

# Final Report

## Minister Doug Griffiths - Mission to China

### October 11 to 20, 2013

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#### Overview:

The Honourable Doug Griffiths visited Shanghai and Harbin, China between October 12 and 20, 2013. The Shanghai portion of the mission focused around the Shanghai International Disaster Reduction and Security (SIDRS) Show, held from October 17-19. The Harbin portion of the mission focused on follow-up to Premier Redford's September visit to Harbin and centred around potential joint work that the two sister provinces can undertake together in the years ahead.

The visits followed closely after significant flooding events in both cities – Harbin experienced floods in the summer of 2013, and Shanghai experienced a 1 in 50 year precipitation event in October 2013. The fact that both cities and Alberta had all experienced, very recently, significant flooding challenges made the visits to the two cities very timely from the perspective of shared experiences and shared knowledge.

#### Mission Objectives:

The following objectives were successfully met during the Minister's mission:

1. Build Alberta's reputation as a global citizen by building relationships with key emergency management partners in China.
2. Support Alberta companies interested in the China market.
3. Discuss joint work with sister province of Heilongjiang.

#### Results:

The meetings in Harbin followed closely after meetings held between Premier Redford and Governor Lu on September 23, 2013. While in Harbin, the Minister met with his Ministerial counterpart from the province of Harbin's emergency management agency, along with his senior management team. It was agreed at the meeting that the two governments would explore possible cooperation and exchange of information on a number of different matters relating to disaster response and recovery including the following:

1. Consider establishment of a mechanism for information exchange;
2. Consider joint tours by staff of the two government's respective mitigation efforts;
3. Share information on disaster assistance made available to individuals;
4. Discuss community level disaster management in contrast to province-wide disaster management – strengths and weaknesses;

5. Consider an exchange of key personnel to share learnings and possibly undertake joint training;
6. Discuss decision making structures; and,
7. Share information on lessons learned with respect to the flooding in 2013.

The Minister later participated in a Heilongjiang-Alberta symposium on disaster response and recovery. The symposium focused primarily on the Alberta disaster response system and recovery efforts undertaken to date. During the symposium senior staff from both provinces actively engaged in a discussion about the experiences of 2013 and possible parallels between the way in which both provinces responded to similar challenges.

While in Shanghai, the Minister attended the Shanghai International Disaster Reduction and Security (SIDRS) Show, which brought together senior officials and industry exhibitors focused on disaster response and recovery. Representatives from two Alberta companies attended the Show and networked with Chinese counterparts with respect to possible joint opportunities. Also, during the SIDRS, the Minister met with senior Chinese officials from many major cities and provinces within China and had an opportunity to discuss disaster response and recovery models, approaches and strategies.

In addition to the SIDRS Show, the Minister also held separate meetings with his counterpart with the Shanghai Government and his senior management team. Shanghai, in addition to being a large city (24 million current population) with the associated challenges of providing services to a concentrated population, faces regular flooding related challenges from frequent rainfall both inland and in the immediate area. Shanghai has developed a complex berm system which, while not necessarily applicable in an Alberta setting, represents a leading practice in terms of a creative solution to a persistent flooding challenge. The Minister also met the Vice Chairman of Shanghai's Commission of Commerce, which is the equivalent of the city's economic development to discuss municipal governance issues and the impact of disaster mitigation on local economies.

Finally, the Minister met with the Shanghai Ministry of Transport air rescue service to discuss that organization's rescue capabilities. The willingness of the Shanghai air rescue service to offer training opportunities for similar teams from elsewhere in the world was discussed, as Shanghai is seeking to build a centre of excellence around their existing capacities.

**Delegation:**

Honourable Doug Griffiths  
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Tim Morrison  
Chief of Staff to the Minister of Municipal Affairs