

## **ESSA Advisory Forum Conference Call – Tuesday, June 23, 2009**

**Participants:** Laurel Exner, Luana Kaleikini, Cathy Semchuk, Elaine Balul, Beryl Itani, Carolyn Sinclair, Janine Aussem

**Regrets:** Jeff Norburn, Deanna Selver, Ruth Manning

### **Discuss the Williams Lake 'in person' meeting**

Carolyn: Great meeting, advantage was to be on the front line in a different community and see how things progressed in another community. The idea of getting back to basics was positive, how to meet the needs of front line volunteers, how to recruit and retain volunteers was also positive. The opportunity to discuss approaches which will allow us to hit the ground running in regard to training deliverables, especially in regard to training challenges facing ESS in BC. It was positive that we clearly want to do a great job to ensure the training is right both for volunteers and for the organizations involved.

Cathy: the in person experience was very energizing and exciting. It was one of the best conferences/experiences Cathy has attended. The goals for the forum are great and Cathy is looking forward to working on them and to getting down to work with it. Also, the initiative to begin meeting in the central region, coordinating training and maximizing participation and decreasing duplication

Laurel: Enjoyed Williams Lake and the pride shown by the community members there. It is important for us to realize that smaller communities can be different from urban ones and it's important to meet their needs in regard to training and the advisory forum initiatives.

Elaine: This is Elaine's first time planning a conference, she is very pleased that people felt so good about it and feels proud that everyone attended.

Luana: Hospitality was incredible. Encourage more of their volunteers to take advantage of the ESSA Conference in the coming years. It is important to realize that we have accomplished a lot in the 1 year of the Advisory Forum existence. There is a lot of flexibility with the advisory forum role and that is positive. It was great to meet Bob Kennedy and to develop a rapport with him. He is doing his best to work within the restrictions that are placed on him by PEP. The focus on alternative methods of training was interesting and hopeful. Fabulous!

### **Database**

Laurie Bean is compiling the database. Janine to add it to the website and begin distributing information to the database members.

### **Training**

Carolyn: Attended the ESS Training Committee meeting on Monday which included representatives from the JIBC, PEP, Canadian Red Cross, The Salvation Army, ESSA, ESSA Advisory Forum. The committee spends time reviewing the ESS training in BC and any issues associated with ESS Training. Carolyn attended to let people know that the Advisory Forum has training related goals and intentions to make training recommendations on alternative methods of training.

Also noted that the Advisory Forum is exploring training options so that people can have access to training despite poor road & weather conditions.

Janine: ESSA is currently funding the courses provided by the JIBC. The Salvation Army, Canadian Disaster Child Care and Canadian Red Cross courses are currently

unfunded. ESSA in its role as advocate for ess volunteers made it clear that they are deeply concerned by the lack of funding by PEP for ESS training and that ESSA sees these training agencies as critical to the provincial ESS training umbrella.

ESSA will continue to advocate for ESS including training concerns.

ESS Site Management course:

It did go ahead on June 16 – pilot was positive and ESSA hopes to offer at least 1 course per region this fiscal.

- **Website**
- **Suggestions to improve the Advisory Forum part of the website**
- \* something indicating something new to look at (best practices located here) feature items – what's new under what heading.
- Shared documents listed or linked under current initiatives
- Members only area (for those who have paid)
- Membership lists – who's in & what community & region they represent
- Comment from each of the members of the forum – name, where from and their thoughts on it. (who we are – recognition)
- People may be more willing to connect with an advisory forum member from their own region rather than anyone else.
- Catalogue/index to the shared documents section
- Suggestion to review the BCAEM website to see how they manage membership applications.
  
- **Resource Sharing Documents**
- Send along documents to Janine
  
- **Action Items for July, August, September**
- Carolyn – work with Janine to gather information and recommendations for the fall. Tool Kit resource.
- Beryl-rebuilding the team in West Kelowna, training on Registration and Referrals over the summer.
- Laurel: Create a letter to ESSD's re: posting exercises on the website
- Cathy: electronic registration and Referrals forms (meeting with IT staff for their input) Some research into the Alberta program
- An IT group has chosen Kelowna as pilot project for new computer system for emergency management. Want to put together a template for some of the forms. Beryl and Cathy to connect
- Luana – to review minutes from Williams Lake to confirm
- **Other**

Janine to pass along the NMESSN information to the Advisory Forum.

Next Conference Call Date: **Tuesday, August 25, 2009 7pm/1900**