



2016 Northern Emergency Support Services Training Weekend

Prepared by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako &
Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine
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People Helping People

"The Heart of Emergency Response"

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Event Summary

On April 15th – 17th, 2016, 83 Emergency Support Services (ESS) volunteers and staff from communities across Northern BC gathered at the Coast Inn of the North in Prince George, British Columbia for the 4th Annual Northern Emergency Support Services Training (NESST) weekend. This activity and training filled weekend was hosted by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, Regional District of Fraser Fort George, City of Terrace, City of Prince George, City of Fort St John, District of Fort St James, District of Taylor, District of Kitimat and the Village of Telkwa,

The NESST organizing committee's main goals are to ensure ESS volunteers establish relationships and skills that benefit them in the future by networking and getting to know one another, as well as, participating in training workshops and exercise scenarios.

On Friday night, the volunteers had an opportunity to meet one another at the Networking Activity at the Northern Lights Estates Winery. A great time was had by all. The buzz in the room was contagious with excitement and anticipation for what the rest of the weekend would hold. Each participant was provided with a delegate bag filled with fun and emergency preparedness themed goodies that were provided by our sponsors and various communities.

“As a new attendee to NESST, I enjoyed
meeting all of the volunteers. Their
passion was contagious”

Saturday morning, the ESS volunteers were welcomed by the City of Prince George's Mayor Lyn Hall. Brad Shauer, from Spectra Energy, a diamond sponsor, joined the volunteers for breakfast and gave a presentation about Emergency Planning and Spectra Energy. After breakfast, volunteers attended their chosen courses. NESST 2016 offered three course options: Reception Centre Applied Training, presented by Catherine Williams, Documentation Unit, presented by Bev Wilson and the Vancouver Island Mobile Support Team, and Registration and Referrals, presented by Jackie Kloosterboer.

“Excellent course, great event. Would
have liked to be able to take all of the
courses” – *ESS Volunteer & NESST
Attendee*

During the morning and afternoon breaks Naomi Gourlay, ESSD for the RDKS hosted a video booth to capture what it means to be an ESS volunteer and why the NESST conference is so important. [The video can be viewed here.](#) Tourism activities were also arranged during the extra-long lunch where participants could choose to visit the Art Gallery, Exploration Place, or have some self-directed retail therapy.

On Saturday evening the NESST Organizing committee hosted the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Awards Presentation where Bev Wilson, Barbara Greene, and Wayne Hartley of the Vancouver Island Mobile Support Team presented their keynote presentation, “ESS from the Mobile Support Team Perspective”.

“The Keynote Speaker for this event was one of the best I have ever had the opportunity to listen to” – ESS Volunteer & NESST Attendee

The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was filled with gratitude for all of the volunteers' hard work and dedication within their own and neighbouring communities. At the end of the evening, certificates were distributed to all individuals celebrating their year(s) of service to the ESS Program with a grand total of 532 years of experience in the room. Community gift baskets filled with local gifts and preparedness resources were also drawn and given away to a number of lucky winners.

On Sunday morning, volunteers participated in a functional Reception Centre Exercise where each participant was able to put into practice what they had learned during the weekend. After the exercise Barbara Green, from the Vancouver Island Mobile Support Team, led a debrief session where everyone had the opportunity to give and receive feedback. The weekend's activities were wrapped up around noon.

With the experience, stories and knowledge shared by the course facilitators, NESST attendees left feeling they would be able to use their new skills to benefit their communities and were better prepared to assist their ESS team during a response to an emergency.

“The training exercise was extremely valuable. It gave a small idea of the difficulty imagining people traumatized by an event”

NESST weekend would not have been possible without the generous donations of our sponsors. The cost for the weekend was \$16,713.42. With total sponsor contributions and registration fees NESST 2016 was 100% paid for. The following is the complete list of sponsor contributions.

Spectra Energy	2,000.00
Pacific Northern Gas	1,500.00
Trans Canada Pipeline - Coastal Gas Link & Prince Rupert Gas Transmission	1,500.00
Dungate Community Forest	1,200.00
New Gold	1,000.00
Taylor Industrial Mutual Aid	1,000.00
City of Prince George	630.00
Regional District of Fraser Fort George	630.00
Valard Construction	750.00
Comfor	500.00
Integrus Credit Union	500.00
Pinnacle Pellet	<u>500.00</u>
Total	11,710.00

Sponsors 'In-kind' were:

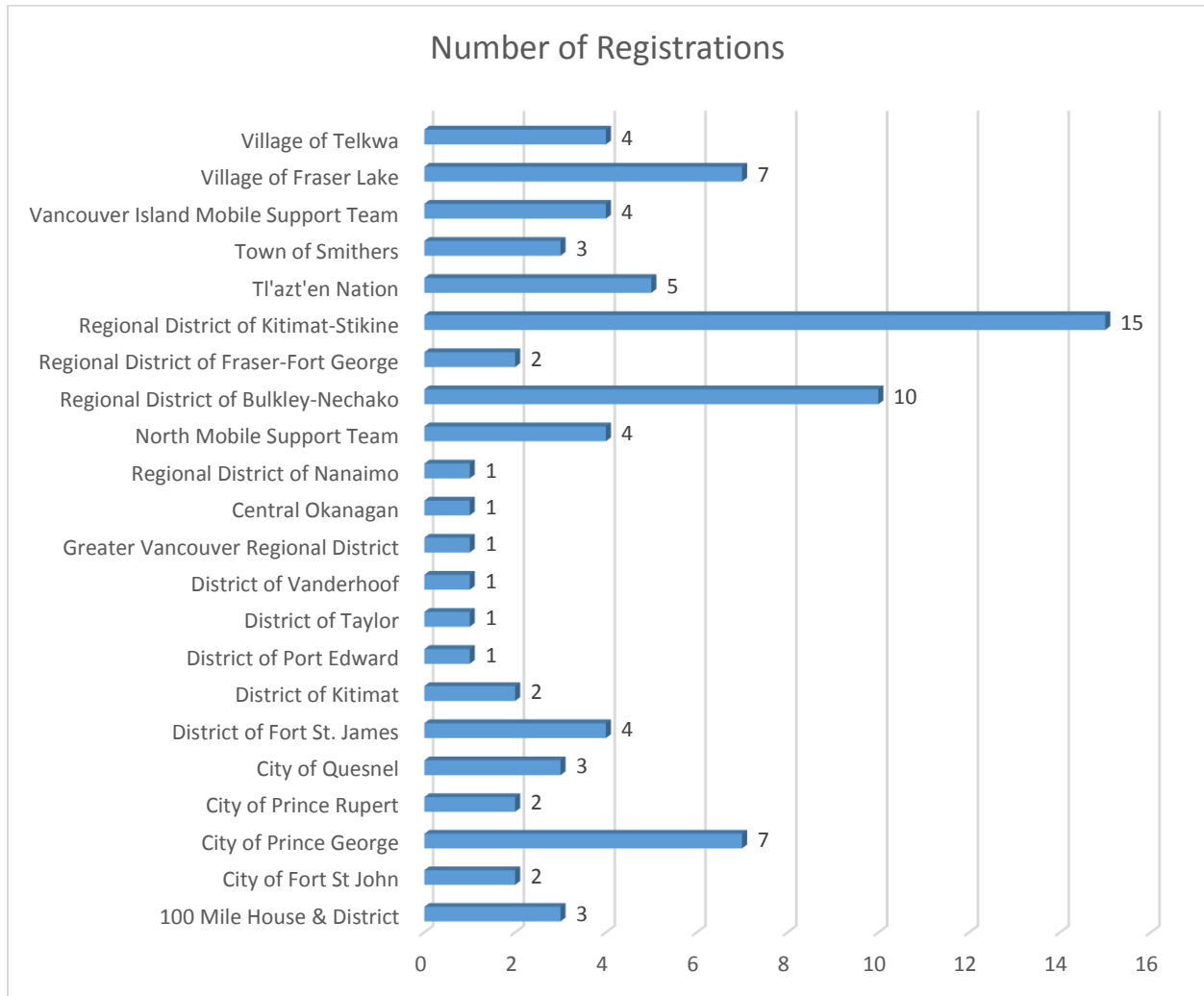
- The Inn Flower Place: 10% off floral decorations;
- Emergency Management BC: covered the cost of providing:
 - Reception Centre Applied Training;
 - Registration and Referrals;
 - Documentation Unit; and

- travel costs for the Vancouver Island Mobile Support Team and the Northern Mobile Support Team.

The NESST organizing committee would like to thank the sponsors again for their contributions. Their generosity will benefit the communities of those volunteers which now have a better understanding of ESS and more tools and experience to bring with them when responding to emergencies.

Attendance

This year's attendance for NESST surpassed the organizing committee's expectations with 21 more people than the previous year, for a total of 83 attendees.



Key Outputs

1. Improved capacity of Northern Emergency Support Service Organizations to respond to large scale emergencies:
 - with three course options, NESST attendees have gained skills in Reception Centre, Registration and Referrals, and Documentation Unit;
 - Northern ESS volunteers will be able to respond to a variety of different situations they may encounter during an emergency;
 - These new skills can translate from a level one response across to a Reception Centre.
2. Increased communications between northern ESS organizations:
 - with networking and relationship building opportunities, ESS teams too far away to respond to an incident are still able to communicate with one another for valued support;
 - although they may not be able to respond and help physically, they are always able to count on one another for emotional support, resources, and idea sharing.
3. Increased base of volunteers available for mutual aid between communities:

- ESS volunteers may be more willing to travel outside of their communities to help others as they are more familiar with neighbouring ESS teams;
 - Interaction and awareness with/of the Mobile Support Team
 - the NESST weekend is aimed to bring volunteers together and implement the importance of relying on and helping one another.
4. NESST Organizing Committee made up of ESS teams across the north:
 - nine ESS team representatives dedicated their time to make NESST possible;
 - during the event, other team representatives expressed interest in joining the committee for future planning.
 5. Host NESST in different northern communities each year:
 - the location for NESST is being changed annually to allow another communities to benefit from having the event held locally;
 - this also allows more or less travelling for volunteers depending on where their team is located;

Acknowledgement of Sponsors

Acknowledgement of all the sponsors was provided on correspondence, event signage, and website materials. Different sponsorship levels also identified which 'perks' were available with which levels. Diamond and Platinum level sponsors were given the opportunity to present to the volunteers on Saturday morning.

Conclusion

NESST 2016 was an amazing success. Volunteers left feeling like they were part of a larger team and had new skills to put forward in the field. NESST would not have been possible without the generous support of the sponsors and the hard work and dedication of the host community, the Organizing Committee and the attendance of ESS volunteers.

*"The weekend was very successful overall. I look forward to the next NESST weekend" –
ESS Volunteer and NESST attendee*

Attachments

1. Evaluation Summary
2. NESST Agenda
3. Expenses
4. Sponsor Acknowledgement
5. Pictures of event
6. 2015 NESST Final Report



Evaluation Summary

Chart 1 demonstrates how NESST attendees rated their experience for the following: Saturday Afternoon Excursion, Keynote Address, Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, Networking, Food, Check-in Process, and Pre-Registration.

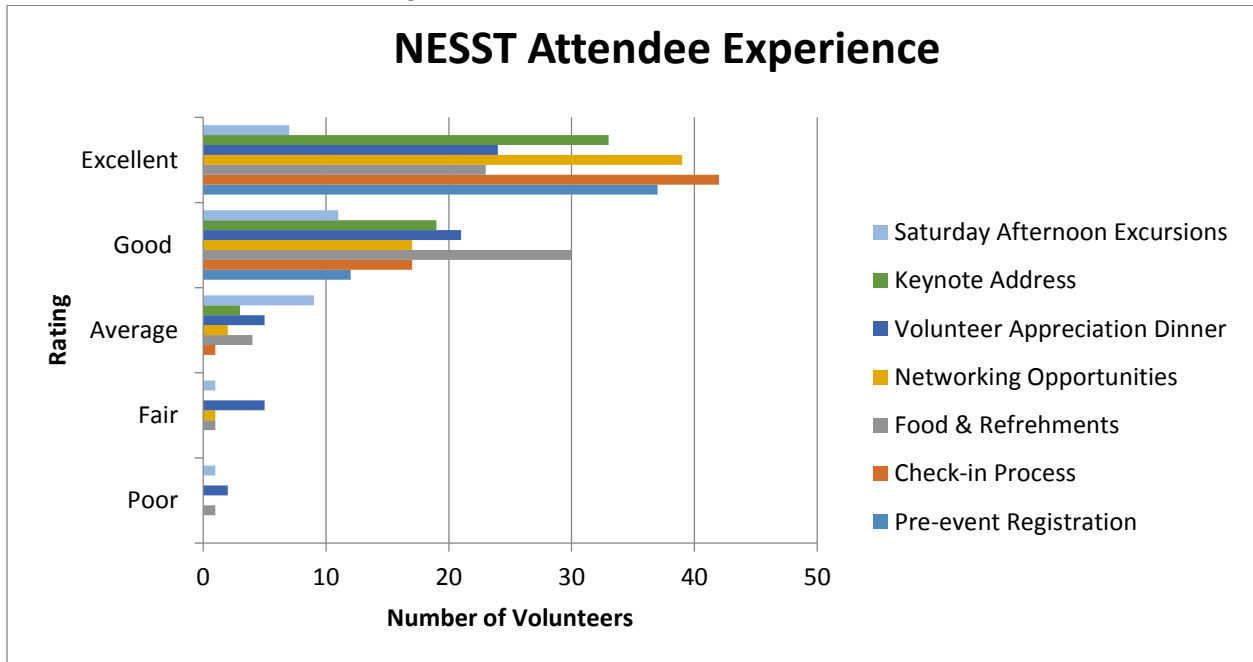


Chart 2 demonstrates how NESST attendees rated their experience for the following: Training Exercise, Documentation Unit, Reception Centre, and Registration and Referrals.

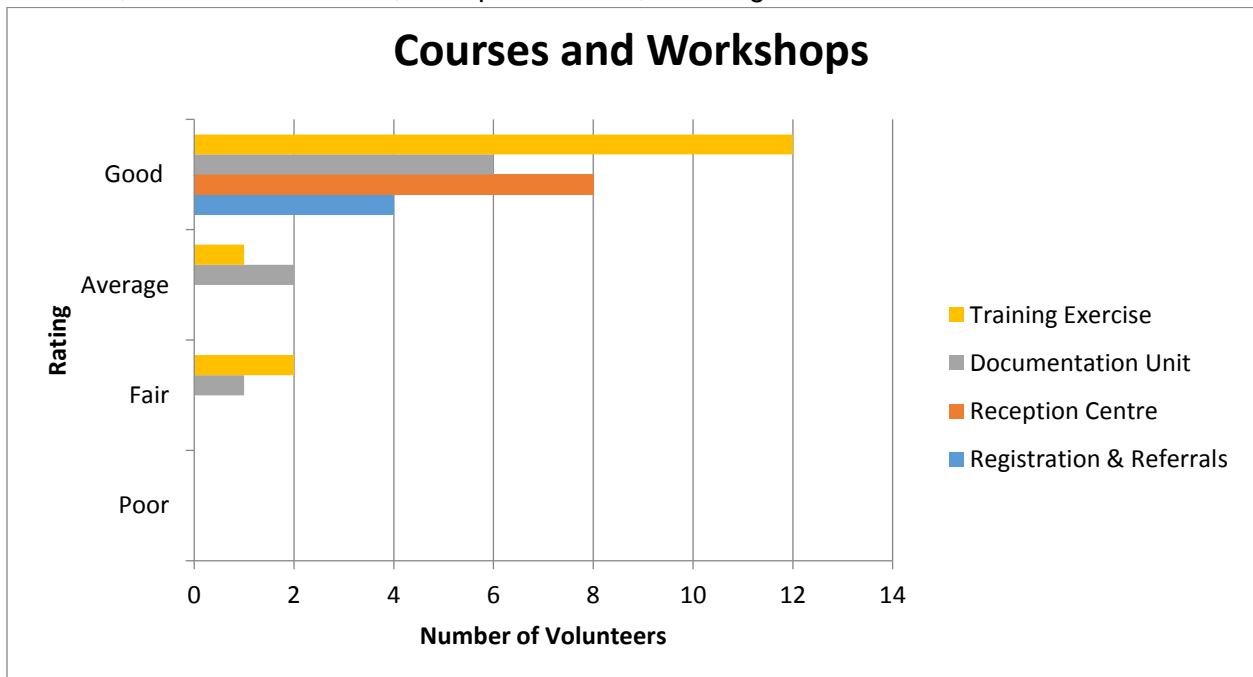


Chart 3 demonstrates interest of NESST attendees for possible courses for next year.

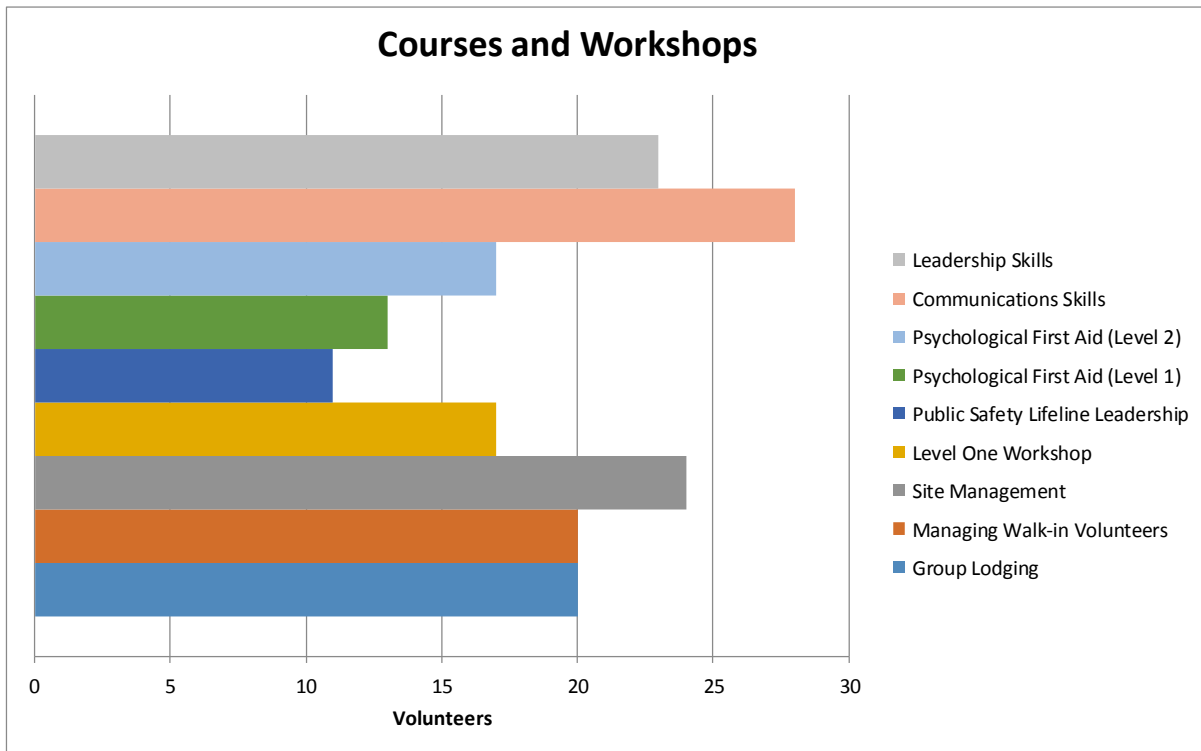


Figure 1: Volunteers were asked to make suggestions for future courses for the NESST event.

Suggestions for Courses for Next Year
Resource Acquisition
Break into groups, each group having session addressing emotions, presentation skills. Keeping ourselves calm and responsive.
Recruitment and Retention - Momentum
CDART for pets

Figure 2: Volunteers were asked to describe two things that they liked during the weekend.

Two things you liked
Spending Time With all the ESS people
All the hands on
Very well organized
Training exercise was extremely valuable. It gave a small idea of the difficulty in managing people traumatized by an event.
The Keynote Speaker for this event was one of the best I have ever had the opportunity to listen to

The exercises were awesome!!
Course Content
As a new attendee to NESST, I enjoyed meeting all of the volunteers. Their passion was contagious
have a great choice of different courses to take
we felt part of a larger team
Seeing old friends and making new ones

Figure 3: Volunteers were asked to describe two improvements for the weekend to help with future NESST planning.

Two Improvements
Timeliness of catering
Better options for food - maybe buffet style
Maybe have any "training" sessions at the beginning as most people are 'eager' upon arrival; at the end, people are 'eager' to get going especially when having to drive a few hours to get home on a Sunday.
not happy about bringing a basket and people who brought nothing won - also price point to baskets
Start times were way too early!
Perhaps two sessions on Saturday instead of one long one.

Figure 4: Volunteers were asked to make general comments about their overall experience

Comments
Excellent learning opportunities for all involved.
Volunteers were very eager to please and were open to all suggestions to improve.
Dinner needs to be more organized.
Great learning exercises and awesome networking.
Overall a really good training weekend.
Maybe have teddy bears and dolls to represent pets and children.
The positive encouragement from those presenting and overseeing the roleplaying exercise and their experience.
Great event. Thank you very much.
It was great. Keep up the good work.
Pet services was ignored for relief, even after 2 requests to the RC manager, But I think because of shift changes, I think Pet Services was forgotten about.
My name was listed on the board as Pet Services coordinator. "Out of sight, out of mind".
We had lots of people directed to us and we learned a lot.
Planning group did a great job.

Food was great, but dinner was late.
At the volunteer dinner beautiful baskets were handed out, but between those band aids were handed out as well. The people at my table were so disappointed! May I suggest such items be given after all baskets are gone? Would have loved to take all the courses.
Well done.
Can Fort St. James outdo the winery experience?
Very interesting, informative.
Great learning experience.
Needed more direction in Organization Chart. Also key people need to keep notes to be turned over to their replacement.
I had a great time and learned so much! Thank you for this opportunity.
Enjoyed the weekend very much.
Excellent weekend, except for the dinner service. Networking is great.
Start was very early. Not sure why agenda was changed.
Excellent course, great event. Would have liked to be able to take all of the courses.
The hard work done by the organizing committee is greatly appreciated.
Exercise is very useful, but briefing and organization need to happen to keep communication lines open.
Always a good conference.
I found the table with the instructors very loud at dinner when their peers were speaking, so we couldn't hear the keynote speakers because they were too busy telling their stories to each other.
The facility worked well to hold the conference. Thanks to RDBN for sponsoring our costs.
Great
Good hands-on experience. Volunteers all had a very good attitude.
Pleasant weekend, enjoyed the food, room and company.
Thank you for the two bottles of wine.
This was my first NESST event. I am looking forward to next year. Everyone did such a great job.
Always a great weekend of learning.
Great conference. Very enjoyable.
Unfortunate circumstances at Volunteer dinner on part of the hotel staff. Actually left bad feeling as they appeared rude.
Separate 'newbies' from advanced folk.
Great work and kudos to organizers! Really appreciate the work.
Best NESST yet!
This was an excellent learning opportunity. Very well organized. Thank you, organizing committee.
Food amazing!
This was a fabulous weekend. I am leaving with new energy, more confidence, and knowledge. Documentation is a crazy place to be. Lots of questions came up and were answered. Very helpful. The certificates are wonderful and the photos are great.

Training is valuable - glad this happens. Organization of event good.
Overall a good course with valuable information that was well presented.
Well done.
Overall, great course.
Great learning and networking opportunity plus applying the course knowledge.
Why the 7:15 start time?
This is my first NESST event. It was great!
Thank you to all of the organizers - you did a great job! You must be exhausted.
I am definitely going to NESST 2017.
This was really well put together, hotel lovely, food fabulous and the people who attended are amazing. The sharing of information and networking, experience is so helpful. And debrief.
I was logistic manager in first exercise. Was frustrated by the lack of supplier or info on what I was to do!
Thank you. Great experience!
Thank you to the organizing committee for all their hard work.
Thank you Deborah, Corrine, Shelly, June, Naomi and all others who stepped in to carry on the conference when unexpected event(s) occurred.

Figure 5: Volunteers were asked to make future suggestions for the NESST event.

Future Suggestions
Be sure to "always" include a keynote speaker who tells their ESS stories. I love hearing how others have dealt with a disaster as a learning tool. Follow up with sending out "things learned" document from speaker to put in our bag of tricks. P. Stebbing did this in 2014 and it was much appreciated. Maybe invite the local ESS suppliers to the Saturday dinner/keynote presentations. Not enough recognition is given to the suppliers who we can't do ESS without. They might enjoy having the opportunity to learn more about ESS and meet the people.
Hands on a visuals are always the best i.e. mock set ups; scenarios; breaking off into teams and the films were great. Also, the YOGA at lunch was awesome!
When possible, have inexperienced presenters present to organizing committee ahead of time to work out the bugs
A different facilitator to run the activity



Agenda

Northern Emergency Support Service Training

Weekend Agenda



FRIDAY, APRIL 15			
1815		Coast Inn of the North Lobby	Meet to Catch Winery Bus
1900	2200	Northern Lights Estates Winery	Opening Social
SATURDAY, APRIL 16			
0730	0830	Summit Room	Breakfast Emcee: Shelly Wall Welcome - City of Prince George & Regional District of Fraser Fort George Announcement – District of Fort St. James Councillor Kris Nielsen Sponsor Presentation – Spectra Energy – Brad Shauer
0745			
0830	1200	Gleason Room	Course 1 – Registration & Referrals: <i>Jackie Kloosterboer</i>
0830	1200	McGregor Room	Course 2 – Reception Centre: <i>Catherine Williams</i>
0830	1200	Summit Room	Workshop – Documentation Unit: <i>Bev Wilson</i>
1000	1020	Summit Room Foyer	Networking Break – Video Booth
1200	1230	Summit Room	Lunch
1230	1330	Location details in conference registration packet	Local Excursions
1330	1630	Gleason Room	Course 1 – Registration & Referrals <i>cont'd</i>
1330	1630	McGregor Room	Course 2 – Reception Centre <i>cont'd</i>
1330	1630	Summit Room	Workshop – Documentation Unit <i>cont'd</i>
1500	1520	Summer Room Foyer	Networking Break – Video Booth
1800	2200	George Evanoff Room	Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – No-Host Bar Emcee: Deborah Jones-Middleton Keynote Address: Bev Wilson & Wayne Hartley
SUNDAY, APRIL 17			
0700		Summit Room Foyer	Breakfast
0830	1130	Summit Room	Functional Reception Centre Exercise
1130	1200	Summit Room	Debrief & Closing Remarks



Costs

NESST Weekend Actual Costs		
	Actual	Actual
Expenses	2016	2015
Participants	83	62
Venue, Meals, and Bar		
Venue (rental, setup, AV equipment)	732.95	1,172.72
Equipment Rental		290.00
Refreshment Breaks, Meals	9,531.84	7,550.75
Bartenders		100.00
Gratuities	1,429.78	1,132.61
Bar		80.10
Friday Night Networking	1,230.00	
Total Venue, Meals, and Bar	12,924.57	10,326.18
Meeting Costs	96.92	
Supplies (Décor, Bags, Attendee Gift, Presenter)	2,122.89	697.04
Instructor (Fee, Travel)		1,267.96
Printing	556.58	
Registration/Web Design	1,012.50	1,319.25
Total Expenses	16,713.46	13,610.43
Revenue		
Sponsor Contributions	11,710.00	10,250.00
Volunteer Registration Fees	6,675.00	3,095.00
Prior year surplus	1,489.26	1,754.69
Total Revenue	19,874.26	15,099.69
Surplus to 2017 NESST	3,160.80	1,489.26



Sponsorship Acknowledgement

All sponsors were acknowledged on the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Protective Services homepage with logos which were links to the sponsor's individual website. Sponsors were also acknowledged on signs in all rooms at the event and the event's coordinator speech.

"I would also like to thank all of our sponsors; their generosity has allowed us to keep the cost of this weekend to a minimum for attendees. This includes our course instructors, corporate donors, and the host communities that generously gave of their time and resources." – Deborah Jones-Middleton, Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



NESST SPONSORS



DIAMOND



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE





Event Photos

[View the Complete Photo Gallery Here.](#)

Networking at Northern Lights Winery



Spectra Energy Presentation



Courses





Volunteer Appreciation Dinner







Sunday Exercise

