

Emergency Support Services (ESS) 2016 Year in Review



**EMERGENCY
SUPPORT SERVICES**

People Helping People

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What is ESS?

Emergency Support Services (ESS) provides short-term assistance to people forced to evacuate their homes in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. The success of the program depends on the dedication and careful planning of the ESS Management Team, volunteers and partner organizations in communities throughout the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS).

The ESS Management Team is comprised of RDKS Staff, City of Terrace Fire Department Staff, the RDKS and City of Terrace Emergency Program Coordinators, as well as, the Thornhill Fire Department and City of Terrace Fire Department Deputies. The management team meets on a quarterly basis to develop, implement and monitor goals and objectives to achieve the successful outcome of the ESS RDKS Program.

Overview:

This document outlines key highlights and accomplishments of the ESS RDKS program for 2016. Over the past year, there has been substantial growth in volunteer training and emergency response hours. New volunteers joined the Skeena Valley, District of Kitimat, District of New Hazelton and Stikine Region ESS teams with existing membership remaining strong. ESS RDKS continued to meet with neighboring First Nations and remote Northern communities to discuss ESS and provide support.

Naomi Gourlay completes her third year as ESS Director and oversees the coordination and administration of all aspects of the ESS RDKS program. Focus areas include delivering a comprehensive training program, building solid community and organizational partnerships, developing new initiatives, resources and tools and implementing plans for the ESS RDKS program.

Michelle Taylor joins our team as ESS Director for the Skeena Valley in June 2016. She maintains an effective ESS program for the Skeena Valley region and works with staff, volunteers and partner organizations to coordinate a wide variety of ESS activities related to planning, preparedness, training, volunteer recruitment and emergency response.

Key Stats for 2016 - ESS Team Membership:

- Skeena Valley – 24 Active Volunteers and 1 ESS Director (Michelle Taylor)
- The Hazeltons – 5 Active Volunteers and 1 ESS Director (Jude Hobenshield)
- District of Kitimat – 18 Active Volunteers and 1 ESS Director (Cameron Kelso)
- Stikine Region – 6 Active Volunteers and 1 ESS Director (Dawn Tomkins)

We are particularly pleased to welcome new volunteers to the Stikine Region ESS Team this year. Our goal is to provide ESS services to the communities of Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek in a supportive and efficient manner.

RDKS ESS Total Volunteer Hours = 1362 Hours Segmented Into:

- Emergency Response = 70 Hours
- Training = 1174 Hours (vs. 734 Hours in 2015)
- Outreach = 118 Hours



Members of the New Stikine Region Team in Dease Lake, August 2016

Training:

ESS volunteers and staff participate in a mixed-mode training program delivered through a combination of workshops, online and community-based courses, interactive exercises, team building events and regional conferences. Provided on a monthly basis with groups meeting independently and/or coming together for specialized opportunities, we incorporate content and curriculum from the following organizations:

- ESS RDKS and Community ESSDs (Monthly Team Meetings)
- Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) Academic ESS and Emergency Management Programs
- Emergency Management BC (EMBC)
- Northern Emergency Support Services Training Weekend (NESST)
- Disaster Psychosocial Program, Provincial Health Services Authority (DPS)
- Northwest Community College (NWCC) related courses such as Food Safe, Child Care
- Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity Conference, Vancouver BC
- And other support organizations such as the Salvation Army, Red Cross and St. John Ambulance

Hosted in different communities and venues throughout the RDKS and across Northern BC, topics explored in 2016 include ESS Basics, Preparedness, Psychological First Aid, Worker Care, Resource Acquisition, Reception Centres and Group Lodging.



*Resource Acquisition Course with the Justice Institute
in Terrace, November 2016*



*RC Exercise at the Alliance Church in Terrace,
October 2016*



*Group Lodging Course with the Justice Institute in
Kitimat, October 2016*



*Volunteers Practice the 'Child Care' Function at a
Group Lodging*



Northern Emergency Support Service Training (NESST) Conference

The NESST conference is a full training weekend that provides ESS volunteers from across Northern BC with opportunities to network, meet neighboring teams, participate in workshops and exercises, receive recognition and have fun.

ESS RDKS Chairs the NESST Organizing Committee which is comprised of delegates from communities across the North and helps to lead sponsorship efforts, formulate the agenda, promote the event and manage key logistics.

ESS RDKS volunteers attended the fourth annual Northern Emergency Support Service Training (NESST) Weekend in Prince George from April 15th – 17th, 2016 and participated in a variety of courses such as Reception Centre, Documentation Unit and Registration and Referrals. We also produced and edited a short video called 'ESS Talks' that describes the importance of ESS and volunteerism.

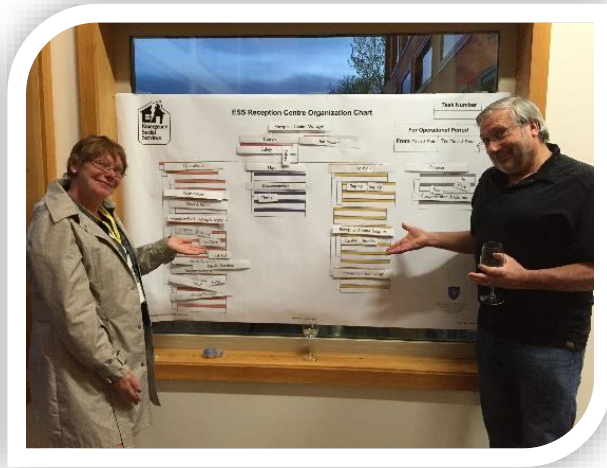
Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-W0pU4BIQ4>

The NESST Organizing Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis to plan the agenda and many details necessary to produce the 5th Annual NESST slated April 28th – 30th, 2017 in Fort St. James.



Members of ESS RDKS at NESST in Prince George, Spring 2016

More Pictures from NESST 2016



Warm-up Reception Centre Exercise



Volunteer Appreciation Awards and Banquet



Networking Event at the Northern Lights Winery



Sunday Reception Centre Exercise



ESS Tools and Resources:

ESS RDKS continues to develop and maintain tools, resources and emergency supplies for the RDKS communities to access including:

- The Volunteer and Member Management Portal, which provides an array of functions and features enabling volunteers and administrators to apply online, maintain profiles, monitor activities, track courses, log hours, send and receive targeted communications.
- Program Planning and Response Document and Spreadsheet Templates
- Reception Centre and Group Lodging Kits
- Program Marketing and Promotional Pieces including posters, pamphlets and our Facebook page at [facebook.com/essrdks](https://www.facebook.com/essrdks)



ESS Pamphlet: Page 1



ESS Pamphlet: Page 2

Volunteer Recognition:

Both new and experienced ESS volunteers were recognized for their commitment to ESS throughout the year. New volunteers received Personal Preparedness Kits and Team Shirts and “One Year Service” Jackets awarded to those eligible. Members who responded to emergency call outs in the Skeena Valley received Star lapel pins.



Skeena Valley ESS Volunteers Awarded Service Jackets



The Hazeltons ESSD Receives Service Jacket

ESS volunteers also enjoy appreciation events such as the City of Terrace Volunteer Recognition Dinner, the ESS Summer BBQ at Lakelse Lake Provincial Park and the Annual Thornhill Fire Department Holiday Dinner and Dance.



Cutting the Cake at the Summer BBQ



Activities at the Summer BBQ



Community Outreach:

ESS RDKS helps to raise public awareness for Personal and Neighborhood Preparedness and ESS through a variety of digital and traditional communications channels including newspaper ads, articles, social media and a spot on the Open Connection CFTK-TV show in May.

ESS Volunteers set up booths and exhibits at regional events including the:

- City of Terrace Fire Department's Canada Day Breakfast (July 2016)
- Skeena Valley Farmer's Market (Summer 2016)
- Dease Lake Canada Day Fair (July 2016)
- Guns and Hoses Hockey Game in Terrace (November 2016)
- Salvation Army Kettle Campaign (December 2016)



Relationship Building:

ESS RDKS also designed and delivered an Introductory ESS workshop for interested First Nations and remote Northern communities.

The goal is to encourage collaboration, resource sharing and empower people to develop customized ESS Teams that meet the needs of their individual communities.

Kitselas has requested support to develop an ESS component as part of their overall Community Emergency Plan. ESS RDKS will continue to provide resources, training opportunities and assistance.



ESS RDKS meets with Kitselas staff members to share ideas and plans on how best to provide immediate support to people forced to evacuate their home(s).



ESS Partners:

We continue to establish agreements and relationships with new and existing businesses and organizations throughout the RDKS to create awareness of the ESS program and get them on board as ESS Partners and Suppliers. This includes hotels, motels, grocery stores, restaurants, vets, clothing stores, taxi and bus services, gas stations, pharmacies and more. Support organizations include the Salvation Army, Red Cross, etc.

ESS RDKS and Community Teams have forged agreements with facilities suitable for Reception Centres and/or Group Lodging in the event of a large-scale evacuation. Site plans and inventories continue to develop for School Board buildings, Churches, Colleges, Arenas, Curling Clubs and Community Halls.

We have secured a stockpile of 270 cots and 520 blankets distributed regionally to storage spaces in Terrace, New Hazelton and Kitimat.



ESS Activation and Response:

ESS volunteers and staff responded to register evacuees, provide comfort kits, emotional support and referrals for necessities such as food, clothing and lodging for the following level one emergency activations within the RDKS.

Key Stats

Emergency Call Outs and Hours:

- Skeena Valley – 8 Call Outs / 48 Hours
- Hazeltons – 0
- Kitimat – 2 Call Outs
- Stikine Region – 0 Call Outs

Skeena Valley On-Call Hours Estimate for 2016:

On average 8 people are on call 24 hours per day x 365 days per year = 70,080 On-Call Hours



*Happy Faces Representing Teams throughout the RDKS
and the City of Vancouver*



*ESS Receives a Donation from the Royal
Purple at a Reception Centre Exercise in
the Terrace Sportsplex, Spring 2016*