

**EVACUATION OF FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES IN ONTARIO:
ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED PRACTICES**

By

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In

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**We accept this thesis as conforming
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines issues, challenges, lessons learned, and best practices for Ontario municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees. Municipalities that hosted First Nations evacuees in the past or stated interest in hosting evacuees in the future were engaged to participate in this study. Using a mixed-method research methodology, research participants carried out one-on-one telephone interviews or completed survey questionnaires. The research findings suggest that challenges faced by municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees could be alleviated with an increase of knowledge of expectations and roles and responsibilities, development and enhancement of relationships with key stakeholders, including First Nations groups, and more proactive planning activities in the pre-evacuation stages. Recommendations are provided for (1) Ontario host municipalities, so they can better meet the needs of First Nations evacuees, and (2) Emergency Management Ontario, so it can assist municipalities to better prepare in effectively hosting these groups.

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ACRONYMS AND TERMS

Acronyms

CEMC – Community Emergency Management Coordinator

EMO – Emergency Management Ontario

EOC – Emergency Operations Centre

INAC – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

JEMS – Joint Emergency Management Steering Committee

NAN – Nishnawbe-Aski Nation

PHAC – Public Health Agency of Canada

Terms

The term *First Nation(s)* is used throughout this paper as an alternative to the term *Indian*, a term highlighted in the Indian Act (1985), as the latter term is considered outdated and inappropriate.

The term *First Nations community* refers to “a small group of Aboriginal people residing in a single locality and forming part of a larger Aboriginal nation or people” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1996, p. 8).

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CHAPTER 1: FOCUS AND FRAMING

According to the 2006 Canadian Census, First Nations make up a total of 1,172,790 or 3.8% of the country's population (Ontario, 2008). The province of Ontario has the largest number of First Nations inhabitants whereby one fifth or 242,495 of those reporting to be Aboriginal reside within its jurisdictional boundaries. An estimated 20% of First Nations in Ontario reside within 134 reservations or "tracts of land ... that [have] been set apart by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of a band" (Indian Act, 1985, Interpretation section, para. 2). Epp, Haque, and Peers (1998) observed that the geographic location of many First Nations communities in Canada increases their vulnerability to surrounding natural hazards. A number of these communities are located near lakes or rivers, and are at significant risk of flooding. Others are encircled by forests, which increases their risk of forest fires. Often being remote and isolated, these communities with poor infrastructure also have greater susceptibility to health hazards. As of January 2009, more than 103 First Nations communities across the country were under a drinking water advisory (Health Canada, 2008). All of these hazards increase the likelihood of an emergency occurring within a First Nations community.

When such emergencies occur, First Nations residents are often evacuated to areas of lower risk, most often to municipalities outside reservation boundaries, where they temporarily reside until the threat passes. Often, municipalities that receive First Nations evacuees are ill prepared to host them and are unaware of the challenges, expectations, and best practices associated with accommodating these evacuees.

This research sought to answer one key question: What are the current main issues with and recommended enhancements to the existing process used by Ontario

municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees? Furthermore, the following research questions were examined: (1) What issues and challenges exist for municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees? and (2) Which “best practices,” observations, or “lessons learned” could best guide Ontario host municipalities when serving as host for First Nations evacuees? This chapter explores the significance of these questions, and provides a broad context for the research topic.

The Opportunity and Its Significance

This study sought to highlight the challenges and associated recommended practices of hosting First Nations evacuees. The research findings should assist host communities to better meet the needs of First Nations evacuees and provide valuable information to decision makers so they can address these issues in order to better prepare municipalities in effectively hosting First Nations evacuees.

The research is timely in that First Nations communities in Ontario continue to be threatened by hazards that often result in the evacuation of their populace. However, few studies have actually examined related issues or documented lessons learned related to the hosting of First Nations evacuees. If history is a reflection of the future, then one can safely deduce that First Nations in Ontario will continue to live on reservation lands, and be subject to emergencies that will require the evacuation of their residents to outside municipalities. A number of First Nations communities in Ontario (e.g., Attawapiskat, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Sandy Lake, Deer Lake, and Keewaywin) have already experienced emergencies that resulted in the evacuation of their residents. These (and other) evacuations were initiated for a variety of reasons including forest fires, health emergencies, and flooding.

Scanlon (2001) argued that we must learn from the past, as it is not a question of if an emergency will occur, but when it will occur. Scanlon stated: “Since there is an amazing amount of untapped material on past disasters, one step in the right direction may be to spend more time appraising past events and documenting their lessons” (p. 12). The past may also provide insight into future emergency occurrences. Scanlon argued that if an emergency has occurred in an area, the likelihood of it occurring again is greater. Reputed social scientists (Quarantelli, 1991; Scanlon, 2001) have predicted that the future holds nothing promising with respect to emergencies and disasters. Quarantelli (1991) suggested that disasters in the future will be characterized by higher intensities and frequencies:

If we look ... from the present to the future, it is very clear things are going to get worse. We are going to be faced with more and worse disasters in the future. ... The future, insofar as disasters are concerned, is certain to produce not only quantitatively more disasters but qualitatively worse kinds of disasters than we presently have or have had in the past. (p. 3)

Therefore, it can be presumed that in the future, there may be an escalation in the necessity to carry out evacuation of First Nations communities. Hence, it is essential that Ontario municipalities become better prepared to host First Nations evacuees.

Setting the Context

First Nations in Canada are regulated by the Indian Act (1985), a lengthy statute first developed in 1867 that grants the federal government authority over the legislative decisions regarding the lives of First Nations and their lands. Because First Nations in Canada are under federal jurisdiction, it is Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) that serves as the lead agency for overseeing activities within these communities. Despite INAC being the principal organization within First Nations communities, Emergency

Management Ontario (EMO), the provincial emergency management agency, is often called upon to assist during emergencies in these communities.

EMO exists within the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and serves as the main agency that is responsible for promoting, developing, and maintaining emergency management programs throughout the province (EMO, 2008a). A number of agreements identify the role of EMO within First Nations communities in relation to emergency management.

The *Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Protocol Agreement* between the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN), INAC, and the province of Ontario identified that NAN, through the Chief and Council, is responsible for emergency preparedness, planning, and evacuation. INAC is responsible for support and funding, and the province of Ontario (through EMO) provides liaison and coordination in collaboration with other provincial ministries (EMO, 2008b). In addition, the *First Nations Emergency Assistance Agreement* (EMO & INAC, 1992) between the Province of Ontario and INAC stated that EMO provides assistance regarding emergency preparedness and response activities to First Nations communities by request. According to this agreement, emergency response includes the

Provision of liaison and advice, the procedures for arranging, coordinating and directing personnel, services, equipment or material resources to an emergency, the costs associated with evacuating a community including transportation, accommodation, feeding and evacuation and reception centre support and such other miscellaneous. (EMO & INAC, 1992, General agreement section, para. 2)

An emergency within a First Nations community is defined as “a situation or an impending situation that by its nature or magnitude affects the health, safety, welfare and property of a First Nations community and requires a controlled and coordinated response by several agencies” (EMO & INAC, 1992, Definitions section, para 1). During an emergency situation, the Chief of a First Nations community must first declare it an

“emergency” before formally asking for assistance. Declaration of a local emergency provides expedited assistance from provincial and potential federal agencies, grants the chief authority to pledge expenditures to facilitate emergency activities, and declares assistance for evacuation of its residents (Ontario, 2006). When requested by INAC or the First Nations community, EMO in collaboration with various other agencies responds to emergencies within these communities and ensures the successful transportation and administration of evacuees to other municipalities for temporary accommodation. INAC will reimburse the province for costs associated with emergency response activities related to First Nations communities.

The province maintains a list of municipalities that are willing and capable to receive and accommodate First Nations evacuees. These municipalities must have the necessary facilities and resources to effectively host small or large numbers of people. However, availability of these resources may be dependent upon the time of year. There is little forewarning of an emergency; therefore, host municipalities often only have a few days or even a few hours’ advance warning of the possible need to host evacuees. Municipalities that have hosted First Nations evacuees may have existing processes to organize personnel and resources in a timely manner. Yet given the complexities of evacuation and the receipt of evacuees, it is quite likely that municipalities without a plan in place for evacuation or reception of residents are likely to be challenged to succeed. They encounter significant challenges, especially when a perceived short-term evacuation transforms into one that is longer-term. Once the threat passes, the Chief of the First Nations community is responsible for termination of the emergency, likely in

collaboration with other government agencies. It is then determined whether it is safe for evacuees to return to their respective communities.

Epp et al. (1998) argued that the development of a response system that is appropriate to First Nations communities should be considered high priority. Because these communities have a unique structure within the federal jurisdiction, it is necessary that Ontario host municipalities develop emergency response plans that are conducive to the needs and requirements of First Nations evacuees.

Summary

This chapter provided a brief context into the research problem and identified the importance of the study. It also presented the stakeholders involved. The following chapter highlights key elements in the literature that relate to the research problem. Chapter 3 examines the research methods, approach, and techniques. Chapter 4 provides an in-depth look at the study findings, conclusions, and limitations of the project, and Chapter 5 provides recommendations for action. Chapter 6 highlights lessons learned.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides in-depth review of the literature regarding the purpose of evacuation, related issues and challenges, their implications, and corresponding best practices. It also highlights First Nations evacuation experiences.

Evacuation

The literature regarding evacuation case studies and practices is extensive. Emergency evacuations occur across time periods, geographic areas, and populations from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. These evacuations may impact a town with a small number of residents or a large urban region with hundreds or even thousands of residents. Evacuation falls under the “response phase” of the Emergency Management Cycle, which forms the basis for understanding the field of emergency management. This cycle contains four phases: mitigation, prevention (or preparedness), response and recovery. Countless variations of the term evacuation exist; however, for the purpose of this analysis, evacuation is defined in its simplest form as “the withdrawal actions of persons from a specific area because of a real or anticipated threat or hazard” (Vogt & Sorensen, 1992, p. 3).

Historically, evacuation studies concentrated on wartime evacuations. However, a shift in focus has occurred as the focal point of current literature is evacuation due to emergencies. Evacuations are generally undertaken as a precautionary measure when there is an apparent risk, hazard, or threat (Vogt & Sorensen, 1992). Scanlon (2001) suggested that the appropriateness of an evacuation should be assessed against the timing of a threat. He observed that “evacuations are appropriate when there is a significant threat ... they are also appropriate when a threat continues ... they are not appropriate

when the danger has passed and victims wish to start rebuilding their shattered lives” (p. 7). Similarly, Quarantelli (1990) asserted that the evacuation of an affected population prior to a possible threat may reinforce that community’s morale, because it demonstrates a proactive response by authorities to a particular threat.

An evacuation is considered to be a temporary solution whereby inhabitants leave on a “round trip” with the intent to return to their homes once a hazard or threat passes (Quarantelli, 1985a). Although an evacuation is considered a proactive measure that generally produces positive results, there is considerable literature that suggests evacuations may also generate negative impacts. Studies conducted by Quarantelli (1990), Coker et al. (2006), Vogt and Sorensen (1992), and Epp et al. (1998) demonstrated that evacuations may trigger stress, and generate depression, psychological consequences, and long-term health impacts, due in part to leaving under duress. Evacuations are usually disruptive to social routines, and separation from family and friends may strengthen an existing stressful environment during an emergency (Epp et al., 1998). For the most part, evacuations fulfill their function by the removal of residents from danger, protect lives, mitigate probable injuries, and conserve personal belongings (Quarantelli, 1990).

First Nations Communities

Despite extensive documentation regarding evacuation practices and experiences, there is inadequate research that explores evacuations within a Canadian context. Furthermore, there is a smaller body of work that examines emergency response within First Nations communities. Epp et al. (1998) analyzed three emergencies within the province of Manitoba that resulted in the evacuation of the local First Nations

communities: the Mathias Colomb First Nation in 1989 and 1995 due to forest fires; the Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation in 1997 due to flooding; and the Sioux Valley First Nation in 1995 due to flooding. Epp et al. found that each of these communities perceived unfair treatment when evacuated to outside communities. Research findings (Epp et al., 1998) on evacuation and host communities imply that cultural or ethnic differences between two communities may occur more frequently than initially considered. This is perhaps because the host population may not understand the needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of evacuees (The Sphere Project, 2004).

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) (2007) stated that evacuees should be lodged close to their own respective communities. Epp et al. (1998) suggested that when possible, First Nations should be evacuated to neighbouring communities, rather than to non-First Nations municipalities. However, this option is not always possible, as First Nations communities in Ontario are dispersed across the province and often located in remote or isolated regions and may not have the proper infrastructure to accommodate the evacuees or limited existing resources to provide necessary services. As a result, First Nations communities in Ontario are often evacuated to non-First Nations municipalities.

Epp et al. (1998) found that First Nations evacuees typically preferred to stay with friends and families in other regions than at shelters. Their conclusions echo findings in the evacuation literature. Research (The Sphere Project, 2004) suggested that evacuees “would prefer to stay in a host community, with other family members or people who share historical, religious or other ties” (p. 213) and, therefore, shelters run by public agencies are usually only utilized as last resort (Quarantelli, 1990).

Roles and Responsibilities of Response Organizations

There is strong evidence in the literature suggesting the majority of problems associated with evacuation have less to do with the evacuees themselves and more to do with the organizations that assist in the evacuation efforts. In an examination into the 1997 Red River Flood in Manitoba, Epp et al. (1998) found that most evacuees were confused about the distribution of roles and responsibilities among the federal government, provincial agencies, and emergency social services. Quarantelli (1985a, 1990), Aguirre (1994), and Epp et al. (1998) agreed that evacuation efforts are less successful when the functions of responding agencies are ambiguous. The problem may stem from various response agencies being clear about their respective roles, but this may contradict the perceptions of other responding agencies.

There may also be a misunderstanding of the scope of the evacuation problems (Aguirre, 1994). Quarantelli (1990) observed that there is often “little consensus and explicit communication as to which agency is responsible for what role or duty and which should act as the lead agency” (p. 118). It is evident that with a greater number of organizations responding, more problems with coordination and communication are likely to arise. In a study conducted following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Appleseed (2006) determined that successful evacuations involved the following factors: response agencies were clear who would serve as the lead agency, each agency had one main contact person who remained constant throughout the process of hosting evacuees, and each agency was clear about its own mandate and had responsibilities related to its area of expertise. The Sphere Project (2004) reported that coordination is necessary, because it ensures that organizations are able to meet the needs of evacuees, and avoid

redundancies in the provision of services. Vogt and Sorensen (1992) contended that planning for evacuation coordination could alleviate some communication problems, and Quarentelli (1990) argued that the more defined relationships and organizational linkages are prior to an emergency, the fewer the evacuation-related problems. Additionally, discussion of roles and responsibilities prior to an emergency would alleviate confusion for responding agencies and evacuees.

Accommodation and Sheltering

Overall, research is consistent in stating that emergency shelters are often poorly planned and managed (Vogt & Sorensen, 1992). Emergency planners frequently fail to properly house evacuees, placing them in buildings that were never intended to accommodate hundreds or even thousands of people for long periods (Vogt & Sorensen, 1992). Studies regarding the best method of housing evacuees remain scarce, perhaps due in part to the reality that emergency accommodation is dependent upon the emergency situation and region.

The province of British Columbia's Provincial Emergency Program (British Columbia, 2005) directed that where possible, evacuees should be relocated to hotels and motels. Yet the availability of these facilities is often dependent upon the time of year and the capacity of the host municipality. Smaller municipalities may not have the infrastructure to support a large number of evacuees compared with larger municipalities. Resort or tourist-focused locations typically have hotels and motels booked in advance by visitors. Emergency lodging guidelines developed by PHAC (2007) suggest that private and commercial accommodations are preferred for housing evacuees. However, if in limited supply, these accommodations should be assigned to individuals who meet the

following criteria: elderly, families with young children, people with serious medical conditions, or workers who require undisturbed rest.

In terms of physical space of accommodation for evacuees, there is general agreement in the literature that the standard for a minimum sleeping area for an individual is 3.5 square metres (PHAC, 2007; The Sphere Project, 2004). Bolin (1986) stated that of highest priority when hosting evacuees is accommodation that considers privacy, with high levels of safety and security.

Whenever possible, evacuees from the same community or region should be housed collectively within a facility, in order to allow friends and family to be together, to converse about their concerns, and to provide emotional support (PHAC, 2007). This guideline may be particularly applicable to First Nations communities, because they adhere to a communal way of life. Yet Perry, Lindell, and Greene (1981) found that housing families or communities together may not be as important as the provision of information to evacuees regarding the location of their missing family members.

Overall, host communities use their best judgment to accommodate the evacuees within existing resources. During Hurricane Katrina,

Host cities did not back down from the challenge of sheltering evacuees. Their best instincts took over, and the cities focused substantial efforts on helping the evacuees ... agencies were quick to respond and understood what was needed to manage the disaster. (Appleseed, 2006, p. 3)

Provision of Health Services

The provision of health services during an evacuation is an important component. Every host community is confronted with evacuees who require various levels of health care owing to existing medical conditions or to problems associated with the evacuation itself. There is general consensus among researchers that initial triage and medical and

health services should be provided to evacuees at the shelters (Appleseed, 2006; Brown, Kurtz, Turley, & Gulitz, 1988; Vogt & Sorensen, 1992).

Appleseed (2006) recommended that shelters provide a one-stop service centre that offers a number of health services to evacuees. During Hurricane Katrina, these one-stop shops worked considerably well and proved to be sufficient at providing the level of care required for evacuees. However, these one-stop shops may not be realistic for host communities when evacuees are housed in various locations. A one-stop shop that provides services around the clock may also be daunting for health care workers and other volunteers who have to maintain the services at all times. It is more challenging to manage a 24-hour shelter for a longer-term evacuation when the intent was to manage it on a short-term basis only. Brown et al. (1988) studied the use of nurses during Hurricane Elena in 1985, and observed that the one-stop type of shelter could quickly lead to the exhaustion of health care workers. Their results identified that many nurses were overworked as they volunteered at the shelters from 24 to 36 hours without relief.

An important reason for providing health care within a shelter is to alleviate the strain on local health services. If one were to study Ontario's hospitals, one could observe that they are already overwhelmed owing to high rates of daily visits to the emergency department. An influx of a significant number of evacuees could "severely challenge or exceed the current capacity of the health care system" (Edwards, Young, & Lowe, 2007, p. 173). Thus the initiation of an alternative site where evacuees could be offered health services is considered to be best.

Planning for Longer-Term Evacuations and Re-entry

Often, host municipalities are able to meet the immediate needs of evacuees; however, there is consensus that municipalities are poorly equipped for longer-term evacuations. According to Appleseed (2006), “the greatest challenges facing host cities is how best to address the long-term needs of evacuees” (p. 3). There remains a significant difference between short-term and long-term evacuation. The former usually endures for a few days, whereas the latter could carry on for a few weeks or months. More specifically, the province of Ontario considers a short-term evacuation to be an evacuation that lasts from one to 14 days, whereas a long-term evacuation endures for more than 14 days (Joint Emergency Management Steering Committee [JEMS], 2008). Usually, the length of time evacuees spend away from their homes is dependent upon the nature of the emergency within their community.

A short-term evacuation tends to rely more on emergency shelters, could be organized more quickly, generally has fewer logistical problems, and requires less “complex arrangement for the provision of food, medical attention, and other essentials” (Aguirre, 1994, p. 11) than longer-term evacuations. A longer-term evacuation requires more planning associated with the transport of evacuees, safety and security, and essential services and supplies (Perry, 1978). Greater challenges become apparent in longer-term evacuations as they consequently tend to cause more strain on the social and economic environment of host communities (Perry, 1978). Perry et al. (1981) stated that “long-term evacuation involves dismantling a community and either reassembling it at another location or dispersing it within one or more other communities” (p. 3).

Longer-term evacuations may also incorporate short-term recovery activities. Recovery is “the process of getting things back to normal after a disaster” (University of Colorado, 2005, p. 11-6) and involves creating routines to speed up the recovery process for evacuees. Omer and Alon (1994) developed the concept of a *continuity principle*, in which they argued that throughout all phases of an emergency, including the response phase, activities should be developed to preserve and restore routines disrupted by emergencies.

Gay and Chenault (1974) noted the importance of creating organized patterns of behaviour for evacuees. They stated that host communities should not only provide sheltering, but also expand their services to include employment, education, and other human social services. PHAC (2007) argued that services such as childcare, recreational activities, financial assistance, and emotional support could also be offered to evacuees during longer-term evacuations. Other activities such as the provision of religious or cultural services could be encouraged. All these activities will aid in the initiation of the recovery process for evacuees. However, these activities should not overshadow planning for re-entry of evacuees into their respective communities. Evacuees want to return to their home as soon as possible; thus, planning for re-entry must be considered of high priority – yet it is a component that host communities often neglect (Vogt & Sorensen, 1992).

Summary

Although the research proved sufficient to aid in understanding of issues, lessons learned, and best practices concerning emergency evacuations, it was not complete and certain elements were neglected. For example, no author reflected upon the importance of

communication by city officials in host communities to their public regarding the decision to receive emergency evacuees. Additionally, with one exception (Quarantelli, 1985b), insufficient research focused on the relationship between evacuees and host communities. Quarantelli observed that

The relationship between evacuees and host communities is relatively good. Both sets of parties accept many discomforts and difficulties they would not in non-emergency situations. But as time goes on, the relationship becomes conflictive and a great number of problems emerge. (p. 14)

Also missing are studies regarding the benefits resulting from activation of the host community's emergency operations centre (EOC).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study was guided by the following research question: What are the current main issues with and recommended enhancements to the existing process used by Ontario municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees? This chapter provides an overview of the steps taken to answer this question. It also examines the research approach, qualitative and quantitative research methods and tools, selection of research participants, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations for the study.

Research Approach

The study follows an action research approach. Greenwood and Levin (2007) defined action research as “social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and the members of an organization, community, or network who are seeking to improve the participant’s situation” (p. 3). This approach reflects upon related theories and practices in an aim to find practical solutions to issues affecting people or communities (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). It is unique in that it grants ownership to research participants in the development of new solutions to existing problems.

Research Methods and Tools

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was chosen as the preferred methods of data collection for this study. Qualitative research is “typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants’ point of view” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 94). It is generally concerned with capturing the beliefs, opinions, experiences, and emotions of individuals (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this

study, qualitative techniques were one-on-one interviews and a review of documentation. In contrast, quantitative research seeks answers to explain phenomena through the examination of relationships among variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In this study, survey questionnaires (Appendix A) were utilized to capture quantitative data.

Researchers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Morse, 1991) argued that a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods can assist the researcher to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding a certain phenomenon. Morse (1991) found the combination of these two methods can result in more balanced research findings. The term for this amalgamation is *methodological triangulation*. Methodological triangulation is the “use of at least two methods, usually qualitative and quantitative, to address the same research problem” (Morse, 1991, p. 120). Most often, data are collected separately and simultaneously, but the research findings tend to harmonize with one another.

Once the draft survey questionnaire was developed, it was distributed to the project sponsor and to members of JEMS for review. The JEMS committee is co-chaired by EMO and INAC, and members include representatives of First Nations groups, various federal departments, provincial ministries, and municipalities. Committee members provided valuable input and offered suggestions for improvement. The questionnaire was revised with their consideration (Appendix A).

This study used an Internet-based service to help develop the survey questionnaire. The online service was valuable, as it granted research participants the convenience of completing the survey questionnaire whenever and wherever they

preferred. The rationale for utilization of this service was to capture, store, and retain research data in a confidential and anonymous manner.

Project Participants

Purposive research sampling was utilized to establish potential research subjects. As the term implies, purposive research sampling is the act of choosing individuals to participate in research who represent a group of people and who may provide diverse perspectives and insights into the research problem (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In collaboration with the project sponsor, a list of 42 municipalities and corresponding community emergency management representatives was compiled. The majority of community representatives had an existing relationship with the sponsor. For municipalities to be identified on the list, they had to meet one of two criteria: either their municipality had hosted First Nations evacuees in the past (host-experienced municipalities), or their municipality had stated an interest in hosting evacuees in the future (host-inexperienced municipalities). A total of 28 Ontario municipal representatives participated in the research project, a response rate of 67%. Of these participants, 12 were CEMCs, 12 were fire chiefs, 3 were emergency social services representatives, and one was a member of a municipal council. Each individual had expertise in emergency management, was involved with planning concerning First Nation evacuations, and was in an occupation that could bring a depth of knowledge to the research topic.

Table 1 demonstrates that 14 municipalities chose to complete survey questionnaires, and 14 municipalities chose to carry out telephone interviews. For various reasons, 14 municipalities did not participate in the study. A small number of

municipalities noted they were interested in participating, but were unable to because they were involved in responding to unforeseen emergencies within their jurisdictions. Other municipalities chose not to participate because they did not anticipate hosting First Nation evacuees in the near future because of their limited accommodations or resources. Since the research participants were assured that no names would be utilized in the final report, research participants are categorized by regional districts throughout the province of Ontario (also see Figure 1).

Table 1: *Research Participants by Region*

Region	Completed a Survey Questionnaire	Carried out a Telephone Interview	Did Not Participate in Study	Total
Eastern Ontario	1	1	3	5
Northeastern Ontario	2	7	1	10
Northwestern Ontario	4	2	1	7
Central Ontario	3	1	4	8
Western Ontario	4	3	5	12
Total	14	14	14	42



Figure 1: Regions in Ontario.

Note. From *Ministry Regional Offices*, by Ontario. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2008, Toronto, ON: Author. Copyright 2009 by Queen's Printer. Reprinted with permission.

As identified in Table 2, a total of 16 host-experienced municipalities and 12 host-inexperienced municipalities participated in the project. Interestingly, the host-experienced municipalities preferred to carry out one-on-one interviews rather than complete survey questionnaires. Of the 16 host-experienced municipalities, 11 of them carried out telephone interviews, whereas 5 completed survey questionnaires. In contrast, of the 12 host-inexperienced municipalities, 9 preferred to complete survey questionnaires, whereas 3 favoured telephone interviews.

Table 2: *Data Collection Preference by Participant Group*

Participant Group	Completed a Survey Questionnaire	Completed a Telephone Interview	Total
Host-experienced municipalities	5	11	16
Host-inexperienced municipalities	9	3	12

Study Conduct

The project sponsor distributed an initial letter to individuals identified in the research sampling (Appendix B). The letter introduced the researcher and outlined the significance and potential benefits of the project. In addition, the letter advised potential research subjects that the researcher would contact them within a week to discuss their participation in the project. The initiation of this letter by the sponsor allowed the researcher to gain access to the research participants. Lofland and Lofland (1984) observed that researchers are more likely to achieve success when they utilize existing relationships to assist in removing barriers to access their research population.

Within one week of distribution of the introduction letter, the researcher contacted potential research subjects by telephone to formally invite them to participate in the project (Appendix C). Those who agreed to participate in the study were given the choice to either complete an online survey questionnaire or participate in a one-on-one telephone interview. Research data were collected between November 17 and December 5, 2008.

Survey Questionnaires

Participants who agreed to complete an online survey questionnaire were sent an e-mail inviting them to visit a Web-site link that would direct them to the online

questionnaire. Prior to beginning the survey questionnaire, they were presented with a script that identified the project benefits and reminded them that all data would remain confidential and anonymous (Appendix D).

For the most part, the research questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with predefined variables. However, each question provided an opportunity to include more information by simply choosing the “other” variable. There were a few questions that, if answered in a certain manner, prompted research participants to further expand upon their answer in a secondary or tertiary follow-up question.

Time to complete survey questionnaires varied and was dependent upon the municipality’s experience in hosting First Nations evacuees. For respondents from municipalities that had experienced the hosting of First Nations evacuees, completion of the questionnaire required an estimated time commitment of 25 to 30 minutes. Respondents from municipalities with no evacuee-hosting experience required an estimated 10 to 20 minutes to complete the survey. Approximately one week prior to the submission deadline, an e-mail reminder was sent through the Internet-based survey service to individuals who had not responded, asking them to complete the questionnaire.

One-on-One Telephone Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted by telephone at a mutually agreed-upon time convenient for the researcher and the research participant. Prior to the onset of the interview, a script was read to each research participant (Appendix E). The script noted the time commitment, advised the participants that they were free to withdraw at any time without implications and that the information would remain confidential and anonymous, and indicated where they could locate the final report.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of open-ended questions and allowed the opportunity for discussions to evolve to greater depth through a free-flowing arrangement. Although the same questions were used as in the survey questionnaire, the telephone interview did not have predetermined responses. In addition, the questions were posed in a different sequence depending on the research participant's responses.

As with the survey questionnaires, the time to complete the interviews varied and was dependent upon the municipality's experience in hosting First Nations evacuees. Interviews lasted from 20 to 30 minutes for host-experienced municipalities, to approximately 45 to 60 minutes for host-inexperienced municipalities.

The initial aim was to audio-record interviews; however, during the initial discussions with the research subjects, it became apparent that they preferred that the researcher take interview notes. Throughout each interview, the research participant allowed time between questions for the researcher to record notes. Immediately following the interviews, notes were transcribed unto the computer and subsequently stored in a locked cabinet until data analysis was conducted.

Document Analysis

Document analysis was also conducted for this study. Documentation examined included debriefing reports and follow-up studies from host-experienced municipalities. In addition, the *Service Level Standards* document developed by JEMS (2008) was reviewed.

Data Analysis

Because this study consisted of a mixed-method approach, a unique strategy for analyzing research data was employed. Data were evaluated through the use of the "data

transformation” strategy. This strategy consists of converting one data type (either qualitative or quantitative) into the other, so that both data types can be analyzed together (Caracelli & Greene, 1993). For the purpose of this study, quantitative data were transformed into narrative and included with qualitative data. Caracelli and Greene (1993) argued that the utilization of the data transformation strategy could “significantly augment the power ... to advance conceptual understanding and insight” (p. 204). The next step involved reading through all the data to identify themes and patterns, associations, and causal relationships.

Ethical Considerations

This section presents the ethical principles that guided the researcher’s actions throughout the study. The ethical guidelines identified within the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [Tri-Council], 1998) were utilized as the basis for the study.

Respect for human dignity. Considered to be the dominant principle, this guideline aspires to ensure that the dignity of research participants is respected (Tri-Council, 1998). Throughout all stages of this project, all research participants were respected, as they were given the opportunity to freely share their ideas and perspectives.

Respect for free and informed consent. This principle entails the necessity of providing research participants with the overall purpose of the project and obtaining their consent to participate in the project (Tri-Council, 1998). At the onset of the project, potential research participants were informed of the clear goals of the project, the way

that the research would be conducted, and the time commitments. In addition, the research participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study without prejudice. Participants were also free to ask any questions or seek clarifications. Consent to participate in the project was granted electronically through the online survey questionnaires or verbally in the interviews.

Respect for vulnerable persons. This guideline stated the importance of respecting those considered to be vulnerable (Tri-Council, 1998). However, no person considered to be vulnerable or to have cognitive disabilities participated in this research project.

Respect for privacy and confidentiality. Respect for privacy and confidentiality is considered essential to human dignity (Tri-Council, 1998). This standard harmonized with all steps of the research project. When the introduction letter was distributed, participants were unable to view the other intended recipients of the letter. Questionnaires were submitted and one-on-one interviews were conducted with only the knowledge of the researcher and the individual involved at the time. All research participants were advised that their information would remain completely confidential, and to protect anonymity, that no names of municipalities or community representatives would be identified in the final report. The privacy and confidentiality of participants were also respected through the decision not to audio-record the one-on-one interviews.

Respect for justice and inclusiveness. As made clear in this guideline, research must be conducted with fairness and equity, and those who participate in the research project should be the ones who can expect to benefit from its findings (Tri-Council, 1998). Research participants in this research project were purposively chosen to represent

their community and were in occupations where their municipalities could benefit from the research results.

Balancing harms and benefits. The guideline to balance harms and benefits stated that clear distinctions between potential risks and benefits of the project need to be articulated to potential participants (Tri-Council, 1998). Potential harms identified for this project were insignificant, and the potential benefits of the project clearly outweighed any probable harm.

Minimizing harm. This guideline stated that all effort should be made to ensure the minimization of harm (Tri-Council, 1998). In an effort to minimize potential harm to others, this project limited participation to a select group of individuals.

Maximizing benefit. This principle recognizes a need for the research to maximize benefits (Tri-Council, 1998). It was communicated to research participants that participation in this project would also benefit First Nations communities, Ontario municipalities, and municipal and provincial emergency management agencies.

Summary

This chapter identified the research strategy utilized for this study. In addition, it highlighted the research methodology, tools, and techniques employed. Furthermore, it discussed research data analysis and emphasized ethical considerations. Research findings and conclusions are presented in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents project findings and conclusions, and identifies the scope and limitations of the study. Because this project utilized a mixed-method approach, quantitative and qualitative data were examined collectively. Research findings are presented under themed headings.

Study Findings by Theme

There were significant similarities between the issues and challenges identified by host-experienced municipalities and the anticipated concerns of host-inexperienced municipalities. As a result, research findings from these groups are explored collectively. Distinctions are made only where differences in research results are significant.

Expectations of Host Municipalities

A general theme presented in the research data was the lack of understanding concerning expectations of municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees. Although host-experienced municipalities assumed their hosting abilities were sufficient, they were unaware if they met the demands of the province, because expectations of host communities were not communicated to them. In particular, the host-inexperienced municipalities stated that they would like to commence planning for expected First Nations groups; however, they did not know where to begin their planning activities, because they were unaware of the expected demands of a host community.

The document *Service Level Standards*, developed by JEMS (2008), serves as an effective tool to provide guidance on planning for hosting First Nations evacuees. Participants were asked if their municipality received a copy of this document. Of the 16 host-experienced municipalities, only 7 of them received a copy. The majority of the

municipalities that received the document found it to be helpful in their planning activities. Of the 14 host-inexperienced municipalities, only one received a copy of the document. Three other communities were unaware of its existence.

Roles and Responsibilities

One of the most prevalent themes in the research data was the need to clarify roles and responsibilities between the province, federal government departments, local response agencies, and host communities. Research participants were asked to identify their level of understanding of roles and responsibilities of the following groups during a First Nations evacuation: their municipality, EMO, and INAC. Host-experienced municipalities appeared to have a good understanding of their roles, but they were still confused about the roles and responsibilities of INAC and EMO (see Table 3). Host-inexperienced municipalities noted they were unclear about their respective functions and accountabilities. They too reported being unclear about the roles and responsibilities of EMO and INAC.

Table 3: *Level of Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities*

Organization	Very Clear	Somewhat Clear	Not Clear at All
<i>Host-experienced municipalities</i>			
Your municipality	8	5	3
EMO	6	5	5
INAC	5	6	5
<i>Host-inexperienced municipalities</i>			
Your municipality	3	4	4
EMO	2	6	3
INAC	0	4	7

Municipalities identified that, most often, their perceptions and assumptions of their functions prior to an evacuation did not harmonize with their actual roles performed

while hosting evacuees. In one participant's words, "roles and responsibilities should not be decided during emergencies." There was also significant confusion as to who would serve as the lead agency when hosting First Nations evacuees.

Declaration of an Emergency

One of the most surprising findings in this study was the subject of the appropriateness of a declaration of an emergency while hosting First Nations evacuees. Research participants who had hosted in the past were asked whether their municipality had initiated their EOC while hosting evacuees. Of those host-experienced municipalities, 9 had declared an emergency in order to activate their EOC, whereas 5 had not and 2 were unsure of the process. Municipalities that had declared an emergency within their community identified their rationale of activation of the EOC. Declaring an EOC within a community provides coverage to all volunteers who assist during an emergency under Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board legislation, and allows their municipality to request provincial resources (if required). A number of municipalities that had not declared an emergency stated that they had decided not to do so because members of their EOC planning group were already available to assist in hosting; therefore, there had been no need to make an official declaration. Another municipality had used an unconventional approach and declared an emergency in secrecy, in order to initiate portions of its emergency management plan.

Accommodation and Sheltering

As previously mentioned, a high proportion of host-experienced and host-inexperienced municipalities concurred that expectations and standards of host municipalities were ambiguous. This issue had a strong association to the most suitable

accommodation for hosting First Nations evacuees. The research findings highlight a vast discrepancy in the types of accommodation perceived to be most appropriate to house First Nations evacuees. Three municipalities stated they would only accept evacuees if they could be housed in hotel rooms, while 4 municipalities said that only vulnerable populations or elders should be housed in hotels. Some research participants determined that *vulnerable* should also include those with health problems and young families. One municipality stated that it is inappropriate to house individuals within an open-spaced shelter, even during an emergency. On the other hand, another municipality noted that since evacuation is considered a “life or death situation,” shelters, arenas, or recreation centres should suffice.

The disparity in types of accommodation was found not only in the perceptions held by host municipalities, but also in the standards conveyed to them by the province. For example, one host community was informed that First Nations evacuees should only be housed in hotels with kitchens, whereas another municipality was advised that evacuees could be housed in shelters or other open-spaced facilities.

Planning for Longer-Term Evacuations

Although the topic of planning for longer-term evacuations was not included as an official question in the research study, the issue transpired from the research findings.

Research participants were asked to identify the number of times their municipality had hosted First Nations evacuees (see Table 4). The majority of municipalities noted they had hosted evacuees only once. However, one municipality identified that it had hosted between 5 and 10 times, whereas 3 other municipalities identified they had hosted evacuees between 11 and 20 times.

Table 4: *Frequency of Municipalities' Hosting of First Nations Evacuees*

Number of Times Municipalities Had Hosted First Nations Evacuees	Number of Occurrences by Municipality
1	5
2	0
3	3
4	4
5-10	1
11-20	3

Although most communities had served as hosts, a small number of communities had “staged” evacuees. The staging of evacuees entails immediately removing evacuees from the threat within their community and transporting them temporarily to another community until there is agreement on who is to host the evacuee population. The rationale for the large number of times hosted may be that some municipalities included staging as part of their answer on the number of times they had hosted First Nations evacuees.

First Nations Evacuee Liaisons

A question was posed to host-experienced municipalities regarding the role of First Nations evacuee liaisons and the significance of their role. These liaisons are evacuees themselves and are often appointed by the Chief and Council of their First Nations community. Nearly all research participants found the liaisons to be an invaluable resource. They bridge the communication gap between host communities and evacuees, often assist with interpretation for First Nations local languages, and have gained the trust of their fellow community members. Their main role is to ensure the wellbeing of those displaced from their homes and to address the needs of their

community with the host community. Host-experienced municipalities stated that First Nations evacuee liaisons had contributed to the success of the evacuation efforts.

Provision of Health Services

Research participants were asked to provide their level of understanding concerning evacuation stages 1, 2, and 3. Almost half of the respondents of host-experienced municipalities reported they were “very clear” about the differences between the three stages (8, 8, 7), whereas the other respondents acknowledged they were “somewhat clear” (3, 1, 2) and “not clear at all” (5, 7, 7) (see Table 5). For host-inexperienced municipalities, the majority said they were “not clear at all” (9, 9, 9) with regards to the differences in the evacuation stages. The rest of the respondents conveyed they were “somewhat clear” (2, 2, 2) and “very clear” (1, 1, 1).

Table 5: *Level of Understanding of the Three Evacuation Stages*

Evacuation Level	Very Clear	Somewhat Clear	Not Clear at All
<i>Host-experienced municipalities (n = 16)</i>			
Stage 1	8	3	5
Stage 2	8	1	7
Stage 3	7	2	7
<i>Host-inexperienced municipalities (n = 12)</i>			
Stage 1	1	2	9
Stage 2	1	2	9
Stage 3	1	2	9

Host-experienced municipalities noted they were often unaware of how many Stage 1 or 2 evacuees they would be receiving and had no knowledge regarding the corresponding health aides required. Hence, a number of communities found that they struggled to find diapers, wheelchairs, and baby carriages at the last minute. Another issue identified was that often Stage 1 or 2 evacuees are transported with a dependent,

nurse, or caregiver who is expected to assist in providing care to the Stage 1 evacuee. These individuals are often responsible for assisting Stage 1 or 2 evacuees and are also dealing with the stress of the evacuation.

Since children under 5 years old are considered Stage 2 evacuees, there were instances in which children arrived first at the airport in the host municipality, without their parent or guardian, who were scheduled to arrive on a later flight. It was suggested that a parent or guardian travel with the evacuated child to the host community or that the host community have resources in place to ensure the child's health and safety until a parent or guardian arrives.

Overall, with little or no pre-planning, most host-experienced municipalities found they managed to organize services, personnel, and resources within a short period. Lessons learned and best practices concerning the provision of health services were identified within the research data and are listed below.

To assist with the provision of health services, a number of host-experienced municipalities utilized local pre-existing health organizations such as the Victoria Order of Nurses, a non-profit organization offering a number of health care services. Also, communities invited doctors and nurses to provide care for patients at the shelter where they conducted check-ups, monitored the most vulnerable patients, and distributed necessary medication. Another municipality invited the Medical Officer of Health to set up a first aid room for the evacuees and ensured that the majority of health concerns could be proficiently addressed at the shelter. A different municipality invited the local Aboriginal health centre to provide traditional holistic health services to evacuees.

Financing and Economic Implications

A reoccurring theme found in the research data was the confusion in relation to financial administration when hosting First Nations evacuees. Both host-experienced and host-inexperienced municipalities were unclear regarding authorized and unauthorized expenses. The deficiency of anticipated timelines by the province for reimbursement of expenses while hosting evacuees was also identified as a problem by many host municipalities.

Surprisingly, a number of the smaller communities observed that hosting First Nations evacuees may provide a boost for their local economy. They believed that evacuees typically purchase food or clothing items from local stores and businesses, which consequently enhances the local economy.

First Nations Agencies

Host-experienced municipalities were asked if they typically invited local First Nations agencies to assist in hosting First Nations evacuees. Nearly all communities stated they invited these groups to assist and found them to be a wonderful resource. The roles of First Nations agencies varied, but most often consisted of the provision of traditional meals and ceremonies for evacuees. Some groups supplied translation, facilitated activities for children and families, and offered guidance on how to make evacuees feel more comfortable. Host-experienced municipalities found these groups assisted in bridging the cultural and communication gap between the host community and the evacuees. For example, one community collaborated with the local Friendship Centre to provide a welcoming ceremony, which was well received by the affected evacuees.

However, a few communities found they over-utilized the services of First Nations agencies during a long-term evacuation and ultimately exhausted their resources.

One host-experienced municipality reported that it did not invite First Nations agencies to assist while hosting evacuees, because there was little warning of the evacuees' arrival. However, upon reflection, the municipality wished it had involved these agencies. This problem could have been alleviated if First Nations agencies were part of the EOC planning group. Inviting these agencies to sit on the EOC planning committee would have allowed relationships to be developed in advance and would have allowed these agencies to be engaged in the emergency planning process.

Preparation of Host Municipalities

Host-experienced municipalities were asked to identify what resources could have better prepared their community to host First Nations evacuees. Most stated that a clarification of roles and responsibilities between agencies and municipalities, knowledge of expectations, and information regarding financial processes could have significantly improved their hosting abilities.

A similar question was posed to municipalities with no hosting experience. They noted that in order to be successful in hosting, they require foremost a copy of the *Service Level Standards* (JEMS, 2008). In addition, they stated that they would like information on what to expect while hosting evacuees such as identification of their roles and responsibilities, and a briefing or workshop session in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved. A few noted that a tabletop exercise between EMO or with host-experienced municipalities could be conducted, to provide a forum in which municipalities could share their expertise and experiences. More importantly,

discussions with First Nations communities are necessary in order to determine their needs and expectations when they are evacuated to other municipalities.

Other Findings

A number of host-experienced municipalities noted the importance of developing mutual aid agreements in the pre-evacuation stages with local agencies and businesses. Especially important in smaller communities with limited resources, these mutual aid agreements could ensure when First Nations evacuees arrive, the community will have pre-identified local businesses, restaurants, catering enterprises, and clothing stores that could provide services or resources. The development of mutual aid agreements would ensure that local businesses have enough supplies and inventory to supply and maintain for the evacuees and the general population, especially during seasons when key items may be in high demand.

Study Conclusions

Roles and Responsibilities

It was evident that the majority of research participants – in particular, host-inexperienced municipalities – were unclear regarding their related roles and responsibilities. The implications of an ambiguity of roles and responsibilities during evacuation efforts were briefly discussed in chapter 2. Quarantelli (1985b, 1990), Aguirre (1994), and Epp et al. (1998) concurred that evacuation efforts are less successful when responding agencies' functions are ambiguous. Ambiguity of roles and responsibilities may lead to a duplication of roles and activities, may generate assumptions, and could potentially cause communication breakdown between agencies (The Sphere Project, 2004). Municipalities determined that discussions concerning roles and responsibilities

and agreements on who should serve as the lead and supporting agencies would better enhance their ability to meet the needs of First Nations evacuees. Therefore, it is essential that discussions regarding functions and accountabilities are carried out between the responding agencies and host municipalities in the pre-evacuation stages.

Finding the Right Fit

Almost all research participants identified they were unaware of expectations of the province and were unclear of their roles, responsibilities, and service provision as host municipalities. A few municipalities suggested that the province could work with communities that are able to meet their hosting evacuee standards rather than have municipalities attempting to correspond with the expectations of the province. For instance, the province could develop criteria that a municipality must meet for it to be considered a potential host community. The criteria could involve a capacity assessment that examines the accommodation facilities, personnel and volunteer reserves, and resources available within a particular community. These findings could determine whether municipalities would be invited to serve as hosts for First Nations evacuees. Rather than having a number of municipalities prepare to serve as potential hosts for evacuees, this method would advocate that a small number of municipalities be chosen to host because they are the right fit. The province could work with those identified municipalities to enhance their capacities so they are successful in hosting First Nations evacuees.

Declaration of an Emergency

The research findings identified the existence of diverse response procedures used by municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees. A number of municipalities chose

to declare an emergency to activate their EOC, whereas others did not. The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (1990) stated:

The head of council of a municipality may declare that an emergency exists in the municipality or in any part thereof and may take such action and make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area. (Declaration of Emergency section, para. 4)

The divergence in response may be due to the perception of the meaning of the terms *emergency* and *evacuation*. For instance, one CEMC noted that her municipality did not declare an emergency, because it considered the hosting of First Nations evacuees to be a planned event, rather than an emergency. Others identified evacuations as “life or death situations”; therefore, shelters would be appropriate to house evacuees. Because every community operates in a different manner, better communication is needed regarding the benefits of declaring an emergency while hosting evacuees. Improved communication may assist municipalities to make more informed decisions regarding the appropriateness of such a declaration.

Accommodation and Sheltering

It was clear that research participants were unaware of the best method of accommodating evacuees. Review of the literature suggested that private and commercial accommodations should first be offered to the most vulnerable – people with medical conditions, young families, and the elderly (PHAC, 2007). However, the term *vulnerable* is subjective and could be interpreted in different ways. Better clarification regarding the most appropriate types of accommodations for evacuees could provide some direction and perhaps allow municipalities to secure potential facilities in the planning stage. It will also provide guidance for host-inexperienced municipalities and allow them to determine

the number of First Nations evacuees they could effectively accommodate through an examination of their local facilities.

Longer-Term Evacuations

It was apparent that most often when municipalities planned to receive First Nations evacuees, they only considered shorter-term evacuations. A short-term evacuation tends to last one to 14 days, whereas a longer-term evacuation extends beyond 14 days (JEMS, 2008). Although on average, host-experienced municipalities that participated in the study hosted evacuees only for a few days or weeks, there were a few instances in which some municipalities hosted evacuees for one to 2 months. As noted in chapter 2, longer-term evacuations (as opposed to shorter-term evacuations) tend to be more complex and require more planning, more people, and an increase in resources (Aguirre, 1994).

There are implications for lack of planning for longer-term evacuations. Communities that do not plan for prolonged hosting periods may find that their facilities are not appropriate for the longer-term accommodation needs, their resources may become depleted, and their personnel would likely become exhausted. In addition, longer-term evacuations could generate psychological illnesses and increase stress-related conditions for evacuees (Coker et al., 2006; Epp et al., 1998; Quarantelli, 1990; Vogt & Sorensen, 1992).

It was suggested by host-experienced municipalities that the province initiate plans for repatriation of evacuees to their communities after a certain period of time. This approach would give municipalities a better understanding of how long they could sustain their effort and maintain their services without being depleted. However, planning for

repatriation could be complex given that facilities may need to be rebuilt, and social and physical structures to be in place. It was suggested that as an alternative to having evacuees return to their communities too early, perhaps a secondary plan could be developed, which directs that after a certain period, evacuees could be relocated to another community and accommodated there for a while, to ensure that their needs could continue to be effectively met.

First Nations

It was suggested by a few host-experienced municipalities that First Nations evacuee liaisons' roles should be more permanent and identified in advance by the Chief and Council, so that the liaisons better comprehend their roles and expectations of the province. They could also potentially assist in enhancing personal preparedness activities in the pre-evacuation stages within their respective communities. More permanent roles would be most beneficial for those First Nations communities that experience frequent evacuations, because it would allow relationships to be developed between potential host municipalities and the First Nations community while still in the prevention (or preparedness) phase.

Health

For the most part, host-experienced municipalities initiated the provision of health services within shelters or accommodation facilities. The aim of providing health-related services at a location removed from hospitals and clinics is to alleviate the strain on these facilities. The Sphere Project (2004) stated that "the provision of facilities and support for displaced populations can cause resentment amongst the host community, especially where existing resources are limited and have to be shared with new arrivals" (p. 32).

Most municipalities noted they did well at dealing with unforeseen health challenges. However, they also observed that the development of an emergency plan to manage health services for evacuees would alleviate some of these problems.

Study findings demonstrated that host-experienced and host-inexperienced municipalities struggled with comprehension of the various evacuation stages. According to the *Service Level Standards* (JEMS, 2008), stages 1 and 2 in their simplest form consist of those individuals whose health may be compromised, need immediate assistance, or are dependent upon a caregiver, and Stage 3 includes all other residents. Often, those who are considered Stage 1 or 2 are given priority and are the first to be transported to host communities.

The distinction between these stages is essential, as it determines which type of health services will be provided in the host community and which types of resources are required to assist with these health conditions. Better clarification of the various types of stages and warning regarding the expectance of Stage 1 or 2 evacuees could assist host municipalities to ensure they have the necessary resources to meet the health needs of these evacuees once they arrive.

Financing

The issue of financing evacuation costs was found to be of great importance to host municipalities. However, the issue of financing for communities when hosting evacuees appears to be rather common. During Hurricane Katrina, it was found that one year after the disaster, local organizations were still waiting to be reimbursed (Appleseed, 2006). The major implication for the delay in payments is that it may impact a

municipality's decision to host evacuees. The development of financing guidelines could assist host municipalities to better comprehend the financial process.

Overall, the majority of the community representatives found that hosting First Nations evacuees was an excellent experience. It allowed municipalities to test their local emergency plans and facilitated the development of newfound relationships with other individuals and organizations. Furthermore, hosting evacuees highlighted the necessity to broaden their EOC planning group to include a more diverse representation. It also allowed local agencies such as the Canadian Red Cross and the Salvation Army to carry out the roles they had been trained to perform, and helped identify gaps in emergency management plans for both local agencies and the municipality.

Scope and Limitations of the Research

The most evident limitation of this study was the lack of involvement by First Nations communities and evacuees. The initial intent of this project was to engage both First Nations communities and host municipalities to participate in the project, so as to seek their input concerning issues and recommended solutions for improving future evacuations. However, owing to short timelines and limited funding, the scope of the project was narrowed to include only host municipalities. Therefore, a major limitation of this project is that it does not consider the needs, requirements, perspectives, and expectations of First Nations communities. It is recommended that further research be carried out in collaboration with First Nations communities, as their input is crucial to the success of future evacuation efforts. As Epp et al. (1998) asserted, "the development of emergency preparedness requires the input, understanding and direction of the community which it will serve" (p. 1).

A secondary limitation was the time of year in which the research data were collected. The likelihood of a First Nations evacuation occurring in the winter months is typically small. First Nations evacuations are often triggered by floods or forests fires, which are more likely to occur in the spring or summer months. Therefore, one may surmise that because the threat of evacuation is relatively small during the time of this research, the importance of discussions regarding First Nations evacuations was not considered a high priority.

An additional limitation was the lack of time to complete the research project. Perhaps more municipalities would have participated in the study if the deadline to participate had been extended by a few weeks. However, an extension was not feasible. Moreover, since part of the role of community representatives is to respond to emergencies, a few had to cancel interviews or were unable to find the time to complete the survey questionnaires. With added time, additional municipalities could have been invited to participate.

Summary

This chapter identified project participants, and presented study findings, conclusions, and limitations. The research conclusions suggest that most of the issues identified by municipalities when hosting First Nations evacuees could be alleviated with greater knowledge of expectations, roles, and responsibilities; initiation of relationships; organization of resources in the pre-evacuation stages; and assistance or guidance from the provincial emergency management agency. A number of municipalities also identified constructive lessons learned and best practices that would assist host-inexperienced municipalities to better prepare for the hosting of First Nations evacuees.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents recommended practices for consideration by Ontario municipalities, so that they could become better prepared to host and meet the needs of First Nations evacuees. Moreover, the chapter presents recommendations to EMO, the sponsor for this project, so it could assist host municipalities in the enhancement of their preparations when hosting First Nations evacuees.

Recommended Practices for Ontario Municipalities

Recommended Practice 1: Assess Your Municipality's Capacities Prior to Agreeing to Host First Nations Evacuees.

It is recommended that Ontario municipalities examine their own hazards, vulnerabilities, and capacities prior to agreeing to host First Nations evacuees. By assessing their own hazards, and their physical, social, and economic vulnerabilities, municipalities would have a better understanding of their capacity to host First Nations evacuees. In addition, an assessment of personnel, resources, facilities, and services available within a community would assist a host municipality to determine whether it is able to effectively host First Nations evacuees.

Recommended Practice 2: Prepare as Much as Possible in the Pre-evacuation Stages.

Preparedness is defined as “actions taken prior to an emergency or disaster to ensure an effective response” (Emergency Management Ontario [EMO], 2004, p. III). Preparedness activities involve the formulation of emergency response, recovery, and business continuity plans; training; public awareness; education; and emergency exercises. Preparedness activities for host municipalities could also include the examination of existing resources, development of potential roles and responsibilities

during an evacuation, and initiation of competency assessments for personnel and potential volunteers. As well, it could include the development of relationships, fan-out lists, and designation of agencies that may be able to assist during evacuations. Planning in advance for evacuees could alleviate inherent problems, challenges, and stress for both host municipalities and evacuees. It could also make the evacuation response efforts run more smoothly for all concerned.

Recommended Practice 3: Develop Mutual Aid Agreements with Local Agencies and Businesses.

Once municipalities state their interest in hosting First Nations evacuees, it would be worthwhile to begin the development of mutual aid agreements with local agencies and businesses. The initiation of mutual aid agreements in the pre-evacuation stages is important, because it would ensure that resources and services would be provided once evacuees arrive at the host municipality. Furthermore, these agreements would secure resources for evacuees that may otherwise not be readily available within the receiving or hosting community.

Recommended Practice 4: Prepare for More Than the Anticipated Number of Evacuees.

A number of host-experienced municipalities noted the importance of ensuring accommodation and resources for more than the anticipated number of evacuees. Stage 1 evacuees typically arrive with additional family members, who also require lodging. In addition, when First Nations evacuees are housed in different locations or communities, family and friends typically want to reunite with one another, thus increasing the demand for additional accommodation and supplies. It is also possible that other surrounding First Nations communities may need to be evacuated. Therefore, it is essential that

municipalities have more than the required resources to sustain and maintain the evacuee population.

Recommended Practice 5: Ensure a Diverse EOC Planning Group That Includes First Nations Groups and the Canadian Red Cross.

There are many benefits to having a diverse EOC planning group. One of the most important reasons is that it allows for relationships to be strengthened prior to emergencies and provides clarification of functions during emergencies. It is recommended that municipalities invite local First Nations groups and the Canadian Red Cross to become a part of the EOC planning group, as they each possess essential skills needed when hosting First Nations evacuees. First Nations groups play important roles when hosting First Nations communities. They may offer guidance, provide translation, initiate cultural ceremonies, and prepare traditional meals. The Canadian Red Cross could facilitate registration and assist in the sheltering of evacuees.

Recommended Practice 6: Advise Local Residents of Your Municipality's Decision to Host First Nations Evacuees.

It is recommended that host municipalities ensure residents are advised of the arrival of the evacuees and the potential length of their stay. Providing advance notice would permit local businesses to ensure they have enough resources to sustain their community and the evacuees. This practice is particularly important for smaller communities with limited supplies.

Recommended Practice 7: Ensure Transparency Is Adhered to While Hosting First Nations Evacuees.

It is advised that host municipalities ensure they are transparent with First Nations evacuees. Transparency can be accomplished by being open and candid with evacuees about the emergency situation at their home community or other areas that are affected, and the anticipated timelines for their return to their community.

Recommended Practice 8: Provide an Opportunity for First Nations Evacuees to Connect with Their Friends, Family, and Community.

It is important to provide an opportunity for First Nations evacuees to connect with their loved ones and other members of their community during an evacuation. Although it may not always be possible, evacuees can sometimes transfer to other evacuation sites. Methods of communication can include computers with Internet access and telephones, to allow evacuees to communicate with members of their social networks.

Recommended Practice 9: Plan for Longer-Term Evacuations and Repatriation.

Because there are no pre-identified timelines for the length of evacuations, it is important that municipalities plan for long-term evacuations. As noted above, host municipalities often consider planning for short-term evacuations only, but longer-term evacuations tend to require more resources and services and are generally more complex. Communities that do not plan for hosting for a prolonged period may find their facilities may be inappropriate for longer-term evacuations, and consequently resources may be insufficient to sustain the evacuee population. It is equally important to plan for repatriation of evacuees to their respective communities. Often when it is time for

evacuees to return to their communities, there is paperwork that needs to be completed, services that need to be halted, and resources that need to be returned. Planning for repatriation prior to or at the beginning of an evacuation would alleviate some extra work for municipalities once evacuees have returned safely to their communities.

Recommended Practice 10: Plan for De-stressing Activities for Staff Members.

Hosting evacuees is rewarding, but could also be strenuous for local staff members, especially when an anticipated short-term evacuation transforms into a long-term evacuation. It is important to view the signs of worker burnout and address them immediately with local staff members and volunteers.

Recommended Practice 11: Initiate Relationships with Other Ontario Host Municipalities.

Building relationships with host-experienced municipalities is considered of utmost importance. These municipalities have the expertise and knowledge and may provide essential guidance and advice with regard to hosting evacuees in other municipalities. In addition, there may be an opportunity for municipalities to visit hosts and tour the evacuation sites of other hosts in order to observe first-hand the response efforts.

Recommended Practice 12: Include Hosting First Nations Evacuees as an Annex to Municipal Emergency Management Plans.

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (1990) requires that communities develop and implement an emergency management program. An emergency management program consists generally of a set of activities, measures, and plans that ensure a proactive and coordinated approach to managing emergencies (EMO, 2004).

The incorporation of a procedure for hosting First Nations evacuees into a local municipal emergency management plan would provide guidance on evacuation response processes for all parties.

Recommended Practices for EMO

Recommended Practice 1: Carry Out a Capacity Assessment of Ontario Municipalities to Determine Municipalities That Are Capable of Hosting First Nations Evacuees.

The idea of a capacity assessment entails examining Ontario municipalities to distinguish which municipalities are ideal for hosting First Nations evacuees. An assessment could include an examination of local resources, facilities, and support services, and the sharing of resources with neighbouring communities. These findings could serve as a determinant whereby municipalities would be invited to serve as hosts for First Nations evacuees. Rather than having a number of municipalities prepare to serve as potential hosts for evacuees, this method advocates that a small number of municipalities be chosen to host. The province could work with those chosen municipalities to enhance their capacities so they become successful in hosting First Nations evacuees.

Recommended Practice 2: Clarify Expectations of Host Municipalities.

The research findings for this study suggest that further clarifications are needed regarding expectations of host municipalities. Expectations concerning the provision of services and types of accommodation should be communicated to host municipalities. Identification of expectations would assist municipalities in meeting the expected measures.

Recommended Practice 3: Clarify Roles and Responsibilities During an Evacuation in the Prevention (or Preparedness) Stages.

Delegation and clarification of roles and responsibilities between the province, federal departments, social service agencies, and municipalities should be determined in the pre-evacuation stages. Comprehension of these functions would diminish assumptions, confusion and will ensure there is no duplication or absence of essential services. Moreover, agreement as regards to which agencies would serve as the lead and support agencies would increase the success of evacuation efforts.

Recommended Practice 4: Cooperate with First Nations Communities During Evacuations to Classify Stage 1, 2, and 3 Evacuees.

Often when those most vulnerable evacuees arrive in host municipalities, there is little communication as to their required needs; therefore, community representatives find themselves searching for necessary items at the last minute. A more proactive approach would be to collaborate with First Nations communities in identifying in advance the health needs of individuals requiring special medical care, so that their needs are met as soon as they arrive in the host municipality. Furthermore, because children under 5 years old are considered to be vulnerable, they are often transported first to the host municipality as a Stage 1 or 2 evacuee. At times, children are transported alone and are left to stay in the airport by themselves or with a stranger. It is recommended that children be transported with a parent or guardian, or that resources be in place to ensure the safety of the child until a care-giver arrives.

Recommended Practice 5: Collaborate with First Nations Communities So That They Become Better Prepared to Evacuate During Emergencies.

Most often when individuals are evacuated from their community, they have little time to search for valuable items to bring with them to the host community. Since evacuations in several First Nations communities are occurring on a consistent seasonal basis, it is recommended that the province collaborate with First Nations communities in enhancing personal preparedness activities. These activities could ensure that all residents are advised of the necessity to have essential documentation, including health and status cards, medications, prescriptions, and other valuable items, easily accessible when they are required to evacuate.

Recommended Practice 6: Seek the Development of Permanent First Nations Evacuee Liaisons.

As highlighted in the research findings, First Nations evacuee liaisons are an invaluable resource during evacuations, as they bridge the communication and cultural gap between the evacuees and the host municipality. At times, the liaisons are identified and oriented only after they arrive in the host community. It is recommended that a list of potential First Nations evacuee liaisons be identified in the pre-evacuation stages by First Nations communities that are at most risk of evacuation. The aim is to provide more consistency, to grant the opportunity for liaisons to better understand their functions during an evacuation, and to develop relationships with potential host municipal representatives. In addition, the liaisons could assist in organizing and facilitating personal preparedness activities within their communities.

Recommended Practice 7: Identify a Timeline Whereby First Nations Evacuees Are Returned to Their Respective Communities or Relocated to Alternate Communities.

For the most part, First Nations evacuations tend to be short term. Evacuees usually return to their respective communities after the threat has passed, usually within a few days or weeks. However, there are instances in which evacuations could be prolonged and endure for months. After a few months of hosting evacuees, resources in the host municipality could become depleted. It is proposed that the development of timelines could identify when First Nations evacuees would be relocated to an alternate municipality where their needs could continue to be met.

Recommended Practice 8: Discuss with Host Municipalities the Significance of Declaring an Emergency While Hosting First Nations Evacuees.

It is recommended that further discussions take place concerning the benefits and implications of emergency declaration by host municipalities. Some communities declare an emergency while hosting evacuees, whereas others choose not to. As a result of such discussions, communities could make a more educated decision whether this action is right for them.

Recommended Practice 9: Provide Financing Guidelines to Host Municipalities.

Financing is an important component of hosting First Nations evacuees. The development and provision of financing guidelines to host municipalities would establish financial parameters to be adhered to. Guidelines consisting of authorized and non-authorized expenses, necessary documentation, anticipated periods for reimbursement, and possible exceptions to the rules would create transparency and mitigate assumptions.

Recommended Practice 10: Provide Municipalities With the Tools to Aid in Their Preparation Efforts in Hosting First Nations Evacuees.

Host municipalities identified the need for more dialogue and training concerning preparation of hosting First Nations evacuees. It is recommended that workshops or briefing sessions be conducted in concert with current and future host municipalities, and possibly First Nations communities. Suggested topics could include the operational needs of First Nations communities, expectations of host municipalities, stages of evacuation, preferred types of accommodations for evacuees, roles and responsibilities, procedures for long-term evacuations, provision of health services, and financing. These sessions are most important for those municipalities with limited or no experience in hosting First Nations evacuees. In addition, a revised copy of the *Service Level Standards* (JEMS, 2008) should be distributed to all municipalities that have expressed interest in hosting evacuees.

Recommended Practice 11: Encourage and Support the Development of Mitigation or Preventive Techniques within First Nations Communities.

It is suggested that effort should be made to encourage and support further mitigation or preventive techniques within First Nations communities. The development of these actions could reduce or eliminate the probability of future emergencies and evacuations and consequently aid in the creation of long-term sustainable solutions.

Summary

The above recommendations were developed from the assessment of the issues, challenges, lessons learned, and best practices identified in the research findings. It is anticipated that these recommendations will assist host municipalities to better prepare

for hosting First Nations evacuees in the future and help EMO to better prepare and support Ontario municipalities in effectively hosting First Nations evacuees.

CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED

This section highlights lessons learned while conducting this research project.

Method of Carrying Out Research

At times, researchers may face barriers in reaching their intended audience, especially when there are no predefined relationships with the research subjects. For this project, I did not find any barriers to accessing my research participants. What led to my success was the collaboration with my project sponsor in the development and distribution of an initial letter introducing the project and encouraging participants to participate. The letter also stated that within one week, I would contact them to seek their participation. This approach allowed individuals to think about the project ahead of time and decide whether they were interested in participating in it.

An imperative lesson learned was the value of setting aside quiet time to simply think about the research project and its necessary steps. Allowing time away to ponder on the project in a stress-free environment presented me with different insights that were not apparent when the research materials were directly in front of me. Moreover, ensuring sufficient time to analyze the data was critical, because the more I examined the research data, the more associations and themes emerged.

Importance of Transparency as a Researcher

Throughout this project, I recognized the significance of being transparent with all key stakeholders. More particularly, I realized the value of being transparent with research participants. Stating project goals at the onset of the project allowed participants to understand that solutions to existing problems could not be developed without their participation. I found that it was better to provide more information than have participants

seek answers, because this method demonstrated that as a researcher I had nothing to hide. The more transparent I was, the more research participants were willing to discuss their perspectives and experiences.

Value of Being Engaged in the Project

Throughout the project, I was very engaged with the research topic, because it was one that interested me and I could see the benefits it could provide to the study's participants and others. It is recommended that future researchers choose projects that engage them and will continue to peak their curiosity, even after the completion of their project. It is equally important to seek engagement from research participants and other stakeholders. Although as a researcher I was collecting, examining, and analyzing the data, it was the research participants who developed solutions to their own pre-existing problems.

Understanding of Emergency Management

Prior to carrying out this research, I had limited knowledge of evacuation practices and of municipal and provincial emergency management activities. This project granted me the opportunity to work with leaders in the field of emergency management in Ontario and to gain a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities and the complexities they are presented with prior to, during, and following emergencies. Although I discovered many new domains in the field throughout this project, I am aware that there is still a lot to uncover.

Greater Appreciation for Emergency Managers

This project allowed me to work closely with local emergency management representatives from small and large communities. I gained a greater appreciation for

emergency managers. In addition to serving as a CEMC, a number of community representatives also had secondary occupations, which therefore limited the time they could devote to planning for First Nations evacuees. It is anticipated that the study findings will alleviate some work for emergency managers.

Summary

This research allowed me to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues, challenges, and best practices relating to the hosting of First Nations communities by municipalities. It is hoped that host municipalities will consider the research findings and use the recommendations to enhance their emergency management plans. Moreover, it is anticipated that EMO will use the recommendations to better prepare Ontario municipalities to host First Nations evacuees.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **What is the name of the municipality you represent? (Optional)**
2. **What is your operational title? (Optional)**
3. **Has your municipality ever served as host for First Nations communities that were evacuated due to an emergency?**
 Yes (If “Yes”, please move to question #4)
 No (If “No”, please move to question #46)

PAST EXPERIENCE HOSTING FIRST NATIONS EVACUEES

The following questions will refer to your municipality’s experience hosting First Nations evacuees.

4. **How many separate times did your municipality host First Nations evacuees?**

1

2

3

4

5

Other (please specify)

5. **During what month(s) and year(s) did your municipality host First Nations evacuees? Please identify all months and years that apply.**

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
--	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------

Jan.

Feb.

Mar.

Apr.

May

June

July

Aug.

Sept.

Oct.

Nov.

Dec.

6. **What was the primary reason(s) for the First Nations evacuation(s)? Please identify all reasons that apply.**

Forest fire

Flood

Hazardous material spill

Health emergency

Power failure

Tornado

Wind storm
Winter storm
Infrastructure damage
Other (please specify)

7. What factors influenced your municipality to agree to host First Nations evacuees? Please identify all factors that apply.

Had facilities to accommodate
Timing of evacuation was good
Had available resources
Had available personnel to assist
Close proximity to First Nations community being evacuated
Other (please specify)

MOST RECENT EXPERIENCE HOSTING FIRST NATIONS EVACUEES

The following questions will refer to the last time your municipality hosted First Nations evacuees.

8. Think of the last time your community hosted First Nations evacuees. From which community did the First Nations group evacuate from? Please list the community name, First Nations band or region.

9. How many First Nations evacuees did your municipality host?

10. How long in advance was your municipality notified that it would be receiving First Nations evacuees?

Less than 12 hours
Less than 24 hours
Less than 1 week
1-2 weeks
2-4 weeks
More than 1 month
Other (please specify)

11. Refer to your answer in question #10. Did you find the notification gave your municipality sufficient time to prepare to host First Nations evacuees?

Yes (If “Yes”, please move to question #13)
No (If “No”, please move to question #12)
Don’t Know (If “Don’t know”, please move to question #13)

12. How much notification did your municipality require in order to be sufficiently prepared to host First Nations evacuees?

13. How long did your municipality host First Nations evacuees for?

Less than 1 week
1-2 weeks

2-4 weeks
1-2 months
2-4 months
Other (please specify)

14. Was a "First Nations Evacuee Liaison" appointed by the First Nations community?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #15)
No (if "No", please move to question #17)
Don't Know (if "Don't Know", please move to question #17)

15. Were there any issues with the "First Nations Evacuee Liaison"?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #16)
No (if "No", please move to question #17)

16. Please identify any issues related to the "First Nations Evacuee Liaison".

17. Was a "Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)" or "Duty Officer" appointed by Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) to assist your municipality in hosting First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #18)
No (if "No", please move to question #21)
Don't know (if "Don't know", please move to question #21)

18. What role did the "Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)" or "Duty Officer" play within your municipality?

19. Were there any issues with the "Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)" or "Duty Officer"?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #20)
No (if "No", please move to question #21)
Don't know (if "Don't know", please move to question #21)

20. Please identify any issues related to the "Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)" or "Duty Officer".

21. Did your municipality receive a copy of the "Service Level Standards" for hosting First Nations communities developed by the Joint Emergency Management Steering Committee (JEMS) prior to hosting First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #22)
No (if "No", please move to question #25)
Don't know (if "Don't know", please move to question #25)

22. Did you find the "Service Level Standards" was helpful in preparing your municipality to host First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #23)

No (if “No”, please move to question #23)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #23)

23. Did you find there was anything missing or unclear in the "Service Level Standards"?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #24)

No (if “No”, please move to question #25)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #25)

24. What do you think is missing or is unclear in the "Service Level Standards"?

25. What is your level of understanding of roles and responsibilities of the following organizations when hosting First Nations evacuees?

Very clear	Somewhat clear	Not clear at all
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Your municipality

Emergency Management Ontario (EMO)

Indian & Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

26. What is your level of understanding of Stage 1, 2, and 3 evacuees?

Very clear	Somewhat clear	Not clear at all
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Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

COMMUNICATION

The following questions will refer to the last time your municipality hosted First Nations evacuees.

27. Did your municipality set up an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to handle the hosting of First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #29)

No (if “No”, please move to question #28)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #29)

28. Why was an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) not initiated?

29. While thinking of the last time your municipality hosted First Nations evacuees, how frequently did you municipality communicate with the following governmental agencies?

Daily	Few times	Once a	Every 2	Every 2-4	Once a	Every 1-2	Every 2-4
-------	--------------	-----------	------------	--------------	-----------	--------------	--------------

a week week weeks weeks month months months

Emergency
Management
Ontario (EMO)
Indian &
Northern Affairs
Canada (INAC)
Health Canada
Public Safety
Canada
Ministry of
Natural
Resources
Ministry of
Health & Long
Term Care
First Nation &
Inuit Health
Branch (FNIH)

30. Refer to your answer in the previous question. Do you feel like this communication was sufficient?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #32)

No (if “No”, please move to question #31)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #32)

31. Please identify why you did not think the communication was sufficient.

32. Was a debriefing session held in the First Nations post-evacuation stages?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #34)

No (if “No”, please move to question #33)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #34)

33. Why was a debriefing session not held in the post-evacuation stages?

PROVISION OF SERVICES

The following questions will refer to the last time your municipality hosted First Nations evacuees.

34. Which of the following services were provided to First Nations evacuees by your municipality or an outside agency? Please identify all that apply.

Essential hygiene items
Access to medical services
Psychological support
Education
Translation services
Security

- Policing
- Local transportation
- Provision of emergency clothing
- Family reunification
- Cultural ceremonies
- Recreational activities
- Other (please specify)

35. What did your municipality see as gaps to provide services to First Nations evacuees?

36. Did your municipality invite local First Nations organizations and/or agencies (ie. Native Friendship Centres) to assist in hosting First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #38)

No (if “No”, please move to question #37, then #39)

Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #38)

37. Why were First Nations organizations not invited to assist in hosting First Nations evacuees?

38. What role did the First Nations organizations/agencies play?

39. Did your municipality encounter any issues or challenges while hosting First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #40)

No (if “No”, please move to question #41)

40. What issues and challenges were identified or encountered while hosting First Nations evacuees?

41. Did your municipality identify any 'best or recommended practices', observations or 'lessons learned' while hosting First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #42)

No (if “No”, please move to question #43)

42. What 'best or recommended practices', observations or 'lessons learned' did your municipality identify while hosting First Nations evacuees?

43. What advice would you provide to other Ontario municipalities regarding their preparation to host First Nations evacuees?

44. If your municipality agreed to host First Nations evacuees again in the future, what would your municipality do differently from the last time?

45. What information or resources would have better prepared your municipality to host First Nations evacuees?

- Information resources on what to expect while hosting
- Briefing session
- Workshop session
- Sensitivity training
- Other (please specify)

**MUNICIPALITIES INTERESTED IN HOSTING FIRST NATIONS
EVACUEES**

- 46. What do you believe are the needs of First Nations evacuees?**
- 47. What do you believe are the primary requirements in hosting First Nations evacuees?**
- 48. What factors influenced your municipality's decision to declare interest in hosting First Nations evacuees?**
- Had facilities to accommodate
 - Timing of evacuation was good
 - Had available resources
 - Had available personnel to assist
 - Close proximity to First Nations community being evacuated
 - Other (please specify)
- 49. How many First Nations evacuees would your municipality be willing to host?**
- 50. How much notification would your municipality require in order to be sufficiently prepared to host First Nations evacuees?**
- Less than 24 hours
 - Less than 1 week
 - 1-2 weeks
 - 2-4 weeks
 - More than 1 month
 - Other (please specify)
- 51. If your municipality stands within a two-tier government, have there been discussions with both tiers of government regarding the decision to host First Nations evacuees?**
- Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #52)
 - No (if “No”, please move to question #52)
 - Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #52)
 - Not applicable (if “Not applicable”, please move to question #52)
- 52. Are you aware of the "Service Level Standards" document for hosting First Nations communities developed by the Joint Emergency Management Steering Committee (JEMS)?**
- Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #53)
 - No (if “No”, please move to question #56)
 - Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #56)
- 53. Has your municipality received a copy of the "Service Level Standards"?**
- Yes (if “Yes”, please move to question #54)
 - No (if “No”, please move to question #56)
 - Don’t know (if “Don’t know”, please move to question #56)

54. Do you think there is anything missing or unclear in the "Service Level Standards"?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #55)

No (if "No", please move to question #56)

Don't know (if "Don't know", please move to question #56)

55. If yes, please describe what you think is missing or is unclear in the "Service Level Standards"

56. What is your level of understanding of roles and responsibilities of the following organizations when hosting First Nations evacuees?

Very clear	Somewhat clear	Not clear at all
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Your municipality

Emergency Management Ontario (EMO)

Indian & Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

57. What is your level of understanding of Stage 1, 2, and 3 evacuees?

Very clear	Somewhat clear	Not clear at all
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Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

58. What anticipated issues or challenges do you foresee in hosting First Nations evacuees?

59. What information or resources would better prepare your municipality to host First Nations evacuees in the future?

Information resources on what to expect while hosting

Briefing session

Workshop session

Sensitivity training

Other (please specify)

60. Have you consulted with municipalities that have hosted First Nations evacuees?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #61)

No (if "No", please move to question #62)

61. What advice did municipalities give you regarding hosting First Nations evacuees?

62. Are there any areas regarding hosting First Nations evacuees that you would like more information or clarification on?

Yes (if "Yes", please move to question #63)

No (if "No", please move to question #64)

63. Please describe what area you would like more information or clarification on regarding hosting First Nations evacuees.

64. Please add any additional comments.

*Thank you for completing this survey.
Your response will help improve First Nations evacuation in Ontario.*

APPENDIX B: INITIAL INTRODUCTION LETTER TO RESEARCH SAMPLE

Dear CEMC,

EMO has sponsored a Graduate Student who will be conducting an important research project that will focus on identifying issues and recommended practices with hosting First Nations evacuees in Ontario. Julie Obonsawin is completing her M.A. in Disaster and Emergency Management at Royal Roads University and this project is part of the requirements for her program.

Your municipality was chosen as a research participant because your municipality has hosted First Nations evacuees or expressed interest in hosting. By participating in this research project, your municipality will become more knowledgeable and better prepared to host First Nations evacuees in the future. Research results will also assist EMO in developing guidelines that would better equip host municipalities when receiving First Nations evacuees.

Research participants will have the option to carry out a one-on-one telephone interview or to complete a brief online survey questionnaire. No personal information will be recorded and all answers will remain completely confidential. A copy of the final report will be shared with EMO and will be publicly available online.

EMO strongly encourages all municipalities to participate in this important research project. Julie will contact each municipality individually within the next few days to discuss your participation. If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please contact Julie at XXXXXXXXXXXX or at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Best regards,

XXXXXXXXXX

Emergency Management Ontario

APPENDIX C: TELEPHONE CALL-OUT SCRIPT

Hello,

My name is Julie Obonsawin and I am carrying out a research project with Emergency Management Ontario regarding hosting First Nations evacuees for the completion of my M.A. in Disaster & Emergency Management at Royal Roads University.

Did you receive the email from XXXXX last week regarding the research project that will examine issues and recommended practices in hosting First Nations evacuees? Do you have any questions concerning the research project?

My purpose of this call is to seek your participation in the project and to discuss ways in which you can participate. Research participants may either chose to complete an online survey questionnaire which should take less than 30 minutes or carry out a one-on-one telephone interview that will take less than 1 hour and will be audio recorded. A reminder that all information will remain confidential and anonymous and no names of municipalities will be used in the final research report.

Would you be interested in participating in the research project? If so, would you prefer to complete a survey questionnaire or a one-on-one interview?

APPENDIX D: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE SCRIPT AND CONSENT

Thank you for your participation!

My name is Julie Obonsawin and this research project is part of the requirements for my M.A. Degree in Disaster & Emergency Management at Royal Roads University. If necessary, my credentials with Royal Roads University may be established by calling XXXXXX at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX.

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because your municipality has either hosted First Nations evacuees or your municipality has expressed interest in hosting First Nations evacuees.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

The purpose of the research project is to identify inherent issues and recommended practices with hosting First Nations evacuees in Ontario.

I will be sharing my research findings with Emergency Management Ontario (EMO), the Sponsor for this project. A copy of the project will also be housed at Royal Roads University and will be publicly accessible online through UMI/Proquest and the Theses Canada Portal.

METHODOLOGY

It is estimated that survey questionnaires will take approximately less than 30 minutes to complete. Questions will refer to issues and recommended practices when hosting First Nations evacuees.

BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND SOCIETY

By participating in this project your municipality will become more knowledgeable and better prepared to host First Nations evacuees. This research data will also assist EMO in developing guidelines that would better equip host municipalities when receiving First Nations evacuees.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All documentation will be kept strictly confidential and names of participants or municipalities will not be used in the research report. Research data will be examined by the researcher solely for the purpose of this project. As a research participant, you are free to decline to complete a survey questionnaire and alternatively choose to carry out a one-on-one interview.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You are not compelled to participate in this research project and no inducements are offered, expressed or implied, for your participation. You are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice. Your participation, input or none participation will remain confidential.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator
Royal Roads University
XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX

If you have any questions related to the survey or research project, please contact Julie at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Best Regards,
Julie Obonsawin

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

By choosing "YES" in the drop-down menu, you give free and informed consent to participate in this project and confirm that you are over 19 years of age. (Required answer)

APPENDIX E: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW CONSENT SCRIPT

The purpose of the research project is to identify issues and recommended practices with hosting First Nations evacuees in Ontario. In addition to submitting my final report to Royal Roads University, I will also be sharing my research findings with Emergency Management Ontario, the sponsor for this project. A copy of the project will also be housed online and will be publicly accessible.

The interview is expected to last less than one hour. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Research data will be examined solely by myself. You are free to withdraw without prejudice. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Do you wish to continue with the interview?