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Halifax Regional Council
February 7, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Michael Eddy
Michael Eddy, Chief Director Fire and Emergency Service

DATE: February 2, 2006

SUBJECT: Emergency Response Coordination with Nova Scotia Power

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

November 9, 2004 Motion from Councillor Younger for staff to provide a report to Council on storm preparedness and coordination between Nova Scotia Power and HRM.

BACKGROUND

Following the Nov. 9, 2004 motion, a joint working group was formed between Nova Scotia Power and HRM to improve coordination of emergency response. Nova Scotia Power and HRM chose not to commence work on coordination of emergency response until the UARB Hearing with respect to the power outages resulting from the Nov. 13th and 14th 2004 storm. To date, three meetings of the joint working group have been conducted, and a majority of the issues have been resolved. The joint working group meetings occurred on May 25, 2005, July 13, 2005, and December 8, 2005 respectively.

DISCUSSION

The lines of communication between NSP and HRM have been substantially improved, and the joint working group will continue to meet as needed to ensure emergency response coordination is as efficient as possible.

Fourteen issues/opportunities were identified for discussion between HRM and NSP. Following, is a table indicating the issue and status of resolution.

	<u>Issue/Opportunity</u>	<u>Status</u>
1.	Would providing an HRM representative in the NSP Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) be beneficial?	It was determined that this is not required as long as the level of representation by NSP in HRM's EOC is sufficient (see item #2).
2.	There should be a senior level of representation from NSP in HRM's EOC to provide timely and relevant information for planning purposes.	The level of representative from NSP in HRM's EOC is satisfactory. Additionally, tests have been conducted to ensure the NSP representative can access NSP systems/data from within the HRM EOC.
3.	Can HRM have input in prioritization of service restoration?	Yes. HRM can provide a critical infrastructure list to NSP, as occurred during Hurricane Juan restoration. HRM is going to develop an updated list of critical infrastructure.
4.	Could NSP notify HRM when power is being restored to enable HRM to effectively plan for fire alarm response calls?	Yes. NSP has agreed to provide estimated restoration times to HRM throughout outage events to assist with HRM planning for fire alarm response.
5.	Nature and relevancy of outage information provided to HRM for planning purposes.	Through NSP representative in HRM EOC, relevant information for planning purposes can be accessed directly from NSP's systems.

6.	NSP contingency plan for traffic management and use of HRM Police and Fire resources to deal with downed lines.	NSP is employing Traffic Control personnel. In the event they run out of personnel, HRP will provide the services for a set rate.
7.	Prioritization of restoration of traffic flow.	NSP has provided two direct (non-public) phone numbers HRM can utilize to notify NSP of downed lines, and to discuss traffic flow concerns.
8.	Data sharing - GIS - ESRI platform, and web enabled applications.	Partially achieved. HRM and NSP have a data sharing agreement now in place.
9.	Virtual EOC - NSP may be interested in the work HRM is doing in this area.	HRM has offered to share this information with NSP should they be interested. NSP is beginning to think about continuance of service in the event of a pandemic.
10.	Call Centre - It may be beneficial for the Managers of HRM & NSP Call Centres to meet and discuss their operations and best practices.	The call centre managers have been in touch.
11.	Timing of notification to HRM when NSP EOC is activated.	An agreement was reached with respect to when notification would occur, and the process to provide notification. This process has been tested subsequent to the agreement and is satisfactory.
12.	Removal of downed lines on roads to facilitate re-establishment of traffic.	NSP has provided two direct (non-public) phone numbers HRM can utilize to notify NSP of downed lines, and to discuss traffic flow concerns.
13.	97.9 radio channel could be used to disseminate information to the public.	Utilization of the radio channel was discussed, and contact information was provided to NSP.

14.	Webposting. Accurate links between the HRM and NSP website would be beneficial, with up to date information on the NSP site.	A link between HRM and NSP's websites has been established. Following the UARB Power Outage Review, NSP has taken steps to ensure timely and relevant information is posted to their site with respect to power outages.
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In addition to the items described above, NSP representatives have visited HRM's Emergency Operations Centre and have been provided with an overview of how HRM's EOC operates. HRM representatives will be visiting the NSP EOC at the Ragged Lake Control Centre in February to receive an overview of NSP's EOC operations and processes.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None at this time.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

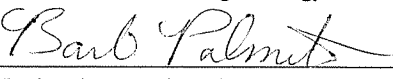
ALTERNATIVES

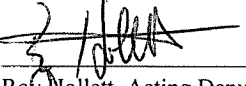
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ATTACHMENTS

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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