tool that has been developed to assist ESS teams in the operation of RCs. The 15 minute video, narrated by Marke Driesschen, describes the set up, functions and services of a RC. ESS teams are encouraged to make use of the video for in-house training and review, or as a reference in the set up of a RC
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=X14k-zYF0dM



// **APPENDIX C**

Course Outline

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Course Code:	EMRG-1610
Short Title:	Intro to Reception Centres
Long Title:	Introduction to Reception Centres
Prerequisites:	EMRG-1600 Introduction to Emergency Social Services
Co-requisites:	N/A
School:	Public Safety
Division/Academy/Centre:	Emergency Management Division
Previous Code & Title:	ESS114 Introduction to Reception Centres, ESS111 and ESS200 Reception Centre
Course First Offered:	April 2013

Credits:	0
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Course Description

Learn about the basic functions of a reception centre during emergencies or disasters. This three and a half (3.5) hour course covers the fundamentals for ESS responders who may be called upon to work in, or support the activities at a reception centre.

Course Goals

To prepare ESS responders for working in local facilities designated as reception centres.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the services in a reception centre
2. Explain the roles and responsibilities of the functions in a reception centre
3. Outline how to set-up and work in a reception centre
4. Plan for self-care

Course Topics/Content

- Reception centre services
- Function roles and responsibilities in a reception centre
- Reception centre set-up and work
- Self-care plan

Text & Resource Materials

Province of BC. (2013). *Introduction to Reception Centres Participant Guide*. New Westminster, BC: Emergency Management Division, Justice Institute of British Columbia.

COURSE OUTLINE

Equivalent JIBC Courses

None.

Instructional Method(s)* (select all that apply)	Total Hours	Instructional Factor	Total Factored Hours
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct Instruction (lecture, seminar, role plays, independent study, etc.)	3.5	1	3.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervised Practice (includes simulations & labs)		.5	
<input type="checkbox"/> Practice Education, Field Placement, Internship or Co-op		.33	
Totals	3.5		3.5

*Refer to http://www.jibc.ca/sites/default/files/governance/policies/pdf/Procedure_Credit-Value.pdf

This course is available online and face-to-face.

Course Evaluation

The evaluation criteria used for this course are represented below. Specific course evaluation information will be provided by the instructor at the start of the course.

Criterion	% of Final Grade (may be represented as a range)
Course work (activities, assignments, essays, reports, etc.)	
Quizzes and exams	100%
Simulations/Labs	
Attendance/Participation (in class or online)	
Practice Education/Internships	
Total	100%

Comments on Evaluation

Course Grading Scheme*

☐ JIBC1 (A to F) ☐ JIBC2 (MAS/NMA) ☒ JIBC3(CM/IN) ☐ JIBC4 (P/F)

(* <http://www.jibc.ca/policy/3304> Grading policy)



COURSE OUTLINE

Other Course Guidelines, Procedures and Comments

View official versions of related JIBC academic regulations and student policies in the JIBC Calendar on the following pages of the JIBC website:

Academic Regulations:

<http://www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/jibc-calendar/academic-regulations>

Student Academic Integrity Policy
Academic Progression Policy
Admissions Policy
Academic Appeals Policy
Evaluation Policy
Grading Policy

Student Policies:

<http://www.jibc.ca/about-jibc/governance/policies>

Access Policy
Harassment Policy – Students
Student Records Policy
Student Code of Conduct Policy

JIBC Core Competencies

The JIBC promotes the development of core and specialized competencies in its programs. Graduates of our programs will demonstrate high levels of competence in the following areas:

- ☐ **Critical thinking:** Identify and examine issues and ideas; analyze and evaluate options in a variety of fields with differing assumptions, contents and methods.
- ☐ **Communication, Oral and written:** Demonstrate effective communication skills by selecting the appropriate style, language and form of communication suitable for different audiences and mediums.
- ☐ **Leadership:** Inspire individuals and teams to reach their potential by embracing innovation through strategic thinking and shared responsibility.
- ☐ **Independent learning:** Show initiative by acting independently in choosing effective, efficient and appropriate applied learning, research and problem solving strategies.
- ☐ **Globally minded:** Self-aware of own identity and culture, recognize the interconnectedness of world events and issues; interact respectfully and authentically across cultures; value multiple perspectives; utilize curiosity to learn with and from others.
- ☐ **Problem solving:** State problems clearly; effectively and efficiently evaluate alternative solutions; choose solutions that maximize positive and minimize negative outcomes.
- ☐ **Interpersonal relations:** Know and manage ourselves; recognize and acknowledge the needs and emotions of others including those with diverse cultures, backgrounds and capabilities.
- ☐ **Inter-professional teamwork:** Understand and work productively within and between groups, respect others' perspectives and provide constructive feedback with special attention to inter-professional relationships.
- ☒ **Information literacy:** Recognize and analyze the extent and nature of an information need; efficiently locate and retrieve information; evaluate it and its sources critically, and use information effectively and ethically.





// **APPENDIX D**

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