

the emergency or some aspect of it falls within the jurisdiction of the federal government.

Usually, EPC knows about a disaster before federal help is requested; its situation centre in Ottawa monitors emergencies across Canada. This ensures that the government is prepared to assist when needed. Depending on the emergency, the most appropriate department takes the lead on behalf of the Government of Canada, with other departments providing support. Every federal department, agency and Crown corporation must plan and prepare to take on emergency responsibilities that relate to their normal functions and resources. For example, Transport Canada plans for assisting in possible disasters involving trains, ships and aircraft; Health and Welfare Canada plans for emergencies involving disease or injury; the Canadian Armed Forces plan and prepare to make their varied capabilities available when needed. EPC planners work with departmental officials to ensure these plans are as effective and as up-to-date as possible.

Federal/provincial co-operation. The governments of the provinces, of the territories and of Canada work together in many areas of emergency preparedness. An EPC regional director in each provincial capital is in constant touch with provincial and territorial emergency officials to ensure a countrywide network of preparedness.

Post-disaster financial aid. In the wake of a major disaster, a community or province may face heavy rebuilding costs. To help provincial governments with the financial burden of their relief measures, EPC administers, on behalf of the government of Canada, the disaster financial assistance arrangements. Since 1970, the government has paid out more than \$125 million in disaster relief to the provinces and territories. Generally, payments are made to help restore personal property, farmsteads, small businesses and public works to their pre-disaster condition.

Joint Emergency Preparedness Program. To foster planning and promote national preparedness,

EPC administers the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) on behalf of the federal government. Roughly \$6 million is spent annually to help provinces and territories with emergency preparedness projects.

Training and education. EPC gives or sponsors more than 100 courses, conferences and seminars a year at the Canadian emergency preparedness college in Arnprior, Ont. Each year, about 3,000 representatives from all levels of government and the private sector are trained in the techniques of emergency planning and management. Most courses run for one week, with topics ranging from emergency health and welfare services to transportation of dangerous goods.

Research. EPC sponsors research related to emergency preparedness. Projects range from an investigation of computers and their potential application to emergency planning, to an assessment of the economic impact should there be an interruption in Canada's supply of strategic minerals.

Key programs. EPC participates in various ways in a number of programs aimed at improving national preparedness for emergencies. Some examples are as follows: continuity of government — the maintenance of a string of emergency operations centres across the country, all of them protected against radioactive fallout and interlinked by communications systems; vital points — a program to identify vital facilities, plants and services that would have to be protected if national security were threatened; essential records — a program to identify and preserve those records that would be essential for government operations during and after a nuclear attack; NATO — planning activities and exercises related to the civil side of alliance preparedness; and Canada/US co-operation — maintaining close working relationships with Canada's counterpart organization in the United States, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.