



Cold/Wet Weather
Strategy

shelternetbc.ca/cwws.htm

Greater Vancouver Cold/Wet Weather Strategy: 2005-2006 Evaluation

January 30, 2007

 James Pratt Consulting

Acknowledgements

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- Emergency shelter service providers, who collected and submitted shelter statistics using a standard format;
- Participants in the Cold/Wet Weather Strategy member survey;
- Executive Committee and Planning and Evaluation Task Group members, who provided direction to the evaluation process.

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- BC Housing;
- United Way of the Lower Mainland;
- Vancouver Foundation.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this evaluation of the Greater Vancouver Cold/Wet Weather Strategy's 2005-2006 year is to assess levels of effectiveness and to provide information for use in action planning and development of initiatives to alleviate homelessness.

The evaluation has three objectives as follows:

1. To provide an overview of the Strategy in 2005-2006;
2. To document inputs (funding and in-kind) and outputs (volume of activity);
3. To analyze outcomes such as improved access to shelter.

The evaluator used three main types of data sources in the preparation of this report: Cold/Wet Weather Strategy (CWWS) documents, shelter service statistics, and Strategy participant surveys.

Overview of the Strategy

Mission

The Greater Vancouver Cold/Wet Weather Strategy is a regional network of organizations responding together to meet local shelter needs during the winter months.

Vision

We envision accessible, high quality emergency shelter services as part of a continuum of housing and supports.

Goals

1. Co-operative planning

Maintain a responsive, effective and accountable partnership.

2. Communication

Communicate service availability to the homeless and the larger community.

3. Sustainability

Gather evidence of need to support coordinated funding and service delivery.

4. Service development

Promote coordination and enhancement of services.

Inputs

Three organizations provided core funding for operation of the Strategy in 2005-2006: BC Housing, United Way of the Lower Mainland, and the Vancouver Foundation. Service Canada and BC Housing provided funds for the Extreme Weather Response project. Total funding for 2005-2006 was \$84,356, not including Extreme Weather Response operational funds provided directly to shelter providers by BC Housing.

In-kind contributions during the year included services and goods valued at a total of approximately \$29,000, not including in-kind resources of local Extreme Weather Response committees and sheltering site providers.

Outputs

Outputs during the September 2005 through March 2006 period included the following:¹

- 6 Committee of the Whole meetings;
- 12 meetings of sub-committees and task groups (3 of the Communications Committee, 2 of the Executive Committee, 5 of the Extreme Weather Task Group, and 2 of the Planning and Evaluation Task Group);
- A full-day Creative Media Relations workshop, attended by 11 participants;
- Purchase and distribution of approximately 520 transit tickets to participating emergency shelter providers.

Key documents completed or updated were as follows:

- 2006-2008 Service Plan (including an executive summary version);
- Evaluation report for the preceding year, 2004-2005;
- Updated 3-year Action Plan;
- Updated Extreme Weather Response plans for Langley, New Westminster, the North Shore, Richmond, Surrey and Vancouver;
- Completion of Extreme Weather Response plans for the Tri-Cities and Burnaby;
- 2004-2005 Extreme Weather Response Project Evaluation report.

Outcomes

Improved balance between cold/wet weather and year-round shelter beds

Cold/wet weather shelter spaces as a proportion of total emergency shelter spaces declined slightly to 30.2 % in 2005-2006 from 30.9% of in 2004-2005. This represents a small improvement in the balance between seasonal and year round spaces.

The proportion of beds for mixed genders, and for women and families, declined significantly in 2005-2006 compared to the previous year. Beds for men and women declined from 57% to 51%, while beds for women and families declined from 16% to 15%. Beds for men increased from 22% to 29%.

¹ In 2006 the CWWS decided to change its fiscal year to April 1 through March 31, in keeping with the fiscal year of funding partners and other Strategy participants (previously, the fiscal year was September 1 through August 31).

Improved access to emergency shelter and related services

Bed nights available

The total number of bed nights available in Greater Vancouver in the 2005-2006 cold/wet weather season (October 1 through April 30) was approximately 190,018. This represents a 6% increase over 2004-2005 (178,934 bed nights).

The 2005-2006 figures show 45,119 CWW bed nights available, compared with 46,626 in the preceding year and 37,761 in 2003-2004. This represents a 3% decrease in CWW services available, compared to an average increase over the preceding 6 years of approximately 22%. Meanwhile, year-round bed nights available increased 10% to 144,899. These numbers indicate a turning point toward year-round service provision.

Occupancy rates

The average occupancy rate for all emergency shelter spaces during this period was 93%, up from 92%. The average occupancy rate for CWW shelters was 87%, compared to 86% in the preceding year and 88% in 2003-2004. The total number of reported bed nights used was 177,020, up 7% from 164,756.

These figures suggest that the shelter system experienced increased pressure despite the slightly increased volume of services. Once again, growth in demand during the 2005-2006 season outpaced expansion of supply.

Service use by gender

Analysis of bed nights used by gender and age reveals that males used approximately 76% of bed nights and females used approximately 24%. In the preceding year these figures were 74% and 26% respectively. This represents proportionate increased use by males, and reflects the shift in supply toward service for males.

Service use by age

The shelter system served proportionately more children and youth in the 2005-2006 season. Service providers reported 4,989 bed nights provided to youth (aged 18 or under) in 2005-2006, up approximately 10% from the previous year. They reported 5,919 bed nights provided to dependent children, up approximately 24% from the previous year.

Extreme weather response

In addition to the numbers reported above, Greater Vancouver extreme weather sheltering sites reported a total of 2,517 bed nights provided in 2005-2006. This compares with 4,378 during the 2004-2005 season and 837 in the preceding season.

In 2005-2006 two communities implemented extreme weather responses for the first time: Burnaby and the North Shore.

Turn away incidence

Service providers reported a total of 28,922 incidences of turning people away during the October through April period, a 9% increase over the previous year. Of these, 92% were due to no vacancy, 4% were due to the condition or state of the client and another 4% were due to the facility not being able to serve the needs of the client (e.g., men-only). This percentage split was the same in the previous year.

Other outcomes

Compared to the preceding year, respondents rated performance on all 5 of the following outcomes more positively:

- Improved planning and coordination of shelter resources (92%);
- Increased community and government preparedness for cold/wet and extreme weather (85%);
- Increased collaboration and sharing of resources among shelter providers (92%);
- Improved community and government understanding of shelter needs (77%);
- Improved contracting for CWW services, including policy, procedures for working with local shelters (e.g. referrals) and funding (62%).

Similarly, ratings on overall effectiveness of the Strategy were significantly more positive than in the previous year.

Conclusion

Analysis of the outcome evidence suggests several key conclusions:

1. The shift from CWW to year-round services began in 2005-2006, with the first-ever decrease in the number of CWW bed nights available since the Strategy began implementation in 1998-1999.
2. Rates of increase in shelter demand continued to outpace increase in supply: while overall shelter supply increased 6% over the preceding year, occupancy rates rose to 93% and incidence of people being turned away rose by 9%.
3. Relative supply of beds for women declined, which was likely the primary factor in proportionate use of the shelter system by females also declining. Use of bed nights by males was up by 11%, whereas use by females up just 1%.
4. Proportionate use by youth and children both rose, with use of bed nights by youth up 10% and use by dependent children up approximately 24%.

These statistics suggest some alarming trends. Growth in emergency shelter demand outpacing growth in supply suggests that the overall continuum of housing services remained inadequate. Increased use of the shelter system by children and youth could be an early warning that inter-generational homelessness is growing. Reduced supply of shelter services for women means decreased access for a population group that was already underserved, as indicated by high turn away statistics in 2004-2005.

Overall, however, the Strategy performed well in responding to shelter needs during the winter months. Expansion of the community based Extreme Weather Response program reflects a positive trend. In addition, the shift from CWW to year-round shelter services suggests that the system turned a corner.

While the Strategy has achieved significant progress, much remains to be done to achieve the vision.

Contents

Executive Summary	ii
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose and objectives.....	1
1.2 Background	1
1.3 Scope and definitions.....	1
1.4 Methodology	1
1.5 Organization of Report	2
2.0 Overview of the Strategy	3
2.1 Strategic Plan	3
2.2 Governance	3
2.3 Program logic model.....	4
3.0 Inputs, outputs and outcomes.....	6
3.1 Funding and in-kind resources.....	6
3.2 Outputs	6
3.3 Outcomes	8
4.0 Conclusion	18

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this evaluation of the Greater Vancouver Cold/Wet Weather Strategy's 2005-2006 year is to assess levels of effectiveness and to provide information for use in action planning and development of initiatives to alleviate homelessness.

The evaluation has three objectives as follows:

1. To provide an overview of the Strategy in 2005-2006;
2. To document inputs (funding and in-kind) and outputs (volume of activity);
3. To analyze outcomes such as improved access to shelter.

1.2 Background

Participants engaged in seven previous annual evaluations of the Cold/Wet Weather Strategy (CWWS) covering the 1998-1999 through 2004-2005 years. These evaluations analyzed the capacity of the CWWS to deliver on its goals and priorities and provided initial evidence of outcomes achieved. The evaluations also identified key strengths and challenges.

1.3 Scope and definitions

This evaluation covers the period from September 1, 2005 through March 31, 2006.

The evaluation measures inputs, outputs, and outcomes, defined as follows.

- Inputs are resources dedicated to a program, such as money, staff time, volunteer time, facilities, equipment and supplies.
- Outputs are the quantities of services provided.
- Outcomes are the changes for individuals or systems that evidently resulted from the program.

1.4 Methodology

Design

The evaluator developed the design of this study in consultation with members of the Planning and Evaluation Task Group. Research methods and tools were designed to be consistent with the previous evaluations and with the objectives stated above.

Data Gathering

The evaluator used three types of data sources in the preparation of this report: Cold/Wet Weather Strategy (CWWS) documents, cold/wet weather and year-round shelter service statistics, and Strategy participant surveys.

- CWWS documents included meeting minutes, Action Plan, Communications Plan, and past evaluations.
- Service statistics included numbers of bed nights provided, numbers used, and incidence of people being turned away. 2005-2006 was the second year that the Strategy collected statistics for year-round as well as seasonal shelter services.
- 13 Strategy participants participated in a written survey.

Data Analysis This report derives from both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Quantitative analysis included:

- Calculation of shelter use and turn-away statistics;
- Calculation of average responses to scaled questions in the Strategy participant survey.

Qualitative analysis included review of CWWS minutes and other documents.

1.5 Organization of Report

The body of this report consists of three sections, as follows:

- “Overview of the Strategy”, which contains information on the CWWS strategic plan, governance structure, activities in 2005-2006, and a revised program logic model;
- “Inputs and outputs”, which presents information on the volume of resources invested in the Strategy in 2005-2006 and the quantity and types of services delivered in that year,;
- “Outcomes” presents evidence of the results of these services, including extensive statistical analysis that pertains to a key outcome: improved access to shelter.

The conclusion provides highlights of the CWWS’ 2005-2006 year, along with general comments on the evaluation findings and their implications.

2.0 Overview of the Strategy

2.1 Strategic Plan

Mission

The Greater Vancouver Cold/Wet Weather Strategy is a regional network of organizations responding together to meet local shelter needs during the winter months.

Vision

We envision accessible, high quality emergency shelter services as part of a continuum of housing and supports.

Goals

1. Co-operative planning

Maintain a responsive, effective, and accountable partnership.

2. Communication

Communicate service availability to the homeless and the larger community.

3. Sustainability

Gather evidence of need to support coordinated funding and service delivery.

4. Service development

Promote coordination and enhancement of services.

Core Values

We share the following four core values:

- ❖ All people should have access to permanent, appropriate housing.
- ❖ When needed, people should have access to temporary shelter that is safe and healthy.
- ❖ People should be able to be sheltered in their own communities.
- ❖ People using shelters deserve respect and dignity.

Operating Principles

The Strategy works in accordance with the following four principles:

- ❖ Seeking to balance the continuum of housing.
- ❖ Collaboration among funders, service providers, and communities.
- ❖ Representation of diverse communities and interests.
- ❖ Consensus decision-making.

2.2 Governance

The CWWS is an unincorporated entity that is governed by an open multi-stakeholder group referred to as “Committee of the Whole”. In 2005-2006 it had four active sub-committees: Executive Committee; Communications Committee; Extreme Weather Task Group; and Planning and Evaluation Task Group. Each of these groups had an approved Terms of Reference document that identifies purpose, accountability, duties, decision-making method and composition. All CWWS committees make decisions by consensus.

The Planning and Evaluation Task Group was dissolved in March 2006, and its responsibilities were added to those of the Executive.

2.3 Program logic model

The following logic model chart shows inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes for the Strategy. The list of “direct outcomes” was modified and updated in 2004.

Inputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding provided by BC Housing, United Way of the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Foundation and Service Canada. 2. In-kind contributions, including professional services, financial administration, training services, participation in meetings, volunteer time, meeting facilities, catering services and document production.
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Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinated planning of cold/wet weather shelter services. 2. Information sharing about cold/wet weather shelter services. 3. Systematic service tracking, using a standard format. 4. Distribution of resources to shelters. 5. Support to communities preparing for periods of extreme weather. 6. Evaluation and planning (for the CWWS table).
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Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of incidences of CWWS joint action with other groups. 2. Number of incidences (and qualitative summary) of formal and informal recommendations to government or multi-stakeholder bodies. 3. Number of Committee of the Whole and sub-committee meetings. 4. Number of incidences of presentations and liaison with other groups. 5. Number of service updates circulated by email. 6. Number of transit tickets purchased and distributed. 7. List of reports produced, e.g., updated Action Plan, 2006-2008 Service Plan, Extreme Weather Response project evaluation.
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Outcomes - direct	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved balance between cold/wet weather and year-round shelter beds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in ratio of seasonal and permanent beds; Change in number of bed nights available. 2. Improved access to emergency shelter and related services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in number of bed nights used (by gender, age); Change in occupancy rates; Change in numbers of people turned away (by gender, age). 3. Improved planning and coordination of shelter resources. 4. Increased collaboration and sharing of resources among shelter providers (both managers and staff). 5. Increased community and government preparedness for cold/wet and extreme weather. 6. Improved community and government understanding of shelter needs. 7. Improved contracting for CWW services, including policy, procedures for working with local shelters (e.g. referrals process), and funding.
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Outcomes - indirect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved efficiency and effectiveness of shelter services. 2. Expanded supply of supportive and affordable housing. 3. Improved health and reduced risk to homeless people. 4. Reduced negative impact of homelessness on the general population, businesses, and public services.
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3.0 Inputs, outputs and outcomes

3.1 Funding and in-kind resources

Three organizations provided core funding for operation of the Strategy in 2005-2006: BC Housing, United Way of the Lower Mainland, and the Vancouver Foundation. Service Canada and BC Housing provided funds for the Extreme Weather Response project. Total funding for 2005-2006 was \$84,356, not including Extreme Weather Response operational funds provided directly to shelter providers by BC Housing.

In-kind contributions during the year included services and goods valued at a total of approximately \$29,000, not including in-kind resources of local Extreme Weather Response committees and sheltering site providers:

- In-kind contributions to the CWWS core operations included discounted contractor fees provided by James Pratt Consulting; no-charge contract administration services provided by Lookout Emergency Aid Society; provision of meeting facilities, copying and refreshments provided by BC Housing and the Salvation Army; and delivery of a Creative Media Relations workshop by Stanton Associates.
- In-kind contributions to the CWWS extreme weather response included provision of sheltering sites and goods by churches and social service agencies.
- In-kind contributions to direct services included no-charge administration of the transit ticket program by Lookout Emergency Aid Society.

3.2 Outputs

Activities and outputs during the September 2005 through March 2006 period included the following:²

- Ongoing liaison with the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee, and Shelter Net BC;
- 6 Committee of the Whole meetings;
- 12 meetings of sub-committees and task groups (3 of the Communications Committee, 2 of the Executive Committee, 5 of the Extreme Weather Task Group, and 2 of the Planning and Evaluation Task Group);
- A full-day Creative Media Relations workshop, attended by 11 participants;
- Purchase and distribution of approximately 520 transit tickets to participating emergency shelter providers.

Key documents completed or updated were as follows:

- 2006-2008 Service Plan (including an executive summary version);
- Evaluation report for the preceding year, 2004-2005;

² In 2006 the CWWS decided to change its fiscal year to April 1 through March 31, in keeping with the fiscal year of funding partners and other Strategy participants (previously, the fiscal year was September 1 through August 31).

- Updated 3-year Action Plan;
- Updated Extreme Weather Response plans for Langley, New Westminister, the North Shore, Richmond, Surrey and Vancouver;
- Completion of Extreme Weather Response plans for the Tri-Cities and Burnaby;
- 2004-2005 Extreme Weather Response Project Evaluation report.

3.3 Outcomes

This evaluation provides evidence related to seven outcomes:

1. Improved balance between cold/wet weather and year round shelter beds;
2. Improved access to emergency shelter and related services;
3. Improved planning and coordination of shelter resources;
4. Increased collaboration and sharing of resources among shelter providers (both managers and staff);
5. Increased community and government preparedness for cold/wet and extreme weather;
6. Improved community and government understanding of shelter needs;
7. Improved contracting for CWW services, including policy, procedures for working with local shelters (e.g. referrals process), and funding.

Improved balance between seasonal and year-round beds

Cold/wet weather shelter spaces as a proportion of total emergency shelter spaces declined slightly to 30.2 % in 2005-2006 from 30.9% of in 2004-2005. This represents a very small improvement in the balance between seasonal and year round spaces.

Improved access to emergency shelter and related services

This evaluation provides evidence on 4 indicators related to shelter access:

- Change in number of beds, by gender and age;
- Change in number of bed nights used (by gender and age group);
- Change in occupancy rates;
- Change in numbers of people turned away.

Number of beds

The total number of cold/wet weather beds and mats increased 1%, from 291 in 2004-2005 to 295 in 2005-2006. The previous year saw a 23% increase, up from 237 in 2003-2004. The average increase over the preceding 5 years was 18%.

The total number of year round beds increased 4% from 652 in 2004-2005 to 680 in 2005-2006.³

The following table shows the details of numbers of year-round and seasonal beds for each shelter, including subtotals by population group.

³ Data on number of year round beds for the years prior to 2004-2005 is unavailable.

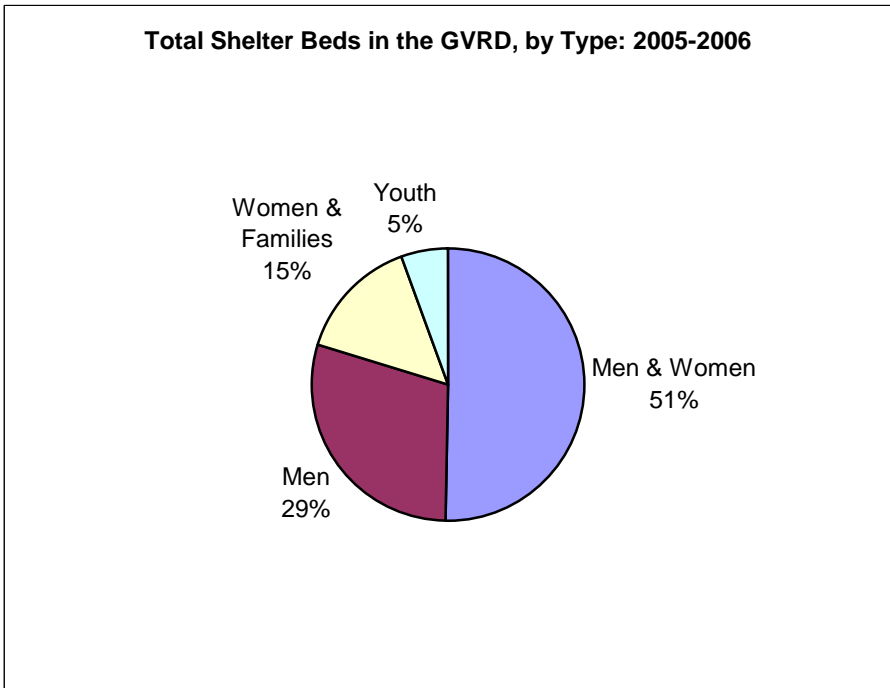
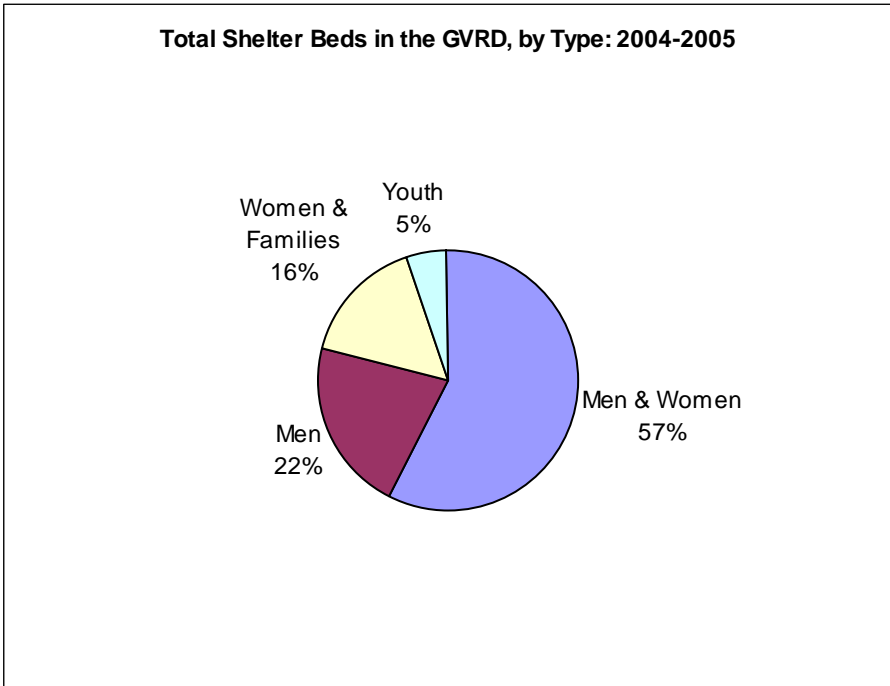
Emergency Shelter Beds in Greater Vancouver: 2005-2006⁴

MEN/WOMEN	Community	CWW Beds and Mats	Year round Beds	Total Spaces
Anchor of Hope	Vancouver	50	0	50
Belkin House	Vancouver	0	69	69
Caring Place	Maple Ridge	36	18	54
Crosswalk	Vancouver	0	35	35
First Baptist Church⁵	Vancouver	0	5	5
Gateway	Surrey	36	0	36
Hyland House	Surrey	0	35	35
Lookout Downtown	Vancouver	0	46	46
North Shore	North Vancouver	20	25	45
Grandview Calvary Baptist	Vancouver	11	0	11
10th Avenue Alliance	Vancouver	0	4	4
Triage	Vancouver	0	28	28
Yukon	Vancouver	35	36	71
Subtotal		188	301	489
MEN				
The Beacon	Vancouver	60	0	60
Catholic Charities	Vancouver	10	92	102
Garfield Hotel	New Westminister	6	19	25
Haven	Vancouver	0	40	40
Richmond House	Richmond	3	7	10
Stevenson House	New Westminister	0	10	10
Tri-Cities Mat Program	Tri-Cities	0	4	4
Union Gospel Mission	Vancouver	0	36	36
Subtotal		79	208	287
WOMEN/FAMILIES				
Bridge	Vancouver	0	12	12
Fraserside	New Westminister	0	12	12
Powell Place	Vancouver	0	26	26
St. Elizabeth's Place	Vancouver	0	32	32
Sheena's Place	Surrey	2	18	20
Umbrella	Vancouver	26	0	26
Vi Fineday	Vancouver	0	18	18
Subtotal		28	118	146
YOUTH				
Aboriginal Safe House	Vancouver	0	7	7
Covenant House	Vancouver	0	22	22
Iron Horse Youth Safe House	Maple Ridge	0	5	5
North Shore Youth Safe House	North Vancouver	0	12	12
Walden Safe House	Vancouver	0	7	7
Subtotal		0	53	53
Grand total		295	680	975

⁴ These figures were current as of February 2006.

⁵ First Baptist, Out of the Cold, and 10th Avenue Alliance each operate on specific nights of the week only, so this table shows the number of beds prorated.

As illustrated in the two charts below, the proportions of beds for mixed genders and for women and families declined significantly in 2005-2006 compared to the previous year. Beds for men and women declined from 57% to 51%, while beds for women and families declined from 16% to 15% and beds for men increased from 22% to 29%.⁶



⁶ This shift was partially a result of Union Gospel Mission becoming a men-only facility. Even without that change, however, the proportion of men's beds would have risen from 22% to 26%. Another factor was the 13 bed women's Homestead program shifting from being stand-alone to being part of mixed gender Belkin House. Factoring that in would show the proportion of women and families remaining at 16%.

Number of bed nights and occupancy

Bed Nights Available, Bed Nights Used and Occupancy Rates:

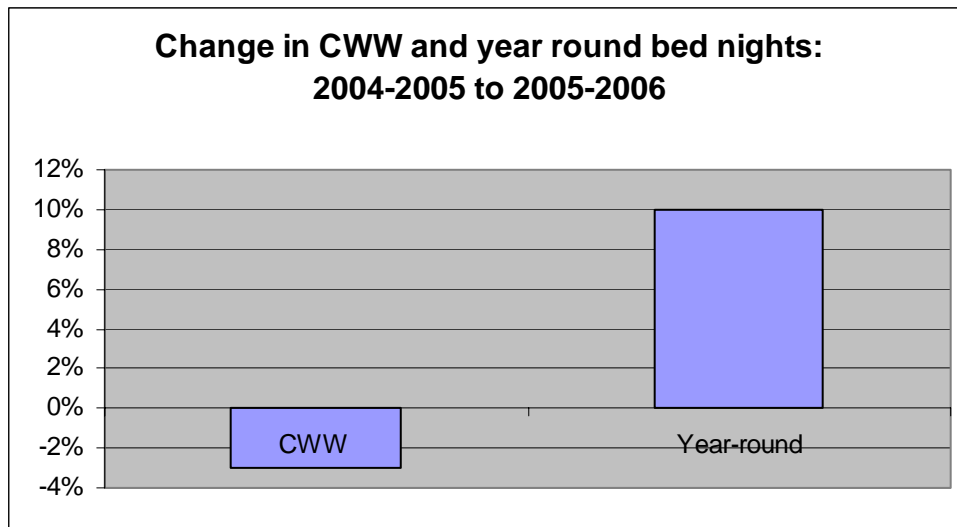
October 2005 through April 2006

MEN/WOMEN	Cold/Wet Weather			Year-Round			Combined		
	BN avail	BN used	Occup.	BN avail	BN used	Occup.	BN avail	BN used	Occup.
Anchor of Hope	7,550	6,766	90%	-	-	N/a	7,550	6,766	90%
Belkin House	-	-	N/a	14,628	14,076	96%	14,628	14,076	96%
Caring Place	4,326	2,737	63%	4,870	4,142	85%	9,196	6,879	75%
Crosswalk	-	-	N/a	7,420	6,701	90%	7,420	6,701	90%
First Baptist Church	-	-	N/a	1,060	1,092	103%	1,060	1,092	103%
Gateway	5,364	4,240	79%	-	-	N/a	5,364	4,240	79%
Hyland House	-	-	N/a	7,499	7,777	103%	7,499	7,777	104%
Lookout Downtown	-	-	N/a	9,640	9,384	97%	9,640	9,384	97%
North Shore	3,234	3,057	95%	5,375	5,257	98%	8,609	8,314	97%
Grandview Baptist Ch.	1,975	1,550	78%	-	-	N/a	1,975	1,550	78%
10th Avenue Alliance	-	-	N/a	650	672	103%	650	672	103%
Triage	-	-	N/a	5,964	5,964	100%	5,964	5,964	100%
Yukon	5,867	5,519	94%	7,596	7,296	96%	13,463	12,815	95%
Subtotal	28,316	23,869	84%	64,702	62,361	96%	93,018	86,230	93%
MEN									
The Beacon	8,760	8,364	95%	-	-	N/a	8,760	8,364	95%
Catholic Charities	1,680	1,680	100%	19,412	18,713	96%	21,092	20,393	97%
The Haven	-	-	N/a	8,460	8,426	100%	8,460	8,426	100%
Richmond House	93	93	100%	1,844	1,750	95%	1,937	1,843	95%
Stevenson House	-	-	N/a	2,120	1,997	94%	2,120	1,997	94%
Tri-Cities Mat Program	-	-	N/a	848	475	56%	848	475	56%
Union Gospel Mission	-	-	N/a	7,632	7,287	95%	7,632	7,287	95%
The Way (Garfield Hotel)	2,160	1,470	68%	4,028	3,993	99%	6,188	5,463	88%
Subtotal	12,693	11,607	91%	44,344	42,641	6	57,037	54,248	95%
WOMEN/FAMILIES									
Bridge	-	-	N/a	2,556	2,536	99%	2,556	2,536	99%
Fraserside	-	-	N/a	2,544	2,080	82%	2,544	2,080	82%
Powell Place	-	-	N/a	5,538	5,388	97%	5,538	5,388	97%
St. Elizabeth Home	-	-	N/a	6,816	7,259	106%	6,816	7,259	106%
Sheena's Place	184	42	23%	3,872	3,321	86%	4,056	3,363	83%
Umbrella	3,926	3,722	95%	-	-	N/a	3,926	3,722	95%
Vi Fineday	-	-	N/a	3,816	2,821	74%	3,816	2,821	74%
Subtotal	4,110	3,764	92%	25,142	23,405	93%	29,252	27,169	93%
YOUTH									
Aboriginal Safe House	-	-	N/a	1,477	1,233	83%	1,477	1,233	83%
Covenant House	-	-	N/a	4,664	4,766	102%	4,664	4,766	102%
Iron Horse Youth S.H.	-	-	N/a	1,060	626	59%	1,060	626	59%
N.S. Youth Safe House	-	-	N/a	1,724	1,124	65%	1,724	1,124	65%
Walden Safe House	-	-	N/a	1,786	1,624	91%	1,786	1,624	91%
Subtotal	-	-	N/a	10,711	9,373	86%	10,711	9,373	88%
Grand total	45,119	39,240	87%	144,899	137,780	95%	190,018	177,020	93%

Bed nights available

As shown in the preceding table, the total number of bed nights available in Greater Vancouver in the 2005-2006 cold, wet weather season (October 1 through April 30) was approximately 190,018.⁷ This represents a 6% increase over 2004-2005 (178,934 bed nights).

The 2005-2006 figures show 45,119 CWW bed nights available, compared with 46,626 in the preceding year and 37,761 in 2003-2004. This represents a 3% decrease in CWW services available, compared to an average increase over the preceding six years of approximately 22%. Meanwhile year-round bed nights available increased 10% to 144,899 (from 132,308 in 2004-2005). These numbers indicate a turning point toward year-round service provision.



Occupancy rates and bed nights used

As also shown in the table, the average occupancy rate for all emergency shelter spaces during this period was 93%, up from 92%. The average occupancy rate for CWW shelters was 87%, compared to 86% in the preceding year and 88% in 2003-2004. The total number of reported bed nights used was 177,020, up 7% from 164,756 in 2004-2005.

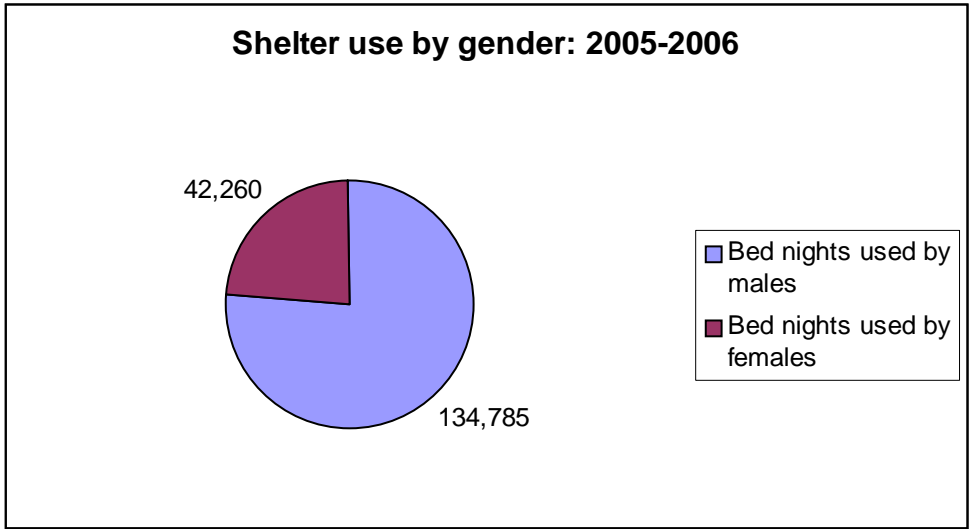
These figures suggest that the shelter system experienced increase pressure despite the slightly increased volume of services. Once again, growth in demand during the 2005-2006 season outpaced expansion of supply.

Service use by gender

Proportionate use of the shelter system by females declined, with use of bed nights by males up 11% and use by females up just 1%. Males used 76% of bed nights and females used approximately 24%. In the preceding year these figures were 74% and 26% respectively. This shift was likely due to the proportionate reduction of women's beds in 2005-2006, as shown on page 10.

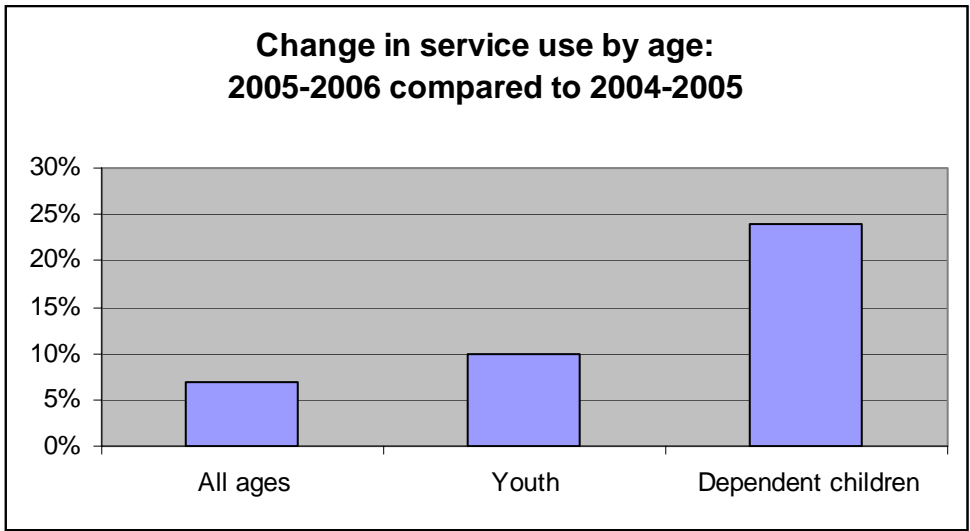
⁷ All figures for 2005-2006 are complete except for February, March and April statistics for North Shore Youth Safe House and April statistics for 10th Avenue Alliance. The service providers were unable to provide that data.

As shown in the following table, service providers reported approximately 134,785 bed nights provided to males during the October 2005 through April 2006 period and 42,260 provided to females.⁸



Service use by age

The shelter system served proportionately more children and youth in the 2005-2006 season. Service providers reported 4,989 bed nights provided to youth (aged 18 or under) in 2005-2006, up approximately 10% from the previous year (from 4,515). They reported 5,919 bed nights provided to dependent children, up approximately 24% from the previous year.⁹



⁸ In addition, 52 bed nights were reportedly used by transgender adults.

⁹ Figures for dependent children for 2004-2005 were incomplete because numbers for one service provider did not break out children and adults.

Bed Nights Used by Gender and Age: October 2005 through April 2006

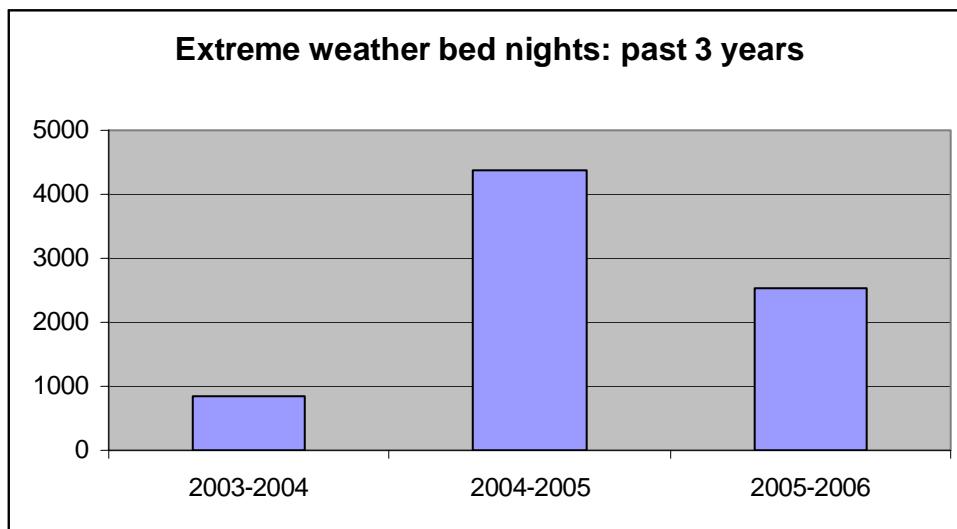
	Adult Males	Adult Females	Youth Males	Youth Females	Dependent Males	Dependent Females	Total Males	Total Females
MEN/WOMEN								
Anchor of Hope	6,142	624	-	-	-	-	6,142	624
Belkin House	9,638	4,265	-	-	86	87	9,724	4,352
Caring Place	5,987	892	-	-	-	-	5,987	892
Crosswalk	6,397	304	-	-	-	-	6,397	304
First Baptist Church	991	89	-	-	4	8	995	97
Gateway	3,913	327	-	-	-	-	3,913	327
Hyland House	6,765	1,012	-	-	-	-	6,765	1,012
Lookout Downtown	7,756	1,733	-	-	-	-	7,756	1,733
North Shore	7,142	1,172	-	-	-	-	7,142	1,172
Grandview Baptist Ch.	1,400	150	-	-	-	-	1,400	150
10th Avenue Alliance	630	42	-	-	-	-	630	42
Triage	4,028	1,908	-	-	-	-	4,028	1,908
Yukon	9,864	2,951	-	-	-	-	9,864	2,951
Subtotal	70,653	15,469	-	-	90	95	70,743	15,564
MEN								
The Beacon	8,364	-	-	-	-	-	8,364	-
Catholic Charities	20,393	-	-	-	-	-	20,393	-
The Way (Garfield Hotel)	5,463	-	-	-	-	-	5,463	-
The Haven	8,426	-	-	-	-	-	8,426	-
Richmond House	1,843	-	-	-	-	-	1,843	-
Stevenson House	1,997	-	-	-	-	-	1,997	-
Tri-Cities Mat Program	475	-	-	-	-	-	475	-
Union Gospel Mission	7,287	-	-	-	-	-	7,287	-
Subtotal	54,248	-	-	-	-	-	54,248	-
WOMEN/FAMILIES								
Bridge	-	2,536	-	-	-	-	-	2,536
Fraserside	339	1,047	-	-	354	340	693	1,387
Powell Place	-	5,388	-	-	-	-	-	5,388
St. Elizabeth Home	-	4,577	-	-	1,329	1,353	1,329	5,930
Sheena's Place	-	2,263	-	-	551	549	551	2,812
Umbrella	-	3,722	-	-	-	-	-	3,722
Vi Fineday	415	1,253	-	-	594	559	1,009	1,812
Subtotal	754	20,786	-	-	2,828	2,901	3,582	23,587
YOUTH								
Aboriginal Safe House	-	-	765	468	-	-	765	468
Covenant House	3,110	1,222	255	127	-	-	3,365	1,349
Iron Horse Youth S.H.	-	-	429	197	-	-	429	197
N.S. Youth Safe House	-	-	720	404	-	-	720	404
Walden Safe House	-	-	933	691	-	-	933	691
Subtotal	3,110	1,222	3,102	1,887	-	-	6,212	3,109
TOTAL	128,765	37,477	3,102	1,887	2,919	2,996	134,785	42,260

Extreme weather response

In 2005-2006 two communities implemented extreme weather responses for the first time: Burnaby and the North Shore. Greater Vancouver communities called a response for widely variable numbers of nights, responding to locally unique conditions, as follows:

- Burnaby – 2 nights
- New Westminster – 18 nights
- Langley – 9 nights
- North Shore – 14 nights
- Surrey – 4 nights
- Vancouver – 29 nights
- Aboriginal – 5 nights.

Greater Vancouver extreme weather sheltering sites reported a total of 2,517 bed nights provided in 2005-2006, compared with 4,378 during the 2004-2005 season and 837 in the preceding season.



Numbers of people turned away

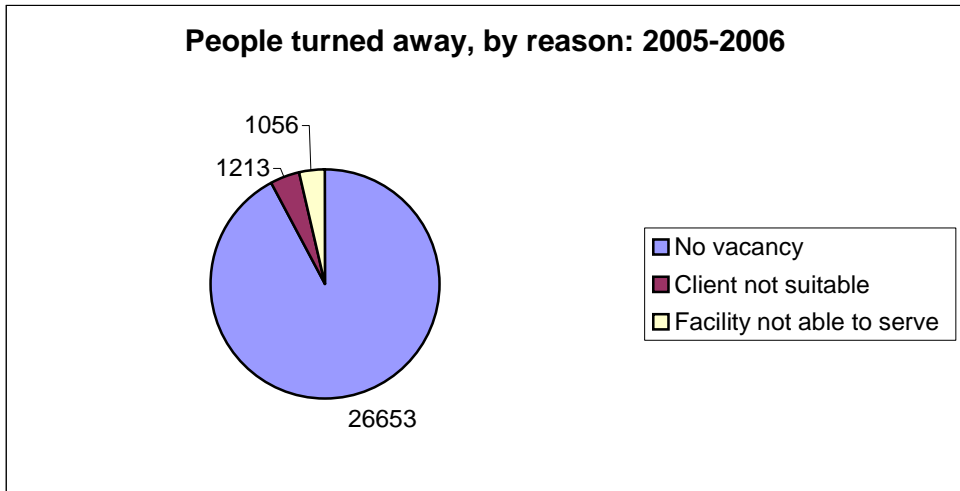
Service providers reported a total of 28,922 incidences of turning people away during the October through April period, a 9% increase over the previous year (26,527 incidences were reported in 2004-2005).¹⁰ As shown in the following table, 26,653 of these (92%) were due to no vacancy, 1,213 (4%) were due to the condition or state of the client (“client not suitable”) and 1,056 (4%) were due to the facility not being able to serve the needs of the client (e.g., men-only facility). This percentage split was the same in the previous year.

¹⁰ The CWWS acknowledges that figures for incidence of turn-away reflect a roll-up of statistics from a diversity of service providers with variable capacity and methodology for recording these incidences.

Incidence of People Being Turned Away: October 2005 through April 2006

MEN/WOMEN	Reason for Turnaway			Total Turnaways
	Full	Client Not Suitable	Facility Not Able to Serve Client	
Anchor of Hope	950	7	29	986
Belkin House	1,543	42	12	1,597
Caring Place	31	17	-	48
Crosswalk	1,040	5	-	1,045
First Baptist Church	18	-	-	18
Gateway	59	1	1	61
Hyland House	2,001	117	9	2,127
Lookout Downtown	1,460	64	13	1,537
North Shore	443	13	101	557
Grandview Baptist Ch.	28	-	-	28
10th Avenue Alliance	91	2	-	93
Triage	3,849	-	-	3,849
Yukon	493	10	4	507
Subtotal	12,006	278	169	12,453
MEN				
The Beacon	561	4	-	565
Catholic Charities	485	4	-	489
The Haven	5,258	-	1	5,259
Richmond House	188	1	-	189
Stevenson House	9	-	-	9
Tri-Cities Mat Program	-	-	-	-
Union Gospel Mission	330	-	-	330
The Way (Garfield Hotel)	4	-	-	4
Subtotal	6,835	9	1	6,845
WOMEN/FAMILIES				
Bridge	1,648	-	-	1,648
Fraserside	639	37	134	810
Powell Place	1,480	35	23	1,538
St. Elizabeth Home	1,705	8	9	1,722
Sheena's Place	89	342	159	590
Umbrella	445	6	6	457
Vi Fineday	175	81	337	593
Subtotal	6,181	509	668	7,358
YOUTH				
Aboriginal Safe House	215	121	21	357
Covenant House	1,097	105	103	1,305
Iron Horse Youth S.H.	30	24	2	56
N.S. Youth Safe House	40	28	21	89
Walden Safe House	249	139	71	459
Subtotal	1,631	417	218	2,266
Grand total	26,653	1,213	1,056	28,922

The following chart provides a visual illustration of incidences of people turned away, by reason.



Other outcomes

The following table shows a summary of CWWS participant survey results on how effective the strategy has been in terms of 5 additional outcomes. Compared to the preceding year, respondents rated performance on all 5 of these outcomes more positively.

CWWS Participant Survey Results (n=13)

Outcome	Agree	Neutral or not sure	Disagree	No answer
Improved planning and coordination of shelter resources.	92%	8%	0%	0%
Increased collaboration and sharing of resources among shelter providers (managers and staff).	85%	15%	0%	0%
Increased community and government preparedness for cold/wet and extreme weather.	92%	8%	0%	0%
Improved community and government understanding of shelter needs.	77%	23%	0%	0%
Improved contracting for CWW services, including policy, procedures for working with local shelters (e.g. referrals) and funding.	62%	28%	0%	0%

Asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the CWWS group over the past year, 77% of survey respondents indicated “very effective”, 23% indicated “effective”, and none indicated “neutral or not sure”, “ineffective” or “very ineffective”. This response, significantly more positive than in the previous year, suggests that participants felt the Strategy had become more effective in producing valuable results.

4.0 Conclusion

This evaluation of the Cold/Wet Weather Strategy's eighth year has documented overall performance in terms of what outputs were completed and what outcomes were achieved.

The following are some highlights of CWWS activities and outputs in 2005-2006:

- 6 Committee of the Whole meetings and 12 meetings of various subcommittees;
- Continuation of expanded shelter statistics collection to include year-round as well as seasonal shelters for the October through April period;
- Supported extreme weather responses across the region during three cold snaps;
- Hosted a full-day media relations workshop;
- Created the 2006-2008 Shelter Service Plan.

Analysis of the outcome evidence suggests several key conclusions:

1. The shift from CWW to year-round services began in 2005-2006, with the first-ever decrease in the number of CWW bed nights available since the Strategy began implementation in 1998-1999.
2. Rates of increase in shelter demand continued to outpace rates of increase in supply: while overall shelter supply increased 6% over the preceding year, occupancy rates rose to 93% (from 92%) and incidence of people being turned away rose by 9%.
3. Relative supply of beds for women declined, which was likely the primary factor in proportionate use of the shelter system by females also declining. Use of bed nights by males up was up by 11%, whereas use by females up just 1%.
4. Proportionate use by youth and children both rose, with use of bed nights by independent youth up 10% and use by dependent children up approximately 24%.

These statistics suggest some alarming trends:

- Growth in emergency shelter demand outpacing growth in supply suggests that the overall continuum of housing services remained inadequate.
- Increased use of the shelter system by children and youth could be an early warning that inter-generational homelessness is on the rise.
- Reduced supply of women's shelter services means decreased access for a population group that was already underserved, as indicated by relatively high turn away statistics reported in the 2004-2005 evaluation report.

Overall, however, the Strategy performed well in responding to shelter needs during the winter months. Expansion of the community based Extreme Weather Response program was a continued positive trend. In addition, the shift from CWW to year-round shelter services suggests that the regional shelter system turned a corner.

While the Strategy has achieved significant progress, much remains to be done to achieve the vision of "accessible, high quality emergency shelter services as part of a continuum of housing and supports".