

ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STATUS UPDATE

REPORT TO THE EVALUATION, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE - AS OF MARCH 31, 2010

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS – COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE FIRST NATIONS WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (200613)

AEC APPROVAL DATE: 19/12/2007

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION PLAN	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	PROGRAM RESPONSE
1. The Department should continue to provide assistance to First Nations for the building, operation, and maintenance of their water and wastewater systems as well as for the training of system operators. The Department should commit to address, in the short term, the remaining major risk issues with water systems.	<p>Minister Prentice committed to reducing the number of high-risk drinking water systems to 49 by March 31, 2008 in March 2007.</p> <p>The funding for the First Nations Water Management Strategy and the Plan of Action for Drinking Water in First Nations Communities expires March 31, 2008. INAC has renewed targeted water and wastewater support activities for two additional years. Once an engineering assessment of water and wastewater systems and needs in First Nations communities provides accurate information on the issues that remain, INAC will prepare a strategy to begin April, 2010, to support First Nations communities in bringing remaining systems to the standards outlined in the Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities.</p> <p>During the next two years, work with First Nations to address issues will continue, with health and safety risks being addressed on a priority basis.</p>	<p>01/04/2008</p> <p>01/04/2010</p>	<p>Status: Implemented</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2009:</p> <p>Complete. Additional assistance to support First Nations in addressing risk issues with water systems was implemented through the \$330 million First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP) in April 2008. Further assistance of \$165 million for priority water projects was provided through Canada's Economic Action plan.</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 30/09/2009:</p> <p>AES Comment: File closed</p>

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<p>2. Monitoring and reporting practices should be enhanced to ensure that the First Nations and INAC have reliable information about drinking-water and wastewater systems in First Nations communities. In particular, INAC should:</p> <p>a) ensure that all funded systems undergo complete annual on-site inspections according to the "Guide for Annual Inspections of First Nations Drinking Water Systems" in the Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities;</p>	<p>a) The Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities requires annual inspections of water systems by a qualified person from outside the operating First Nations. INAC will continue to provide funding for these annual inspections and ensure that they are completed. INAC will improve the inspection process, automating the data collection by creating an inspection form that can be automatically uploaded into the Integrated Capital Management System (ICMS) database. ICMS is web-accessible, which will make it easier for inspectors to upload the information directly into a central INAC database and for First Nations to access the resulting information. Additionally, by centralizing all the data, it will be easier for headquarters to monitor compliance and ensure that the inspection requirements have been met by the regional offices.</p>	<p>01/04/2008</p>	<p>Status: Implemented</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2009:</p> <p>Complete - INAC continues to provide funding and monitor completion of annual inspections as required by the Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities.</p> <p>Complete – The Integrated Capital Management System (ICMS) is fully functional with respect to tracking water and wastewater system inspections.</p> <p>AES Comment: Close pending monitoring of Umbrella PM Strategy implementation</p>

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b) report more clearly on the extent to which systems meet established design, construction and water-quality standards; and	b) With the introduction in 2006 of the Protocol, INAC introduced clear, measurable standards for design, construction, operation, maintenance, and monitoring of drinking water systems. INAC is developing a wastewater systems protocol. This is being reviewed with stakeholders and INAC plans to introduce the new wastewater protocol April 1, 2008. It would be added to funding agreement requirements beginning in fiscal year 2009/10. A key performance indicator on compliance with the drinking water/wastewater protocol will be added to ICMS to ensure that compliance is measured and tracked. INAC will report annually to Parliament on the water and wastewater situation in First Nations communities and will include reporting on compliance with the standards of the Protocol.	01/04/2008 and 01/04/2009	<p>Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010:</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>The approval process is underway for the following three protocols which will soon be announced and released to support first Nations in the management of their on-reserve water and wastewater systems. Key indicators will be reported and tracked through ICMS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protocol for Centralised Drinking Water Systems in First Nations Communities (which will replace the 2006 Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations communities) - Protocol for Centralised Wastewater Systems in First Nations Communities - Protocol for Decentralised Water and Wastewater Systems in First Nation Communities. <p>AES: Close</p>
c) collect data that support basic cost-effectiveness measurement, e.g., cost per connection and cost per person served for capital expenditures and for operations and maintenance	c) INAC will ensure that feasibility studies for new systems, reviewed by HQ, assess the cost per connection and determine the most suitable cost-effective option, including consideration of individual systems. Through the new Integrated Capital Management	31/03/2009	<p>Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010:</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>The National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater System is currently underway and will provide the necessary data to make decisions on</p>

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	System (ICMS) water database, INAC will track the costs of system construction, upgrade, operations and maintenance funding provided, number of connections and people served by the system. In the context of the department's Smart Reporting Initiative, INAC intends to work with First Nations communities to improve broadband connectivity to enable reporting through ICMS to reduce the reporting burden.		cost-effectiveness of systems as well as operations and maintenance. The relevant data will be stored in ICMS. AES: Close
3) INAC should a) revise its funding agreements with First Nations to ensure that funds awarded for operation and maintenance are used for that purpose; and b) Take measures to ensure that the Maintenance Management Plans and Emergency Response Plans required under the Protocol are in place.	a) INAC will explore options to ensure that funding agreements with First Nations allow for an assessment of water and wastewater Operation and Maintenance funding in the year-end financial audit. Measures to assist First Nations communities in addressing any deficiencies in compliance will be developed in collaboration with Audit and Assurance Services Branch. b) The <i>Protocol for Safe Drinking Water in First Nations Communities</i> requires Maintenance Management Plans and Emergency Response Plans be implemented. Compliance with the	Options for improved Operation and Maintenance tracking and accountability will be explored and implementation of initial measures will begin April 1, 2008 Compliance measures will be developed for implementation as of 01/04/2010.	Status: Complete Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010: AES Comment: Close b) Status: Complete Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010: The new Performance Management Strategy has highlighted the key indicators that will determine if

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	Protocol is part of INAC's funding agreements with First Nations communities. As part of INAC's commitment to measure compliance with the Protocol, implementation of these plans will be tracked and measures will be taken to address any shortfalls.	Steps to ensure compliance with the Protocol will continue on an ongoing basis.	First Nations are in compliance with the departmental Protocols. This includes tracking the implementation of Maintenance Management Plans and Emergency Response Plans. These indicators will be updated on an annual basis through the Annual Performance Inspections required by the Protocols. AES Comment: Close monitoring of PM Strategy
4) INAC must significantly improve operator training and certification by substantially upgrading the Circuit Rider Training Program or by implementing a superior alternative.	INAC will expand the Circuit Rider Training Program to allow all regions to hire more (CRTP) circuit riders, to improve remuneration and working conditions for circuit riders, to expand the role of circuit riders in mentoring and assisting system operators, and to offer these expanded CRTP services to all First Nations communities, to take effect April 1, 2008. Additional funding would also be directed to training operators for certification exams.	Implementation will begin 01/04/2008	Status: Complete Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010: The number of Circuit Rider Trainers has increased from 54 in 2008 to 65 to allow better coverage and service to First Nations communities. As of March 2009, thanks to the work of the Circuit Rider Trainers the number of water treatment operators with their first level of certification or greater has increased from 41 % to 64%, representing 791 out of the 1,226 water system operators across the country. The circuit Rider Trainer Professional Association (CRTPA), which has been in place since March 2009, has resulted in the sharing of best practices

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			and are currently working on common training manuals that will be available to all First Nation Circuit Rider Trainers and operators. AES: Underway
5) The Department must address gaps in program design with a view to providing support for alternative cost-effective solutions such as wells and septic tanks.	<p>A detailed engineering assessment of the water and wastewater systems in every First Nations community, to be conducted over an 18 month period, will identify the needs of each community and provide a reliable basis for decisions on future investments.</p> <p>A Protocol to establish standards for wells, septic systems, cisterns and other small system elements is being prepared. The preliminary protocol will be implemented beginning April 1, 2008 and will be finalised by September 30, 2008.</p> <p>INAC will work with Health Canada and other federal partners and with First Nations communities to implement the policy on funding the most cost-effective systems appropriate to community needs and to implement the new protocol on small systems.</p>	<p>Policy on small systems and protocol developed 30/09/2008</p> <p>Engineering assessment complete by 30/09/2009</p> <p>Implementation of the policy for small systems will be phased in beginning 01/04/2008</p>	<p>Status: Pending Implementation</p> <p>Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010:</p> <p>The policy on small systems was approved by the departmental Operations Committee in December 2008. The related Protocol will be approved and released shortly (see item 2 b).</p> <p>The National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems is currently underway. Approximately 264 out of 607 community site visits have been completed to date and the remainder will be completed during the spring and summer 2010. The National Assessment will be finalized in the fall 2010.</p> <p>The implementation of the small system policy will be phased in. The small system protocol (i.e., Protocol for Decentralised Water and Wastewater Systems in the First Nations Communities Will be released shortly to outline to First Nations the new eligible options. In addition, the results from the National Assessment will give the Department a better understanding of the</p>

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			current situation of small systems and allow for the planning of a long-term strategy to implement decentralized system's across the country, where appropriate. AES: Underway
6) Future policy development should consider the implementation of a regulatory framework that would separate INAC's roles as funding agency and de facto regulator. The option of having a separate federal department/agency or the provinces/territories or other entity (such as a First Nations organization/ institution or aggregation), other than INAC, to enforce regulations for water and wastewater on-reserve should be explored.	INAC will develop a proposal for a regulatory framework in accordance with the Government of Canada's commitment in Budget 2007 to introduce an accountable, transparent and enforceable regulatory regime, for safe drinking water on reserve, comparable to off-reserve communities.	Consultations on legislation will take place in 2008.	Status: Pending Implementation Update/Rationale: As of 31/03/2010: Latest round of engagement with Regional Chiefs completed. Draft FNSDWA is complete and ready for introduction. AES: Close