



Services aux Autochtones  
Canada

Indigenous Services  
Canada

Sous-ministre

Deputy Minister

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0H4

March 28, 2024

John Williamson  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Public Accounts  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Williamson:

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is pleased to provide electronically, in both official languages, the progress report requested by March 31, 2024, pursuant to Recommendation 6 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Account's (PACP) Report 34 entitled, *Emergency Management in First Nations Communities*, tabled on November 27, 2023.

Almost every recommendation in the aforementioned reports of this Committee and the Auditor General reference ISC working in collaboration with First Nations. As such, in partnership with the Assembly of First Nations, a steering committee was created with the intention of serving as an avenue for co-development between ISC and First Nations, specifically First Nations communities' members who have professional knowledge of emergency management in the First Nations context. This advisory body of 12 First Nation emergency management practitioners was stood up on October 12, 2023, and meets every two weeks. Members provide their feedback on the development and implementation of actions to address the all of the Auditor General's recommendations to improve outcomes for First Nations Communities.

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**Recommendation 6: On Performance Indicators**

***That, by 31 March 2024, Indigenous Services Canada present the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report presenting the new indicators used by the Emergency Management Assistance Program to measure the progress made against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.***

**Response**

Background

Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) Emergency Management Assistance Program plays a pivotal role in ensuring the safety, resilience, and well-being of First Nation communities across Canada in the face of emergencies and disasters. One of the key tools in assessing and ensuring that the program is meeting the needs of First Nation communities is through performance indicators. These are measures that provide information to monitor, track, and report on performance and progress toward targets using consistent data collection techniques as well as benchmarks or baselines.

The Auditor General's report on *Emergency Management in First Nations Communities* highlighted the necessity for revised indicators. The Auditor General's report found, "that most of the department's performance indicators tracked spending to measure its progress against the goals. Spending is not a good measure because it does not mean that results are being achieved. Without better performance indicators, the department could not assess progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals."

To address the recommendation, the programs undertook a review of the department's 60 current indicators. This review highlighted the need for a more streamlined and purposeful approach to performance measurement within the department.

Shifting from spending-related indicators to measuring progress against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as recommended by both the Auditor General's report and the Standing Committee on Public Account's report is beneficial for ISC's Emergency Management Program. While spending metrics provide insights into financial allocations, they can be supplemented by the assessment offered by the SDGs, which encompass social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development. Aligning with the SDGs ensures that the department's initiatives contribute to their objectives, enhances accountability and transparency, informs decision-making, and promotes sustainable development outcomes for First Nation communities. By focusing on outcomes and impacts rather than inputs alone, the department can prioritize resources effectively and achieve meaningful results while fostering resilience and well-being among First Nation populations across Canada.

## Update

ISC has made significant progress in refining the performance indicators for ISC's Emergency Management Assistance Program. Following a comprehensive review, the program removed 55 performance measurement indicators from an original 60. This strategic consolidation ensures a more focused and effective approach to monitoring our progress and aligns with our commitment to enhancing accountability and transparency.

Following the review of existing indicators, ISC now has 19 – 5 retained and 14 new. These indicators (see Annex A for the full list) span across various areas of the program, providing a comprehensive overview of our emergency management efforts. These new indicators have been developed in collaboration with feedback from First Nations and are aligned with the United Nations' SDGs. Specifically, they address key SDGs such as: ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation, making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, and taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

The indicators embody a holistic strategy for emergency management, covering resilience-building, infrastructure enhancement, community involvement, and adaptation to climate change. By aligning recovery projects with mitigation measures, facilitating the submission of proposals for innovative solutions, and ensuring the linkage of funded activities to emergency management plans, the department actively promotes inclusive, safe, and resilient cities while combating climate change impacts. Additionally, initiatives aimed at enhancing community engagement in emergency management decision-making processes and providing culturally appropriate services contribute to reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive societies. Moreover, timely response and recovery efforts, as measured by evacuation and reintegration indicators, contribute to ensuring healthy lives, promoting well-being, and reducing the socio-economic impact of emergencies. Overall, these indicators represent a concerted effort to address the complex challenges of emergency management while advancing sustainable development goals, ultimately fostering resilience, inclusivity, and well-being within First Nation communities across Canada.

The indicators have undergone a thorough review process by departmental officials to ensure accuracy, relevance, and alignment with program objectives and the SDGs (see Annex A). Now that they are finalized, the department will be implementing these refined indicators effectively from April 1st onwards, marking a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to enhancing the effectiveness and impact of the Emergency Management Assistance Program. We will revisit the indicators and conduct a thorough review every two years to ensure their continued efficacy and relevance.

We trust that the Committee finds this information useful for their work. The above responses illustrate the Government of Canada's commitment to ensuring First Nations communities can thrive and be resilient. The Department is committed to providing the remaining reports requested in the Committee's report under the prescribed timelines.

Should the Committee have any further inquiries, please contact Irene Balite, Senior Director, Legislative, Parliamentary and Regulatory Affairs Directorate, Indigenous Services Canada, [irene.balite2@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:irene.balite2@sac-isc.gc.ca); 343-998-2373.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gina Wilson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gina Wilson

## Annex A: Indicators – New and Retained Existing

Indicators are linked primarily with 5 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- 1 - No Poverty: End poverty in all of its forms everywhere.
- 3 – Good health and wellbeing: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- 11 – Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable
- 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

### New Indicators

The 14 new draft indicators are as follows:

Indicator	Program Area	Target	United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals Alignment
1. Percentage of activities/projects funded that are linked to an EM plan	Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness	100%	3, 9, 11
2. Percentage of Non Structural Mitigation and Preparedness proposals allocated to medium to high risk communities/organizations	Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness	50%	1, 3, 11, 13
3. Percentage of Non Structural Mitigation and Preparedness proposals submitted that have been evaluated based on the Risk Informed Approach	Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness	100%	1, 3, 11, 13
4. Percentage of recovery projects that have incorporated Emergency Management Assistance Program-eligible mitigation	Response and Recovery	100%	1, 9, 11, 13

measures where possible, actively implementing enhanced resilience measures			
5. Percentage of FireSmart activities/projects funded that are linked to a First Nation community Emergency Management plan	FireSmart	100%	3, 11
6. Percentage of FireSmart proposals allocated to medium to high risk communities/organizations	FireSmart	50%	1, 3, 11, 13
7. Percentage of FireSmart proposals submitted that have been evaluated based on the Risk Informed Approach	FireSmart	100%	1, 3, 11, 13
8. Percentage of communities deemed high risk that have an Emergency Management Coordinator or access to one through a Tribal Council or other Indigenous organization	Strategic Policy	100% by April 2025	1, 3, 11, 13
9. Percentage of ISC Emergency Management National plan and regional plans that are regularly updated (every two years)	Strategic Policy	100%	9, 13
10. Percentage of provinces and territories where First Nations or First Nation representative bodies are actively engaged and are participating in the negotiation process for a new multilateral emergency management service agreement (or updating agreements).	Multilateral Policy	Target: 100% of provinces and territories by April 2025	1, 3, 9, 11

11. Percentage of provinces and territories that have a signed multilateral emergency management service agreement that incorporates culturally appropriate services, as defined and agreed upon by First Nation signatories.	Multilateral Policy	Target: 100% of provinces and territories by April 2027	1, 3
12. Percentage of reported emergencies occurring within the last year that did not require a full evacuation (calculated on a fiscal year-basis)	Operations	70%	1, 9, 11
13. Percentage of evacuations that concluded within two months (60 days) from the evacuation start date.	Operations	80%	1, 3, 9
14. Percentage of evacuees who have returned to their community within two months (60 days) after their evacuation.	Operations	90%	3, 9, 11

**Retained Existing Indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals Alignment</b>
15. Percentage of eligible response costs submitted to headquarters is equivalent to the funds transferred	Response and Recovery	100%	1, 3
16. Percentage of eligible recovery costs submitted to headquarters is equivalent to the funds transferred	Response and Recovery	100%	1, 9

17. Percentage of non-structural mitigation and preparedness funding allocated towards on-reserve emergency resiliency and capacity building	Non Structural Mitigation and Preparedness	100%	13
18. Percentage of FireSmart funding allocated towards on-reserve emergency resiliency and capacity building	FireSmart	100%	3, 11,13
19. Percentage of notional capacity enhancement positions funding allocated towards on-reserve emergency resiliency and capacity building	Capacity Enhancement	100%	3,11