



Updated: June 6, 2024

Key Messages: Emergency Management Booking Portal

- The Emergency Management Booking Portal (EMBP) is a pilot project that is being developed in partnership between the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) and the BC Hotel Association (BCHA) and is supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (TACS).
- Funding for this 2024 pilot project has been provided by a grant from EMCR to the BCHA.
- The purpose of the Central Booking Portal project is to help Emergency Support Services (ESS) responders and commercial accommodation operators better coordinate and track commercial accommodation availability for evacuee placement, as well as streamline to administration of booking commercial accommodation.
- The portal will allow the BCHA and its provincial accommodators, EMCR and local ESS responders, and the BC Tourism Emergency Response Team to have a direct, immediate line of sight to the number of available hotel rooms.
- The Portal is focused on providing dedicated ESS online reservation capabilities to the larger host communities of Kamloops, Kelowna, and Prince George, with the potential of adding additional communities to the system during the summer of 2024.
- BC tourism industry partners have suggested a more efficient way to monitor availability and booking accommodation.
- The portal is the result of an incredible amount of work between the BCHA and EMCR with support from TACS.
- During the pandemic, the Hotel Association of Canada, and their provincial counterparts (including BCHA) were contracted by the Government of Canada to create a national emergency accommodation reservation system to help place essential workers and travelers needing isolation – the system developed is called *Check In Canada™* and is still in operation across Canada.
- Meridian Reservation Systems provides the technology supporting *Check In Canada™* and has over 25 years of providing digital reservation and ticketing solutions for individual and flagship commercial accommodations, destination marketing organizations, and others around the world.
- BCHA's Portal system developer is Meridian Reservation Systems.
- BCHA and Meridian have presented to the Ministries responsible for Emergency Management and Tourism since 2021 using *Check In Canada™* as the proof of concept for the Portal that is being implemented in 2024 to support EMCR's ESS programs that are delivered locally across the province.
- Learnings from this pilot project will be evaluated and incorporated into potential future projects to improve commercial accommodation access in emergencies.
- Work is currently progressing on the development of the technological and administrative systems supporting the Booking Portal with input from BCHA, EMCR, TACS, along with

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representatives from Kamloops, Kelowna, and Prince George, the community Hotel Associations, Community Destination Marketing Organizations, Local ESS and Municipality staff, and Northern BC and Thompson Okanagan Regional Tourism Associations.

- TACS is working to improve the traditional document based booking system to provide efficiencies for ESS responders and commercial accommodation providers.
- The anticipated launch of the pilot Booking Portal is set for June 28, 2024.