



# Hazard Resilience Strategies (HRS)

## *Conflictual Social Action*

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- Ensure that community decision-making is open, and that participation is encouraged and flexible to incorporate citizen input into the process through consultations being held at different times and through different means thus allowing all voices to be heard in forums that are comfortable for all, especially on sensitive issues (e.g., resource development, etc.).
- Ensure community leaders, including police, elected councils and Elders, have appointed a conflict resolution team whose members have undertaken appropriate training for de-escalating volatile social situations.
- Create an effective arbitration process that is accessible to all community members and groups. This process should employ conflict resolution techniques with an aim to effectively resolving disagreements and disputes before they turn into conflictual social actions.
- Develop a community ombudsmen system where an impartial agency or individual can advocate for public groups or individuals who have complaints. This ombudsman should be located in or near to the community and it would be helpful to allow electronic or phone access for initiating complaints in the event that persons do not feel they can approach community leadership.
- Ensure the community provides education and training to residents on preparedness in the event of a conflictual social action that affects transportation arteries, public facilities, etc.
- Create a warning system to notify emergency response personnel of gatherings, even those that are peaceful, prior to escalation.
- Ensure community emergency management and emergency response personnel are well engaged with the community and that they keep informed of issues and possible conflicts so they can ensure appropriate response resources are available to prevent and limit conflictual social actions, to the extent possible.
- Ensure economic development issues are explored and impacts on all community livelihood activities and uses of the traditional territories are considered. Prior to decisions, ensure community input is sought out and that leaders seek inclusive agreements that provide a fair distribution of benefits across the community.
- Ensure election processes are designed to be inclusive and free from bias; create ballot processes that are transparent and honest. Consider using a third party for ballot counting if there is a risk of a close race or of discontent expressed prior to official voting.

- Ensure the community maintains a good relationship with all levels of government and create a mutually agreed process for resolving disagreements.
- Ensure community leaders work to maintain a good relationship with neighbouring communities (Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal) and disagreements are resolved through a mutually agreed process.
- Create forums where community groups and individuals are able to express divergent views in a respectful manner and that there are effective forums for discussion and compromise. Use of a mediator may be necessary, however conflict resolution techniques training is a good starting point.
- Ensure there is a warning system in place, using various means of communication including social media, to notify community residents and businesses of a gathering once it has escalated to a point where it is considered a conflictual social action.
- Ensure the community has plans and procedures in place to reestablish peace in the community and faith in the leadership following a conflictual social action.
- Ensure the community has business continuity plans and that an agency/individual from the leadership team works with local businesses and external contract service providers to ensure the community operations return to a state similar to that which existed prior to the conflictual social action (reasonable time to return to previous state must be realistic compared to the duration of the conflictual social action).
- Ensure community members understand their role in community operations and report to Elders, band council or other respected agencies any activities that they perceive as having a risk of escalation to a conflictual social action that may cause damage or harm to the community or a part thereof.
- Ensure law enforcement personnel participate in training on effective peace-keeping and crowd management techniques to keep groups publically demonstrating an opposing opinion from becoming dangerous or escalating their gathering into a conflictual social action.
- Ensure the community consults with Traditional Knowledge holders for ways to emulate and promote traditional peaceful community relationships and to de-escalate conflictual social action.

## References

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