



Question and Answers on the Alternative Funding Model

Q. The proposal states that the original discussion paper was presented to the Minister of Justice in October 2013, why has it taken this long to develop an actual proposal?

A. There has been several previous proposals to increase funding for SAR over the past 20 years, none of these were accepted other than the needs being recognized, although the Province has increased funding through reimbursement and grants... The current approach was to provide a concept for discussion with the Province from which further details could be worked out to benefit all parties, with the result being the more defined model within the proposal. The model proposed is also a major shift to a different approach to allocating funding and increasing supports to SAR Groups and their members.

Q. Why is there 3 different options within the proposal; why not provide one that the SAR Community agrees is the best?

A. The concept within the 3 options have basically the same benefits for the SAR service, while there are increasing benefits to the Province through reduced internal administrative costs in the second and third options. As the model moves forward and other agencies within government are engaged the options provides flexibility more so than an 'all or nothing' approach.

Q. If discussions with the Province has been ongoing since the initial meeting with the Minister of Justice why hasn't there been agreement on a final model?

A. the Alternative Support Model is a major shift for the Province to agree to, it will require other levels and agencies in finalizing which option and details of the concept will be agreeable and to present the submission for final approval and implementation. However, it was critical to gain the support of the agencies that partner and support the SAR community on a day to day basis before moving ahead.

Q. Does the proposed model affect the autonomy of SAR Groups?

A. SAR Groups will remain independent organizations/societies; there is no intent to remove any of their autonomy. Required standardization is through policies and guidelines, the support model is designed to help SAR Groups achieve and maintain the standards required with less administrative burden. A SAR Group would actually have more autonomy with options 2 or 3, as funding could be set aside to purchase equipment rather than relying on grants with limits on time and amounts held.

Q. Why does the concept still include funding from local authorities (municipalities and Regional Districts), why not look at the Province to fund SAR entirely?

A. SAR Groups are an important part of emergency response including civil emergencies such as interface fires, floods and earthquakes. As these are the responsibility of local authorities it makes sense that they provide a level of support, either through funding or in-kind contributions such as use of buildings or vehicles. It is the hope to engage all local authorities in supporting SAR, however it needs to be based on local conditions hence not a standardized level.

Q. Why does appropriately 50% of the 80 Search and Rescue Groups not apply for Community Gaming Grants annually?

A. The reasons why some groups do not apply for gaming grants vary; one major reason is the administrative work required to apply, manage, report, and deal with audits related to grants on top of training and responding. Other reasons stated by groups include: the cost sharing requirements are limiting for those groups in isolated locations and restrictions on use of funds for major projects, for example a group saving funding for storage facility may have too much cash on hand to qualify for additional funding to purchase.

Q. What is the bottom line, how much will each SAR Group get in operating and maintenance funding each year?

A. The proposal includes a funding disbursement model, which is based on what capabilities a SAR Group has been approved by EMBC to provide. The amount each SAR Group receives will be calculated on which option for funding is approved, the overall amount of funding, and which capabilities are approved. A sample spreadsheet is attached to the proposal, once the model and option is approved this will be completed and discussions held with each group.

Q. Why is there a new Foundation required; why not just have the BCSARA take on that role?

A. It is proposed that the Foundation be enacted in legislation, which means the funding and authority cannot be changed easily, which will help long term planning. BCSARA will continue in their role as providing advice to the Provincial Government, with increased focus given the management of funding will rest with the Foundation. The board of the foundation will have representatives from BCSARA and the SAR community, as well as the Province.

Q. What can the SAR community do to support the proposal?

A. the BCSARA asks that SAR Groups provide letters of support to Chris Kelly, President, for the proposed model, a sample letter has been provided or SAR Groups may draft their own. It is hoped to get letters by November 15, 2015, they can be sent to altfunding@bcsara.com.

Q. Where can we get more information on the proposed model?

A. There is a narrated PowerPoint Presentation available on the BCSARA website at www.bcsara.com which goes through the proposed model. There will be presentations at Regional Meetings this fall where scheduled, as well conference calls to reach out as much as possible. Other questions can be directed to altfunding@bcsara.com at anytime.