

June 30, 2023

Monthly Resolution Update – June 2023 Edition

To improve reporting on resolution advocacy, the RMA is releasing a monthly bulletin highlighting recent actions undertaken on five active resolutions

The Monthly Resolution Update Bulletin is a way of routinely highlighting a selection of the over 70 currently active resolutions, offering members a more detailed insight into the work being carried out on their behalf. For the latest formal statuses and reactions to all resolutions, view the RMA's [Resolutions Database](#).

The June 2023 edition of the Monthly Resolution Update Bulletin features the following resolutions:

6-21S National Flood Insurance Strategy and Community Resiliency Advocacy

The Government of Alberta (GOA) participated on the joint federal, provincial, and territorial [Flood Insurance and Relocation Project](#) (FIRP). FIRP is intended to develop a Canada-wide approach to expanding access to overland flood insurance and relocation options for high flood risk properties. In August 2022, the FIRP Task Force released their [final report](#), which includes the following key findings:

- ♦ Total residential flood risk in Canada is estimated at \$9.2 billion per year, significantly higher than previous estimates.
- ♦ The vast majority of risk is concentrated in a small number of the highest risk homes.
- ♦ Improvements in flood insurance design and availability are needed to better protect Canadians and reduce the pressure on government to provide financial assistance to those uninsured.
- ♦ Relocation can be a powerful tool to reduce risk but must be informed at the local level.
- ♦ The design and pricing of flood insurance products must proceed through an equity lens, and consider affordability, as well as improved understanding among individuals and community organizations.
- ♦ Within the context of flood risk management, the cultural connections of Indigenous peoples to water and land must be respected.

The RMA has reached out Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Services to seek an update on the GOA's approach to implementing the recommendations within the report. The GOA has indicated that internal conversations are ongoing concerning the intent of the resolution and the Task Force's recommendations, and a more comprehensive update will be provided later in the summer. RMA will continue to follow up with the GOA for a more substantial update and inform members as new information becomes available.

3-22F Provide for a Uniform Method of Auditing and Enforcing Compliance with Community Aggregate Payment Levy Bylaws

The first action request in this resolution calls for the RMA to advocate for the Government of Alberta to change the [Community Aggregate Payment Levy \(CAPL\) Regulation](#) to allow municipalities to audit CAPL shipment reports and impose penalties when aggregate producers fail to meet their obligations under the CAPL Regulation and related municipal bylaws.

In response, Alberta Municipal Affairs stated that the Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation has been extended for two years and no changes will be considered until the end of 2024. This timeline means that the changes proposed in the resolution cannot be formally implemented until the regulation is next updated. As a result, there is limited action the RMA can take regarding the first ask of this resolution until that time.

Regarding the second ask of this resolution, the RMA has reached out to an official from the Government of Alberta seeking clarity on how the current process considers noncompliance with CAPL bylaws during the review of applications, renewals, and reporting for Class 1 gravel pits. The RMA has enquired whether noncompliance with CAPL bylaws is currently factored into these processes and, if not, the reasoning behind its exclusion. The RMA is currently awaiting a response from the GOA. Members will be updated upon receipt of an update and the RMA will continue to advocate to GOA to ensure industry compliance with municipal requirements is considered in site approvals.

3-21F Vegetation Management on Alberta Provincial Highways

The RMA has reached out to the Government of Alberta to gain insight into their current strategies for managing vegetation on provincial highways and whether a new vegetation management plan has been developed. For the past several years, Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors has indicated a new plan is under development, but no detailed updates or implementation timelines have been provided.

The RMA is meeting in the coming days with Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors to discuss the issue and their vegetation management approach in more detail. Members will be kept updated on any progress or information that comes from this meeting.

11-22F Disparity in Electricity Distribution and Transmission Rates

This resolution calls for the RMA to advocate for the Government of Alberta to adopt a new electricity pricing model for transmission and distribution that eliminates the disparity in pricing across Alberta. The issue of unequal pricing in different regions of Alberta has been a persistent concern for many RMA members.

The RMA received an initial response from the Ministry of Affordability and Utilities, which acknowledges the concerns expressed in the resolution. However, according to the response, changes to the current approach of assigning distribution costs to each specific region serviced by a distribution facility owner are not being actively considered.

In pursuit of more clarity and understanding, the RMA has reached out to a government representative from the Ministry seeking further explanation on why changes to the current approach are not being actively considered, what challenges or considerations are preventing a review of the current model, if there are any plans or timelines for considering this issue as part of implementing the Ministry's mandate of providing an affordable and reliable electricity system for Albertans, and whether any other options to lessen the disparity or protect rural electricity users from high distribution charges can be implemented within the current framework. The RMA also plans to reach out to members to gather data on actual utility costs and local examples of the impacts of the high distribution rates on municipalities, community groups, and residents.

19-20F Reinstatement of the Benefit Contribution Grant for Early Childhood Educators

This resolution calls for the RMA to advocate that the Government of Alberta reinstates the Benefit Contribution Grant (BCG) for early childhood educators, retroactive to July 1, 2020. The intention behind this call was to bolster the recruitment and retention of skilled early childhood educators, which aligns with the provincial government's stated priority for early learning access.

The RMA reached out to the Ministry of Children's Services seeking further clarification on the government's position, given the apparent contradiction between the prioritization of early learning and the cancellation of the BCG.

The response from the Ministry indicated that new grant was introduced effective April 1, 2023: the [Mandatory Employer Contribution](#) grant. According to Alberta Children's Services, this grant is intended to help eligible childcare operators offset the mandatory payroll deductions on wage top-up funding, much like the discontinued BCG. The RMA views this development as potentially promising. However, we believe that further research and clarification are needed to fully understand the parameters of the new grant, including its eligibility criteria, the specifics of its implementation, and how it compares to the discontinued BCG.

The RMA has initiated follow-up communications with the GOA to seek these clarifications and will update members on the outcomes as soon as more information becomes available.

Stay tuned for future editions of the Monthly Resolution Update Bulletin, where we will continue to feature updates on selected resolutions.

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