

# CatIQ Connect, Canada's Catastrophe Conference, described as 'Where Worst Case Meets Best Practice'



**Toronto, February 12, 2020** – The fifth annual Canadian catastrophe conference, CatIQ Connect, was held over three days last week, Feb 3-5, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. More than 235 delegates attended the event, including catastrophe risk professionals and emergency managers from across Canada, the United States, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom. This year featured a great recap of the outstanding initiatives underway across the country, as well as discussions on the work yet to be done.

Delegates participated in a workshop developed by the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>. The CRC led the participants through a wildfire simulation to present the challenges faced in a disaster. From the second part of the workshop, the CRC will use the valuable insights from the diverse participants to contribute to their report on the role of a national flood insurance program in assisting individuals and small business affected by disasters.

“As someone who works with the communities most vulnerable to natural disaster impacts, I appreciated learning about the growing challenges facing the catastrophe

management industry,” said Marjorie Brans, Director of Ecosystem Impact, School for Social Entrepreneurs Canada. “CatIQ Connect is a critical gathering where industry players can pool their creativity and rise to the challenge.”

Climate change and the need for resilient infrastructure were featured prominently in the conversation, as well as conversations around a high-risk flood insurance pool. “We are entering an unprecedented period of collaboration on climate resilience between the federal government and the insurance sector,” observed Craig Stewart, Vice President Federal Affairs at IBC. “As evidenced by the broad federal representation at this year’s event, CatIQ Connect provided a timely opportunity to share our mutual progress in the interest of consumers.”

Further discussion included how we can become more resilient to different types of severe events, such as earthquakes, wind, hail, flooding, and the mental health impacts of home and business owners, first responders and claims teams. Alister Campbell, President & CEO of PACICC described CatIQ Connect as a forum “where worst case meets best practice!” Having a plan in place before a disaster is important to ensuring a smooth recovery process, and CatIQ Connect supports the collaboration needed in the industry and across sectors.

Over 25 organizations participated as sponsors or partners of the event, including CRU Group, The Co-operators and IBC as Platinum Sponsors. Other sponsors included major reinsurance brokers, reinsurance companies, flood risk organizations, cat modelers, imagery specialists, and restoration and emergency management companies.

The success of the 2020 CatIQ Connect event was driven by the oversight of an outstanding Steering Committee. Representation included:

- **Jim Abraham**, President, ClimAction Services Inc.
- **William Belzile**, Geographic Information System Advisor, Desjardins General Insurance Group
- **Alister Campbell**, CEO, PACICC
- **Claudette Cantin**, Chief Actuary and CRO, Munich Re Canada
- **Paul Cutbush**, SVP, Catastrophe Management, Aon

- **Esaie Djossou**, AVP of Reinsurance, CAT Underwriting, International Underwriting and Data & Insights functions, Aviva Canada
- **Dr. David Etkin**, Professor, Disaster and Emergency Management, York University
- **Dr. Blair Feltmate**, Head, Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation, University of Waterloo
- **Dr. Maryam Golnaraghi**, Director, Climate Change & Emerging Environmental Topics, Geneva Association
- **Sean Hobson**, VP, National Programs, WINMAR (Canada) International Ltd.
- **Glenn McGillivray**, Managing Director, ICLR
- **Ryaz Mohamed**, Director, Corporate Reinsurance, The Co-operators Group
- **Shawna Peddle**, Program Director, Community Economic Development Funds, The Co-operators Group
- **Sean Russell**, Managing Director, Guy Carpenter
- **Craig Stewart**, VP, Federal Affairs, IBC
- **Geneviève Thouin**, Project Director, MCIP, FCM
- **Dwayne Torrey**, Director, Construction & Infrastructure Standards, CSA Group
- **Laura Twidle**, Managing Director, CatIQ
- **Rebecca Wagner**, Associate Director, MSC, ECCC
- **Kyle Winston**, President, CRU Group Inc.
- **Anna Ziolecki**, Director, Partners for Action

CatIQ Connect will return to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre February 1-3, 2021. [View 2020 event photos.](#)