

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

COLIN MATHIE

Overview

Strategic Overview (provide an overview of the departments current position)

The Safety and Emergency Management Department was created in August 2023 and its objective is to ensure that attention and effort can be focused on delivering sustainable improvements to community safety and emergency management.

I commenced work with KCFN on August 9, 2023. My efforts so far have been to learn about our community, the people and the projects that have been completed, those that were ongoing and the ones needed to be planned for the future.

Our department is focusing on supporting our people right now where they are at and developing projects that will benefit our people long term, both at home and away. For our department, Public Safety and Emergency Management, much of KCFNs authority relates to how we do these things within our territory, however, this empowers us to develop approaches and practices that work for us, based upon and incorporating our culture and our heritage. We can then take those approaches and practices, demonstrate that they work and will lead to better outcomes and then petition other governments to find ways to incorporate them into their approaches.

We are focusing on ensuring our voice is heard when it comes to Canada and British Columbia working to modernize policing legislation and we continue to advocate for better emergency medical care.

To the role of Director of Safety and Emergency Management, I bring nearly 24 years of experience in community safety and emergency response. I have experience in responding to wildfires, house fires, car accidents, marine oil spills, shipboard fires, aircraft incidents, lost persons, flooding, storm damage (cyclones), tsunami threats and earthquakes. I am passionate to share my skills, knowledge and ability, to develop others and have them share the passion I have for helping people.

Financial Overview Provide an overview of the department's financial journey to this point. How is the department funded, federal gov't, grants, etc.)

Treaty funding and grants. So far this year we have been successful in obtaining over \$700,000.00 in grant funding.

Functional Overview (Provide an overview of the department's current roles and responsibilities, common functions, including operations, employees, structure, information, technology, etc.)

Our department is under development, Elizabeth Jack continues her great work within the department as Emergency Management Service Coordinator, always ready to care for and help the community. Liz works to coordinate our First Responder roster and supports the operations of our CNCGA unit, she ensures that our First Responders and CNCGA Volunteers have access to training, equipment and support.

As a team, our efforts are largely focused on three areas; our First Responder Program, project work that will allow us to continue building community resilience to emergency situations and, engagements and discussions with the Province and Canada related to Public Safety that will help shape reforms and improve services that will benefit all of our Nations members.

First Responder Program

The KCFN First Responder Program is a credit to the Nation and we will continue work to strengthen this program. I want to extend gratitude and acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our current First Responders.

Currently we have First Responders for medical emergencies and marine emergencies and we are continuing to develop our responders for fire emergencies. Our First Responder Program will keep developing and we will start to see procedures come into effect for responding to incidents, this will include how many responders we should have responding to a particular type of incident.

Please note, our current First Responder Program should not be expected to break up fights or to diffuse a volatile situation. This is not their role, they have not been trained to undertake this type of work. Work is continuing to develop a fourth type of First Responder that will be trained to help diffuse situations that are escalated. A training program specific for our Nations is currently being finalized.

Projects that have been completed -

- Community Safety Workshop with the Ha'wiih Advisory Council – to gather their views on what community safety can look like into the future and how we can bring culture into our practices now and into the future.
- Firesmart Community grant – a structural protection fire trailer has been obtained and is now located in Houpsitas. This trailer contains equipment that will enable us to protect homes and important infrastructure in the event that a wildfire threatens Houpsitas.
- Emergency Operations Centre training for staff.
- CRI-680 Community resiliency investment program for fuel mitigation around Houpsitas to reduce the risk of wildland fire threatening our community.

Ongoing Projects -

1. Emergency Medical Responder Training – growing our First Responder Team
2. Emergency Operations Centre training for staff - We will be seeking to schedule one more training session under our current grant.
3. Coastal First Nations Coast Guard Auxiliary development - Ensuring our CNCGA members have had access to training and equipment has been a priority. We have also been seeking documentation to help bring about a consistency of operations. Our hope is that we will be close to moving to operational status by April.
4. Development of a Communications Portal for Integrated Incident Response (CPIIR) - This work is ongoing, we now have enhanced communications equipment that will enable us to have a robust communications network amongst our Nations vessels, and will form the backbone of connecting with the Canadian Coastguard during incident response.
5. Co-developing community response to oil spills - Work is ongoing in collaboration with the Lands and Resources team.
6. Trauma Training to support our First Responders, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge in how to debrief and care for themselves following an incident response - Work is continuing to build the capacity to deliver the training to our First Responders, this is also linked to project 1 and 9.
7. CRI-680 Community resiliency investment program for fuel mitigation around Houpsitas to reduce the risk of wildland fire threatening our community - Currently we are seeking funding opportunities to expand and develop the project to provide a more holistic assessment of the area surrounding Houpsitas.
8. Kwiiis Hen Niip - Change: seeking ways to improve Emergency care services in rural and remote First Nation communities in BC - Work is ongoing to seek tangible ways to improve delivery of emergency care services in our community. This work is connected to project 1 and 6.
9. Enforcement Guide review (developed by Ratcliffe) - The draft guide has been provided for review, prior to moving forward with revisions, project 12 will be undertaken prior to provide important context.
10. Emergency Preparedness guide for visitors to our territory - Development of a guide for visitors to our territory to provide important emergency information to help them enhance their safety.
11. Filming Guidelines – implementation - Implementing the revisions as requested by the Executive, then developing a change management plan to guide the implementation of the guidelines.
Consultation undertaken with Media One, Creative BC is next.
12. Community Safety Workshops - Delivery of 3 workshops to help inform the approach we will take to community safety programs and practices. First Workshop is complete.
13. Police Oversight and Modernization - Ongoing engagements with the Province and Canada in relation to the work that they are doing (independent of one another) in the areas of policing as they related to public safety funding and police service delivery.
14. Emergency Management Act – implementation - Working with the Province on the implementation of the newly adopted Emergency Management Act, ensuring that we are advocating for a distinctions- based approach.

15. Community Boat Safety Program - Working to develop a grant application that would help KCFN obtain boat safety equipment for our Nations Members that own their own boat.
16. Natural Hazards Risk Assessment – Kyuquot - Execution of a Risk Assessment for Kyuquot and surrounds that will help inform future mitigation projects and provide valuable information to support grant and funding applications.
17. Development of First Responder Guidelines – Supporting the development and expansion of the program.
18. Next Gen 9-1-1, developing place identifiers for Houpsitas
19. Mobile Communications Infrastructure – UBCM grant to ensure communications equipment is available and operational in the event of a disaster

Vision of the Department (what does the future vision look like?)

In all things that our department does, we seek to contribute to the following;

“The Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ government assumes the responsibility of providing measures to protect the health, safety and welfare of Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ citizens and to protect Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ lands for present and future generations of Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ citizens. This includes assisting in the preparation for, response to and recovery from an emergency, health hazard or disaster on Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ lands, or with present or imminent effects on Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ lands.”

KCFN Emergency Preparedness Act 60/2020

AND;

“Promote a healthy and prosperous future that ensures the continued existence of the Ka:’yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ First Nations as strong political, social and cultural communities that aspire to grow as organized, determined, successful and self-reliant peoples.”

KCFN Lands Act 12/2011

Our focus is on ensuring that the strengths of our community are incorporated into our approaches to foster a healthy and safe environment. Our department continues to seek to educate and empower community members to encourage voluntary compliance with the community’s collective expectations (and laws).

We seek to partner with outside agencies to ensure that they are serving the community in a good way. We avoid adopting broken or oppressive systems and we strive to ensure that we develop systems and processes that reinforce the strengths and values of our community.

We must stress that our First Responder Program will continue to develop, we need to ensure our people are trained, equipped and feel confident to respond. This is for their safety and the wellbeing of our community. We encourage interested people to speak to us about the program and ways that they can participate.

Where possible we will continue to identify, recruit, develop, and train community members for roles that we require to deliver the services that we need. We will develop relationships with people to mentor and guide our team members to ensure that they feel supported and empowered in their roles.