

Assessment of Implementation Report

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Disaster Recovery Program Transition

(February 2016)

Summary of Recommendations

We assessed the one outstanding recommendation from our February 2016 audit of Alberta Municipal Affairs' *Disaster Recovery Program Transition*. We found the following recommendation has been implemented:

IMPLEMENTED Recommendation:
Implement a transition plan

Introduction

In June 2020, we completed our assessment of implementation and found Alberta Municipal Affairs has implemented our recommendation to implement its transition plan.

Recommendation:

Implement a transition plan

IMPLEMENTED

Context

In recent years, Alberta has been affected by significant disasters, including the 2013 southern Alberta flood and the 2016 Wood Buffalo wildfire. These disasters created a strong demand for government financial assistance for affected people, businesses and municipalities.

The *Disaster Recovery Regulation* allows the minister of Municipal Affairs to provide disaster recovery financial assistance to residents, small businesses, agriculture operations, First Nations, provincial departments and municipal governments for uninsurable losses and damage caused by disasters. Most of these costs are eligible for reimbursement from the federal government.

Between 1995 and 2015, the Alberta government used a contracted service provider to provide evaluation, processing and administrative disaster recovery services. In March 2014, it was announced that the contract will not be renewed past 2015 and instead the administration of the disaster recovery programs (DRPs)⁵⁰ would be transferred to the department.

The Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) is an area within the Ministry of Municipal Affairs that oversees the delivery of DRPs. The department started to transfer the administration of DRPs from the contractor to AEMA in 2014.

In 2016, we assessed whether the department had adequate systems to transition services previously delivered by its service provider. We recommended that the department implement its transition work plan to improve its disaster recovery delivery systems.

Current findings

The department implemented our recommendation⁵¹ to implement a transition plan. Specifically, the department:

- Created policies and procedures to support its business operations and made them available to all staff
- Implemented a technology platform to administer DRP claims
- Developed training programs for staff and a process to rapidly hire temporary staff when a disaster occurs

AEMA has finished its transition from the third-party provider. We have tested the processes the department has put in place to process DRP claims and have found those processes to be working effectively.

⁵⁰ Disaster recovery programs are conditional grant programs that assist government departments, municipalities, and Albertans with their eligible, uninsurable losses or damages resulting from disasters. (*Municipal Affairs 2019 Annual report*, page 75).

⁵¹ *Report of the Auditor General of Alberta—February 2016*, page 62.