

Hazard Risk Analysis

Conflictual Social Action

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This section introduces conflictual social action, which refers to situations where community conflict escalates either internally or with external groups.

Definition

Conflictual social action is a gathering of a group of like-minded people at a designated location and at a specified time to make demands, show strong disapproval or disagreement, or perform an indicated action such as a sit-in, flash mob, protest, or blockade; these actions may or may not be reinforced with non-violent action or civil disobedience.

Conflictual Social Action may be expressed in the following ways:

- **Blockade:** “to stop people or supplies from entering or leaving (a port, community, or country) especially during a war.” Blockades may happen on highways, roads, and rail networks.
- **Civil Disobedience:** “the conscious, individual or collective violation of a law, regulation, or edict. The order violated is usually deemed to be immoral or unjust by those undertaking the action. Civil disobedience also includes disobeying neutral orders, which serve as symbols of more general opposition.”
- **Conflict:** “...a confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends.” Conflicts may create immediate actions or behaviours within a community, or conflicts may build over time.
- **Flashmob (Round Dance):** “...a group of people summoned (as by e-mail or text message) to a designated location at a specified time to perform an indicated action before dispersing.”
- **Non-violent action:** a technique of conflict engagement that attempts to achieve political or social objectives without using physical or violent acts. Non-violent action may take the forms of protests and persuasion (with officials), non-cooperation, and interventions.
- **Protest:** an organized event at which people gather together to show strong disapproval about a something.
- **Sit-in:** “...a strike or protest in which people sit or stay in a place and refuse to leave until they are given what they demand.”

Discussion

There are many reasons for why conflictual social action might occur within communities, including pending resource development issues, poor relationships with federal or provincial/territorial governments, or conflicts that emerge with adjacent communities. When conflictual social action occurs, there is often a process of escalation that could jeopardize peaceful relationships within and between communities, and/or result in property damage or violence. It is important that community-wide issues are mediated and resolved to help prevent any violent escalation of conflictual social action.

It Happened Here...

The Idle No More movement was started in Saskatchewan in December 2012 as a reaction against Bill C-45, and the grass-roots movement has gained support across Canada and the world in their opposition to resource development on traditional Aboriginal territory (such as pipelines, fracking, mining, etc.). The movement has typically staged protests, sit-ins, Round Dances, and non-violent actions to vocalize their discontent. Since it began, the Idle No More movement has organized hundreds of protests across Canada, and is heavily engaged with its supporters over social media.

On October 17, 2013, armed RCMP units in New Brunswick clashed with members of the Elsipogtog First Nation (Mi'kmaq) at an anti-fracking protest. The Elsipogtog community was protesting the development of a potential shale gas site in the province, and felt they were not adequately consulted about the project, which would affect their traditional territories. The Elsipogtog community was also unhappy with the lack of progress on their land claims settlements in the region. The RCMP used pepper spray and sock rounds in their attempts to control the crowd, and were accused of intimidating the protestors. The events of October 17 greatly damaged the relationship between the RCMP and the Elsipogtog First Nation, which had been developing a relationship of trust over the past 15 years.

Hazard Rating											
High Risk		<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Risk		<input type="checkbox"/>	Need More Info		<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable		<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	No	Need More Info	Not Applicable	FACTORS							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instances of conflictual social action may be more likely to occur in a community where there is limited or no open participation in decision-making processes. Does your community have limited or no active participation in decision-making from a variety of community members?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social actions and volatile situations can be de-escalated with the help of a team or person that has been appropriately trained in conflict resolution. Have your community leaders, including police, Band Council, and elders, neglected to appoint a person or team to manage conflict resolution?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The frequency and severity of conflictual social action can be reduced if law enforcement personnel participate in training on effective peace-keeping and crowd management techniques. Do law enforcement personnel, such as community police or volunteer firefighters, need additional regular training on peace-keeping and crowd management techniques?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If conflictual social action has previously occurred in a community the factors that triggered those events may still exist, putting the community at risk for a future conflictual social action. Has your community experienced conflictual social action in the past?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social action can occur when there is potential or ongoing resource development that will affect the community's livelihood and traditional territories. Does your community have any prospective or current resource development that will negatively affect community livelihood activities and/or traditional territories?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social action may occur because of ongoing legal processes that will affect the whole community, such as land claims agreements and treaty changes. Is your community currently engaged in a major legal process that will affect the whole community, or unequally benefit certain community members?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social action can occur during or after large gatherings such as protests, rallies, etc. Does your community host large gatherings?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Controversial elections or voting processes, such as community-wide voting on band council or land management regimes, can trigger conflictual social action. Does your community have a history of controversial elections or voting processes?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social action may occur if a community does not have a good relationship with the Federal, Territorial, or Provincial government. Has your community had major conflicts with the Federal, Territorial, or Provincial government?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflictual social action may occur if a community does not have a good relationship with adjacent or nearby non-Aboriginal communities. Has your community had major conflicts with non-Aboriginal communities?							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If your community is polarized or strongly divided about a certain issue (such as resource development, land claims issues, housing projects, etc.), there may be a greater likelihood for conflictual social action to occur. Does your community have a history of being strongly divided over resource management or community services?							

Historical Events – General Information

Please Note: See your Provincial/Territorial Risk and Resilience Information Guides for additional resources, including information regarding your community emergency manager, contact with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and provincial or territorial Emergency Management Organization (EMO). EMO websites generally provide information specific to the hazards in your territory or province. Band websites or regional Aboriginal community websites can provide more information.

Resources
<p>The “Canadian Disasters - An Historical Survey” website by Robert L. Jones provides a great list of past disasters which have occurred since the 1500s in Canada and have resulted in at least 20 deaths.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://web.ncf.ca/jonesb/DisasterPaper/disasterpaper.html</p> <p>Keywords: Canadian disasters historical survey</p>
<p>The Public Safety Canada “Canadian Disaster Database” contains a list of past disasters in Canada.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/em/cdd/srch-eng.aspx</p> <p>Keywords: Canada disaster database</p>
<p>Wikipedia has a list of disasters in Canada and links to various events; however, it does not have a lot of information about British Columbia.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_disasters_in_Canada</p> <p>Keywords: Canada disasters wiki</p>
<p>SOS! Canadian Disasters is supported by Library and Archives Canada, and provides some interesting stories on historical events and also has a great website on an education program (Grades 7 to 12) on understanding hazards and disasters in Canada.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/sos/index-e.html</p> <p>Keywords: sos! Canada library archives</p>
<p>CBC Archives have a wide variety of news clips on historical and current disasters in Canada as well as educational information on hazards for teachers. On the CBC Digital Archives webpage, search for “disaster” in their own keyword search bar.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.cbc.ca/cgi-bin/MT4/mt-search.cgi?search=disaster&IncludeBlogs=777&limit=20</p> <p>Keywords: CBC archives, Disaster</p>

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