

Provincial Emergency Information Plan



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Mission	1
2. Purpose	1
3. Applicability	2
4. Legislative Authority	2
5. Concept of Operations - Provincial Role	3
5.1 Provincial Chief Emergency Information Officer's Role	3
5.2 Ministry Chief Emergency Information Officer's Role	4
5.3 Provincial Emergency Information Section	5
5.4 Emergency Information Provisions in the PERP and PNERP	7
6. Emergency Management and Information Structure	7
6.1 Emergency Management Structure at the Provincial Level	7
6.2 Emergency Information Structure at the Provincial Level	8
7. Municipal Emergency Information	9
8. Exercise and Validation	11
9. References	11
10. Attachments	11
11. Glossary	12
Ministry OIC responsibilities (OIC 1157/09)	13



1. MISSION

The Provincial Emergency Information Plan (PEIP) is necessary to ensure that during an emergency, prompt and coordinated information from the Province of Ontario is disseminated to the public, media, Members of the Provincial Parliament, partners and stakeholders.

During an emergency, the province will release information needed to protect the health, well-being, safety and property of Ontarians.

This plan:

- clarifies the role of provincial ministries;
- determines when emergency information activities should be centralized and coordinated by the Provincial Emergency Information Section (PEIS); and
- outlines provincial emergency information resources and support that may be available to municipalities.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services Communications Branch administers the plan on behalf of the Government. It will be reviewed annually and changed/updated as appropriate.

2. PURPOSE

Emergency situations can quickly become the centre of local, national and international attention, and often receive significant media scrutiny. It is extremely important that the province speak with one voice during an emergency.

Information issued by the province must be consistent.

Municipalities, nuclear facilities, federal departments and other agencies or stakeholders responding to an emergency will continue to issue information about their own organizations.

However, it is expected that they will share their emergency information response strategy or documents with the PEIS to help ensure consistency of emergency information and avoid conflicting messaging that could affect the safety of Ontarians. The Ontario government, in return, would share its key messaging with these agencies.

Provincial ministries' emergency information plans and Continuity of Operations sections on emergency information must be consistent with the PEIP.





3. APPLICABILITY

The Provincial Emergency Information Plan is implemented whenever:

- a provincial emergency is declared or as required in a municipal emergency declaration;
- the Provincial Emergency Response Plan (PERP) is activated in whole or in part;
- the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan (PNERP) is activated in whole or in part;
- a provincial emergency information response is required at the discretion of the Provincial Chief Emergency Information Officer (PCEIO), in consultation with Cabinet Office and the Commissioner of Emergency Management.

4. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The PEIP adopts a scalable and flexible approach to the delivery of emergency information functions within the provincial government. The plan was developed pursuant to the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA) and Ontario Regulation 380/04.

The EMCPA states that it is the responsibility of:

- (a) each minister of the Crown presiding over a ministry of the Government of Ontario; and
- (b) each agency, board, commission or other branch of government designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to formulate an emergency plan for the ministry or branch of government, as the case may be, in respect of the type of emergency assigned to it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, governing the provision of necessary services during an emergency and the procedures under and the manner in which Crown employees and other persons will respond to the emergency. R.S.O. 1990, c. E.9, s. 6 (1).

Ontario Regulation 380/04 states:

1. Every minister shall designate an employee of the ministry as the ministry's emergency information officer.
2. The emergency information officer shall act as the primary media and public contact for the ministry in an emergency.

In accordance with the emergency management doctrine in Ontario, emergency information activities start at the local level with different degrees of provincial involvement depending on certain thresholds identified later in this plan.

During a declared provincial emergency, or other significant response, every ministry that activates its Ministry Action Group should send at least one communications person to the PEIS to help coordinate the flow of information.

5. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS - PROVINCIAL ROLE

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* identifies 37 potential risks to Ontario and assigns those risks to the appropriate ministry. These ministries are referred to as Order-in-Council (OIC) ministries.

OIC ministries are responsible for formulating emergency response plans in respect of the type of emergency assigned.

The list of OIC ministries and the risks assigned to them are on Page 13.

5.1 Provincial Chief Emergency Information Officer's Role

The Communications Director for MCSCS, who is also the PCEIO, develops and maintains the Provincial Emergency Information Plan.

The PCEIO is a member of the Command Staff within the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC). The PCEIO is responsible for coordinating emergency information with the PEOC's command section, the Commissioner of Emergency Management, Cabinet Office and, when appropriate, the Premier's Office, to determine the level of emergency information and communications response required and ensuring that the PEIS is in a constant state of readiness.

The PCEIO, through the PEIS, also maintains contact with communications departments of Ontario provincial ministries, other provinces, the Federal government, and departments or agencies in the United States to share information and coordinate emergency information response activities.



5.2 Ministry Chief Emergency Information Officer's Role

When an emergency occurs that doesn't require the activation of the PEIS, the director of the communications branch of the lead ministry (or a designate) would assume his/her functions as Ministry Chief Emergency Information Officer (MCEIO) and coordinates all emergency activities at the provincial level. That person is usually a member of that ministry's action group. In addition, the MCEIO would lead their ministry's Emergency Information Centre (EIC).

The MCEIO may call upon the PCEIO and the PEIS to provide further resources if required. For example, the PCEIO could initiate a partial activation of the provincial EIS to support the lead ministry or provide liaison officer(s) to advise and liaise with municipal officials on behalf of the ministry and/or the province.

The MCEIO coordinates emergency information activities for his/her ministry and liaises with:

- other members of the Ministry's Action Group;
- the Deputy Minister;
- Minister's Office;
- Cabinet Office and Premier's Office; and
- the PCEIO.

A ministry EIC, under the direction of the MCEIO, has the following responsibilities:

- writing and issuing news releases and arranging media briefings;
- posting emergency information on the Internet and intranet;
- providing notices and public service announcements to broadcasters;
- answering media and public inquiries;
- monitoring media and the Internet, correcting inaccuracies and dispelling rumours;
- providing communications advice to the Ministry Action Group; and
- advising and liaising with municipal officials.

If the scope or nature of an emergency exceeds the emergency information response capacities of the lead ministry, the PCEIO would likely activate the PEIP and the PEIS. The MCEIO would continue to coordinate emergency communications for their ministry.





5.3 Provincial Emergency Information Section

5.3.1 PEIS Activation

If the scope or nature of an emergency exceeds the emergency information response capacities of the lead ministry or a provincial emergency is declared, it is likely that the PEIS would be activated under the authority given to the PCEIO (or the PEIS Operations Coordinator, if the PCEIO is unavailable) in consultation with Cabinet Office Communications and the Commissioner of Emergency Management or the Chief, EMO.

The following criteria would normally be used to decide on the full activation of the EIS:

- the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan or the Provincial Emergency Response Plan has been activated in whole or in part;
- the PEOC has been fully activated;
- an emergency is declared by the province; or
- at the direction of Cabinet Office

The PEIS operates as a cooperative facility with key staff, planning and logistical support coming from the MCSCS Communications Branch and the PEOC.

Federal departments and agencies, provincial ministries, municipal and private sector stakeholders involved in an emergency will be invited to send representatives to the section to coordinate emergency information.

Whenever deemed appropriate by the PCEIO, one or more provincial emergency information liaison officers will be sent to a municipality or First Nations community to liaise with the PEIS and provide communications advice to local/municipal officials.

5.3.2 PEIS Activation Procedures

When the activation of the PEIS has been decided, the PCEIO and/or the Operations Coordinator will:

- notify MCSCS Communications Branch staff members who have been identified as key personnel in the PEIS;
- ensure that communications directors throughout the Ontario Public Service are notified of the activation of the PEIS so that designated staff from their branches can report to the section or notify those staff directly, depending on the time the emergency occurs;
- invite other stakeholders involved in the emergency response (from the federal government, municipalities, utilities and other private sector entities) to send representatives to the PEIS to facilitate liaison activities and the flow of information between all parties.

5.3.3 PEIS Functions

The PCEIO, working with the PEIS Operations Coordinator, is responsible for the following functions of the PEIS:

- developing and issuing news releases and arranging media briefings;
- posting emergency information on the Internet and intranet;
- providing notices and public service announcements to broadcasters;
- answering media and public inquiries;
- monitoring media and the Internet, correcting inaccuracies and dispelling rumours;
- providing communications advice to the PEOC's Command Section and the Commissioner of Emergency Management; and providing information to the Premier's Office via Cabinet Office .

5.3.4 PEIS Personnel

The PCEIO and the PEIS Operations Coordinator will maintain a roster of communications branch personnel from ministries across the OPS who have received training in, or are experienced in, emergency/crisis communications and in the operations of the PEIS.

Once individuals are identified, the PCEIO and/or the PEIS Operations Coordinator will contact their managers/directors to obtain their consent and willingness to have staff assigned to the PEIS.

The PCEIO would seek support from this group should an incident occur that requires extensive communications support. All personal contact information gathered in this process is kept confidential and is only available to a limited number of MCSCS Communications Branch staff.

5.3.5 PEIS Location

The primary EIS location is the Communications Branch boardroom on the 13th floor of the George Drew Building located at 25 Grosvenor Street in Toronto. Should the George Drew Building become inaccessible for any reason, staff members will be required to report to an alternate location, determined at the time of the incident.



5.4 Emergency Information Provisions in the PERP and PNERP

The Provincial Emergency Response Plan and the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan both include timetables for the issuing of initial emergency information.

The emergency information process during a nuclear incident is defined in the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan. During a nuclear emergency and following the initial operational Emergency Bulletin(s) sent out by the PEOC, emergency information communications materials, such as news releases, backgrounders, fact sheets and Qs & As, would be issued through the PEIS, which would then assume responsibility for coordinating all provincial communications.

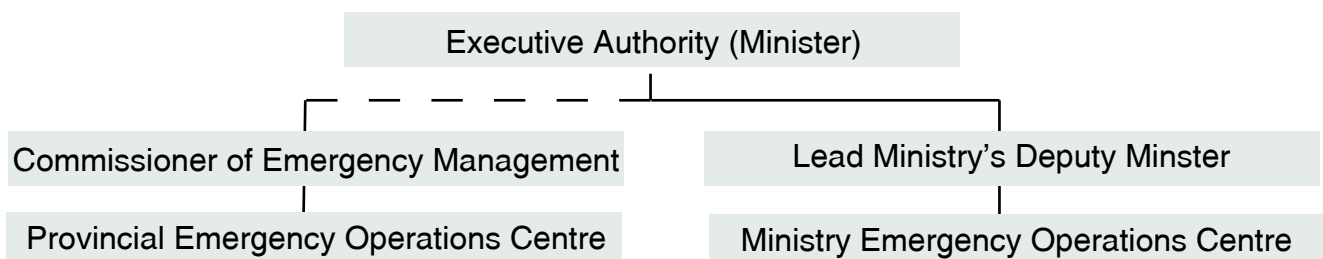
6. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION STRUCTURE

6.1 Emergency Management Structure at the Provincial Level

i) Provincial response overseen by the Commissioner of Emergency Management and coordinated by the PEOC



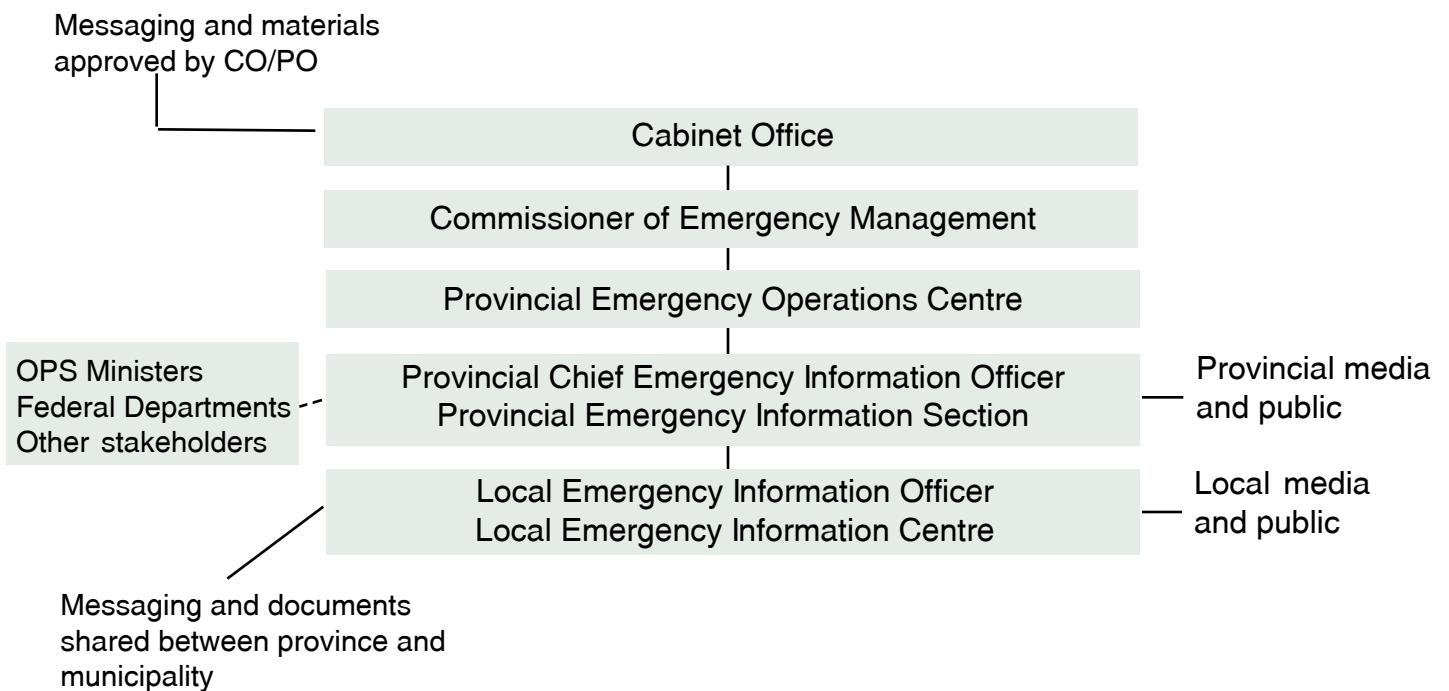
ii) Provincial response coordinated by lead ministry (without PEOC activation) where the Commissioner of Emergency Management provides support and advice to the lead ministry



6.2 Emergency Information Structure at the Provincial Level

The following charts describe the emergency information structure process at the provincial level where i) the PEIS has been activated and ii) where a ministry (other than MCSCS) has the lead provincially on coordinating emergency information with support from the PCEIO.

i) Provincial emergency information coordinated by the PCEIO with activation of the PEIS



Under this structure, consistency of Ontario government messaging would be achieved by routing all provincial emergency information through the PEIS before being issued. Emergency information from all provincial ministries would be shared with, and coordinated by, the PEIS.

The section would also liaise with local officials who are responsible for emergency information at the municipal/ regional and First Nation levels, to help coordinate messaging.

Information for the public and media at a provincial level would be relayed by the PEIS to Cabinet/Premier's Office for approval before being released and distributed.

- ii) Emergency information coordinated by the lead ministry MCEIO with additional support coordinated by the PCEIO if requested.



Under this structure, the MCEIO would coordinate all emergency information activities at the provincial level. All provincial communications products require approval by Cabinet Office/Premier’s Office. The PCEIO and PEIS would provide support to the lead ministry, if requested, and to a municipality, where appropriate.

7. MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION

7.1 Guidelines for Operation

Under the EMCPA, municipalities must identify a spokesperson responsible for the provision of local emergency information. During an incident or a declared municipal emergency, the local spokesperson provides emergency information to the media and the public, possibly from a local EIC.

7.1.1 Municipal Emergency Information Structure

To effectively fulfil their emergency information mandate, local officials are encouraged to:

- ensure that staff members or volunteers are trained in emergency information delivery;
- designate an emergency information officer;
- establish an EIC that can handle media requirements; and
- develop an emergency information plan as part of their emergency management program and procedures for their EIC.

7.1.2 Municipal Emergency Information Centre's Functions

A municipal EIC would generally carry out the following functions:

- issue news releases and other public information documents to local media and residents, describing the emergency and the local measures being taken to manage it;
- assist local and provincial/national/international media covering the emergency;
- monitor media to ensure that local news is being correctly transmitted to the public, and confirm this with the PEIS;
- inform the PEIS about the development and distribution of news releases and other documents for the local media and residents and, as a courtesy, share such documents with the province through the EIS; and
 - inform the PEIS about the context, tone and reaction of the media, the public and other major stakeholders.



7.1.3 Coordination of Emergency Information with Municipalities

The PEIS and local/community EICs will coordinate the development and release of information for provincial emergencies to ensure consistent messaging, share news releases, fact sheets or other public information materials.

The coordination and release of emergency information or public messaging related to an emergency from provincial ministries will flow through the PEIS or ministry EIC. The PCEIO and/or the MCEIO would coordinate the development of key messages for the public/media through the PEIS and/or the lead ministry's EIC depending on the level of an emergency.

7.1.4 Provincial Support for Municipal Emergency Information Delivery

If requested, provincial emergency information assistance may be provided to the municipality. That assistance would most likely involve sending one or more provincial emergency information liaison officers to provide emergency information advice to local authorities and provide a link between the local EIC and the appropriate ministry EIC or PEIS.

Local officials could also request additional communications-related support from the PEIS if their own capabilities were made unavailable by the emergency. This type of request would be handled on a case-by-case basis.

8. EXERCISE AND VALIDATION

The PCEIO will work with EMO to create and carry out an annual OPS-wide emergency information training and exercise activity to ensure that the provincial government is prepared to fulfil its obligations.

An evaluation of the emergency information response will be conducted by those ministries/agencies involved following the completion of every exercise or emergency.

The evaluation will involve all participants in the emergency information activities. Remedial actions will be undertaken if, and when, necessary.

The PCEIO is responsible for updating PEIS procedures following the evaluation of exercises and emergencies.

9. REFERENCES

- Incident Management System for Ontario
- Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan
- Provincial Emergency Response Plan
- Procedures Manual for the Provincial Emergency Information Section

10. ATTACHMENTS

- [Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act](#)



11. GLOSSARY

CO	Cabinet Office
EIC	Ministry/Municipal/First Nations Emergency Information Centre
EMCPA	Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act
EMO	Emergency Management Ontario
MCEIO	Ministry Chief Emergency Information Officer
MCSCS	Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
PCEIO	Provincial Chief Emergency Information Officer
PEIP	Provincial Emergency Information Plan
PEIS	Provincial Emergency Information Section
PEOC	Provincial Emergency Operations Centre
PERP	Provincial Emergency Response Plan
PNERP	Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan
PO	Premier's Office



Ministry OIC responsibilities (OIC 1157/09)

Ministry

Type of Emergency

Agriculture and Food

- Farm animal disease
- Food contamination
- Agricultural plant disease
- Pest infestation

Attorney General

- Any emergency related to:
- The administration of justice including the operation of the courts
 - Provision of legal services to government in any emergency

Community and Social Services

- Any emergency that requires:
- Emergency shelter, clothing and food
 - Victim registration and inquiry services
 - Personal services

Community Safety
and Correctional Services

- Any emergency that requires:
- The coordination of provincial emergency management (EMO)
 - Nuclear and radiological (EMO)
 - Severe weather (EMO)
 - War and international (EMO)
 - Any other peacetime emergency not listed herein
 - Building structural collapse



Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explosion and structural fire• Space object crash• Terrorism• Civil disorder (EMO)
Environment	<p>Energy supply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spills of pollutants to the natural environment including fixed site• Transportation spills, drinking water
Health and Long-Term Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human health, disease and epidemics• Health services during an emergency
Labour	<p>Any emergency that affects worker health and safety</p>
Management Board Secretariat	<p>Any emergency that requires the continuity of provincial government services</p>
Municipal Affairs and Housing	<p>Any emergency that requires the coordination of extraordinary provincial expenditures</p>
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forest fires• Floods• Drought / low water• Dam failures• Crude oil and natural gas exploration and production• Natural gas and hydrocarbon underground storage and salt solution mining emergencies• Erosion, soil and bedrock instability

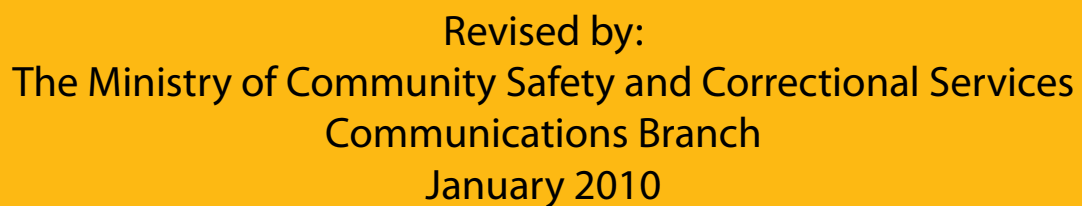


Northern Development, Mines and Forestry

- Abandoned mine hazards
- Any emergency that requires the support of provincial emergency management in Northern Ontario

Transportation

- Transportation



Revised by:
The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
Communications Branch
January 2010