



Making a difference...together

**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2009**

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**SUBJECT:** Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) Grant – Juan de Fuca (JdF) Search and Rescue (SAR) and Emergency Program

**PURPOSE:**

To propose application for a JEPP Grant on behalf of both the JdF Search and Rescue and JdF Emergency Program to replace the old Communications Van.

**BACKGROUND:**

Annually, the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) administers applications for the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) with the federal government. The applications are due October 31 of each year, and are awarded in the first week of the following April. Funding is generally based on 50% contribution from the local service, and 50% from the JEPP Grant.

This summer, the JdF Emergency Program Communications Vehicle was taken out of service. It required costly repairs to be made, well beyond the value of the vehicle. The vehicle was used to provide communications in areas that were otherwise without, mostly along the West Coast Road and into Port Renfrew. It also was able to be used as a forward command post as required.

Although the vehicle was owned by the emergency program, most of the vehicle's regular use was by the JdF Search and Rescue program, as a forward command post and communications centre. Many of the team's calls require the additional support of amateur radio, and access to the PEP radio channels that the vehicle provided. By using the vehicle on a regular basis, the SAR group was able to ensure it was maintained and all radio and emergency equipment on the vehicle was kept in working order. Moving forward, based on the regular use by SAR, it was agreed that the vehicle replacement costs should be shared between the two services.

In looking to replace the vehicle, both the emergency program and the search and rescue program looked at their individual needs. A joint working group was formed to look at potential alternatives that would provide the best replacement for the vehicle. The group also looked to other SAR programs in the province to see how effective the vehicles they were using were.

In the end, the recommendation was made to look at building a specialized box, placed on a used chassis. This would ensure that if the vehicle were to need replacement in the future, that the box could be lifted off the chassis and put on to a newer one.

Motions by both groups were made to contribute a maximum of \$30,000 each. JEPP grants for specialized vehicles are maximized at the lesser of 50% or \$40,000. Given the combination of the two groups working together on this vehicle, the total project cost would be a maximum of \$100,000.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. To approve the submission of a JEPP application for the joint purchase of a communications vehicle by JdF Emergency Program and JdF Search and Rescue Program.
2. Not approve staff to apply for a JEPP Grant for a vehicle to replace the Communications Van.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The maximum JEPP Grant available for specialized vehicles is the lesser of 50% or \$40,000. Both SAR and the Emergency Program propose to put up a maximum of \$30,000 each for a maximum project total of \$100,000. Current funds within each program's reserves will cover their costs, with no requisition increase.

### **SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS:**

Given the terrain and remote nature of much of the JdF area, communications is often a key issue in assisting during emergencies and in search and rescue. Both groups have endorsed the purchase of this vehicle and see a communications vehicle as an essential component of their programs.

The decision to build a custom box with the ability to be used on future vehicle purchases provides a solid long term solution. The box design is comparable to those used by many other programs in the province.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Committee approve the submission of a JEPP application for the joint purchase of a communications vehicle by JdF Emergency Program and JdF Search and Rescue Program.

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