

**THE ENGLISH VERSION IS THE AUTHORITATIVE
VERSION OF THIS REPORT**

Nunavut Emergency Management

**Department of Community
and Government Services**



Annual Report: 2023- 2024

Nunavut Emergency Management



Table of Contents

Message from the Honorable Minister David Joanasié	3
Introduction	4
Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) Training	5
Search and Rescue Response	6
Search and Rescue by Community Statistics	7
Community Emergency Preparedness	8
Training	8
CERP Training Statistics	9
Community Emergency Response	10
Kinngait - Request for Assistance	10
Bathurst Inlet Wildfire – Territorial State of Emergency	10
Local State of Emergency – Arviat and Pangnirtung	11
NEM Program Support Resources	12
Community Outreach	12
Rescue Kits	13
Closing	15

Message from the Honorable Minister David Joanasie

As the Minister responsible for the Department of Community and Government Services, I am pleased to present the Nunavut Emergency Management Annual Report for 2023-2024. This report documents our commitment to ensuring the safety and security of the lives and livelihoods of our fellow Nunavummiut in times of extreme challenge and adversity.

The Nunavut Emergency Management (NEM) Division serves and supports territorial emergency measures, Search and Rescue operations and government business continuity throughout Nunavut. NEM plays an important role in ensuring that our communities are resilient from all forms of disaster through prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures.



I extend my gratitude to the dedicated volunteers and civil servants of our territory who prepare and are ready to answer the call in times of crisis. Their dedication and efforts serve as a testament to the strength and resilience of our territory.

David Joanasie
Minister, Community and Government Services



Introduction

The Nunavut Emergency Management (NEM) division is resolute in its commitment to advancing safety and emergency preparedness initiatives across the vast expanse of Nunavut. With a dedicated team, NEM strives to ensure staff maintain an understanding of the local landscape and cultural nuances integral to effective emergency management.

Part of NEM's mandate is the oversight of search and rescue (SAR) operations and the development of comprehensive emergency preparedness plans tailored to the needs of Nunavut's diverse communities. Through collaborative efforts, NEM assists communities in developing their own emergency plan while also enhancing ground search and rescue (GSAR) capabilities through training, education and the provision of essential equipment and communication systems. By fostering collaboration with government divisions and departments, NEM works to ensure the development of emergency plans and business continuity strategies that are both robust and culturally relevant, ensuring the seamless coordination of response efforts in times of crisis.

To that end, NEM remains dedicated to improving programs and services for community stakeholders by delivering relevant northern-based training that aligns with mandatory territorial and federal legislation regarding emergency management. Through ongoing engagement and consultation, NEM continues to refine its organizational structure to better meet the operational needs of communities across Nunavut. Some of the ongoing initiatives and priorities for NEM include:

- Ongoing collaboration with GN divisions and departments to develop emergency plans/business continuity plans and map out their emergency preparedness;
- Enhancing community-based searches by improving the SAR program through training and assistance with equipment and communication systems;
- Improving programs and services for community stakeholders by developing and implementing relevant northern-based training that meets or exceeds national search and rescue standards, and delivering ongoing training to meet the unique needs of each community; and
- Ensuring NEM's organizational structure aligns with operational needs.

This report provides an overview of the key operations undertaken by NEM throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) Training

NEM, in collaboration with Nunavut Municipal Training Organization, was able to deliver five Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) training courses in 2023-2024 costing \$224,000. These trainings were a success, with forty-five participants across the five training sessions delivered.

Ground Search and Rescue Training is a key function of NEM to ensure communities are provided with the necessary training and resources to respond to emergency situations. The training provided is Nunavut specific SAR training that focuses on issues faced by Nunavut communities. This program was developed in collaboration with the MTO and Arctic Response. Key training in the program included:

- Training on the Garmin In-Reach units. These units are distributed to SAR groups to assist with real-time two-way communication via text with their search coordinator and NEM
- Utilization of the “Go Bags” that were and continue to be distributed to communities to ensure SAR volunteers have safety equipment available to them when deployed on a search
- Search techniques used in Arctic operations
- Lost person behaviour

These training sessions increased the proficiency and safety of SAR operations and volunteer skills and the continued integration of new technology to improve communication speed.

Community	Participants
Cambridge Bay	3
Kugluktuk	8
Kinngait	18
Pangnirtung	4
Clyde River	12

Table 1: 2023-2024 number of participants in each community where GSAR training occurred.



Search and Rescue Response

Search and rescue operations in Nunavut represent a critical lifeline for residents navigating the rugged terrain and extreme weather conditions of Canada's northernmost territory. Ground and in-land water search and rescue is the responsibility of the territorial government. In other jurisdictions it is covered under the Community Police Service Agreement. Nunavut presents unique challenges and demands a highly coordinated and adaptive approach to search and rescue efforts. This can include active engagement with other GN divisions and departments, territorial partners, federal partners, industry, and private enterprise. From assisting individuals stranded in harsh winter conditions to responding to emergencies in remote areas, search and rescue teams in Nunavut demonstrate dedication and courage in their mission to save lives. NEM coordinates with local search and rescue volunteer groups in the municipalities to ensure that guidance, training and support are available. On-the-land medivacs are the responsibility of the Department of Health. NEM's role is to assist in locating air and ground support as needed. This is covered under the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Community and Government Services (CGS) and Department of Health.

Figure 2: Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) of Canada



Canada's SAR Response Authorities	
Type of SAR Incident	Lead Authority
✦ Aircraft Incidents Anywhere in Canada	Canadian Armed Forces
✦ Maritime incidents On the oceans, coastal waters, and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River system	Canadian Coast Guard
✦ Ground and Inland Water (GSAR) On land (e.g., hikers, hunters, lost persons); On inland waterways (e.g., pleasure boaters, anglers, paddlers)	Provincial/territorial governments; usually delegated to the jurisdictional police force
✦ Marine Conservation Areas On land (e.g., hikers, mountain bikers); On inland waterways (e.g., anglers, paddlers)	Parks Canada Agency

Source: Quadrennial Search and Rescue Review, Government of Canada, 2013

Figure 2: Canada's SAR Response Authorities



Search and Rescue by Community Statistics

April 1 – March 31 2023-2024

Community	# of Taskings
Arctic Bay	3
Arviat	6
Baker Lake	10
Cambridge Bay	2
Kinngait (Cape Dorset)	2
Chesterfield Inlet	2
Clyde River	5
Coral Harbour	4
Gjoa Haven	9
Grise Fiord	0
Sanirajak (Hall Beach)	12
Igloolik	10
Iqaluit	5
Kimmirut	1
Kugaaruk	6
Kugluktuk	0
Pangnirtung	1
Pond Inlet	9
Qikiqtarjuaq	0
Rankin Inlet	7
Naujaat (Repulse Bay)	2
Resolute Bay	1
Sanikiluaq	6
Taloyoak	5
Whale Cove	2
Total	110

Table 2: 2023-2024 Community Numbers of SAR Undertaken

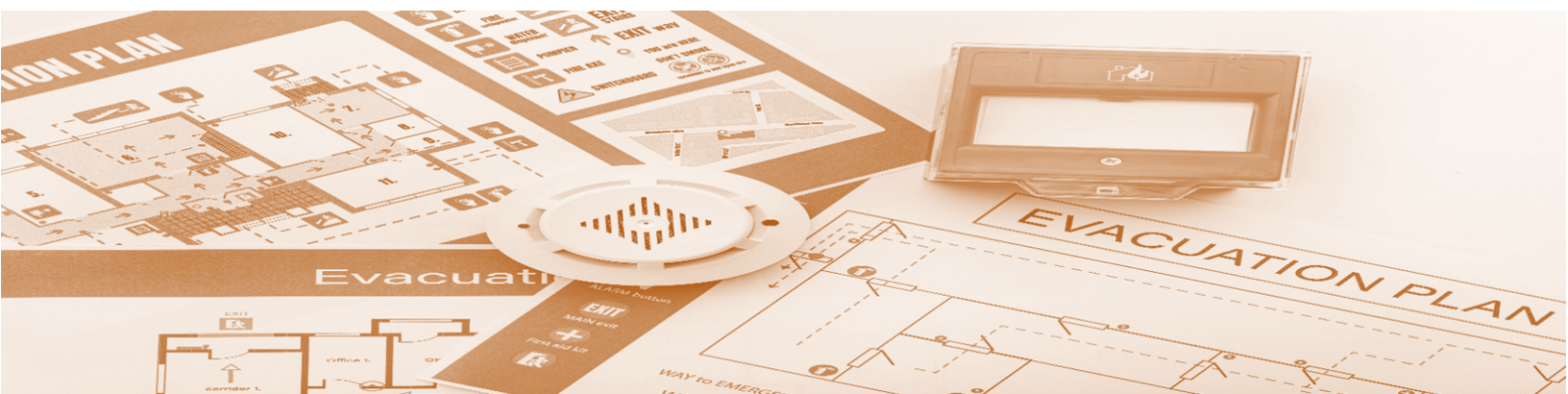
Community Emergency Preparedness

Training

Through the Nunavut Municipal Training Organization, NEM continues to deliver Community Emergency Response training to communities across Nunavut that supplements and supports the development and upkeep of the Community Emergency Response Plans (CERP) which are required under the Emergency Measures Act (EMA). The training is a three-day course that provides municipalities with an all-hazards approach framework to assist in planning and organization during an emergency. The training provides communities with the tools and knowledge necessary to respond to any potential emergency. Communities learn how to identify risks and the probability of occurrence using a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA).

The program helps to identify the community control groups made up of key players during an emergency, including:

- Mayors and Senior/Chief Administrative Officer (S/CAO)
- The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)
- Community health centre staff
- Department of Education
- Qulliq Energy Corporation
- Nunavut Airports
- Other hamlet staff and local leadership as required (community specific)





CERP Training Statistics

The Municipal Training Organization (MTO) received a contribution of \$285,000 through a contribution agreement from NEM to facilitate the provision of ten CERP courses to various communities across the territory. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the delivery of Community Emergency Response Plan (CERP) training to nine of the ten planned communities was completed at a total cost of \$247,975.

This training was delivered in Arviat, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Grise Fiord, Igloolik, Kinngait, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq, and Taloyoak. Training that had been scheduled for Resolute Bay was rescheduled to be hosted in Arctic Bay, however, was subsequently cancelled due to logistics.

Table 5: 2023-2024 Number of Participants in Each Community Where CERP Training Occurred

2023-2024 CERP Training		
Community	Registered Participants	Successful Participants
Arviat	20	20
Baker Lake	9	6
Cambridge Bay	8	8
Grise Fiord	13	7
Igloolik	18	14
Kinngait	14	11
Pond Inlet	6	4
Qikiqtarjuaq	13	11
Taloyoak	10	3
Total	111	84



Community Emergency Response

The Government of Nunavut responded to one formal Request for Assistance (RFA) in the Hamlet of Kinngait.

Kinngait - Request for Assistance

On May 15, 2023, the Hamlet of Kinngait made a request for assistance to the Government of Nunavut for direct support due to critical infrastructure failure of the community water system. An aircraft was chartered to deliver one potable water pump with supply hoses to support municipal fire suppression efforts while QEC and contracted services were engaged to identify and repair power issues to the pump house.

Declaring a local state of emergency on May 17, 2023, the Hamlet of Kinngait escalated their RFA, seeking full emergency assistance and resources from the Government of Nunavut. On the same day, Hon. David Joanase, Minister, Department of Community & Government Services declared a Territorial State of Emergency under the Emergency Measures Act, ending May 21, 2023, to ensure the resource and service needs of the Hamlet could be met. Support from the Government of Nunavut under this declaration included bottled water being flown in by air charter, arrangement for an environmental contractor to assist with a fuel spill in the community, and coordination with the Canadian Coast Guard spill response team for assistance with supporting clean-up efforts with equipment and supplies stationed in Kinngait.

Bathurst Inlet Wildfire – Territorial State of Emergency

With the 2023 wildfire season being unprecedented, Nunavut saw that direct threats to people, property and environment are presented in these types of events. On August 9, 2023, a wildfire threatening the seasonal community of Bathurst Inlet was reported. As the first reported wildfire event threatening a community in Nunavut's history, NEM was able to work closely with the Nunavut Fire Marshal's Office (NFM), Department of Environment, CGS, Department of Finance, the RCMP, and industry partner B2Goldmines. Multiple air charter services were also engaged for aerial fire suppression operations, aerial reconnaissance, and potential seasonal resident evacuation.

A Territorial State of Emergency was declared on August 10, 2023, by Hon. Minister David Joanase, Minister, Department of Community and Government Services, ending on August 18, 2023. With seasonal residents being temporarily evacuated to a B2Goldmine site located a safe distance from the affected area, the wildfire event was brought to a successful end and residents returned to their respective home communities just days later.

NEM Program Support Resources

Community Outreach

NEM's commitment to fostering a culture of education and preparedness in Nunavut extends beyond the development of traditional informational materials. Beginning in 2022-2023 NEM has worked to improve community outreach by diversifying its communication strategy. This effort has expanded community awareness of NEM through the use of posters, flyers, practical refrigerator magnets, and engaging handouts. NEM's educational resources served as tangible reminders of the importance of emergency preparedness and safety measures in every household and community centre across the territory through consistent messaging. NEM took the opportunity to attend conferences such as Nunavut Association of Municipalities (NAM) as well as take part as a presenter in inter-department seminars which have provided invaluable environments to share insights, information and resources related to emergency management.

NEM continues to distribute Winter and Summer self-reliance posters to all Nunavut communities. Continuing on from the 2022-2023 fiscal year, NEM developed new 72-hour preparedness refrigerator magnets, fliers, and Emergency Preparedness quick reference guides to support family awareness in Nunavut.



Figure 7: NEM Booth



Figure 8: NEM Brochures

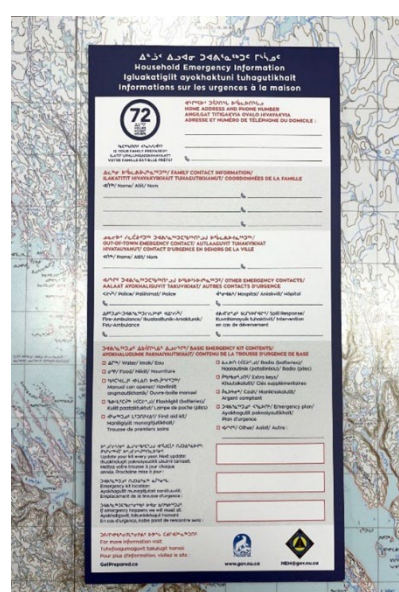


Figure 9: NEM 72 HOUR Pack Brochure

Rescue Kits

Go Bags

NEM remains committed to enhancing the capabilities of Search and Rescue operations across Nunavut. In line with this commitment, NEM continues to provide support to Municipal Ground Search and Rescue teams by supplying “Go Bags”. These bags are equipped with an array of essential survival items, carefully selected to ensure the safety and well-being of responders in even the most challenging circumstances. From tarps and snow knives, to mittens, toques, sleeping bags and signal mirrors, each item is chosen to empower responders to face the unpredictable realities of the land with confidence and resilience. NEM ensures that GSAR teams are prepared and safe so they can focus on the search at hand when called to do so.

Figure 10: NEM “Go Bag”



GPS and InReach

Over the years, NEM has continued to enhance responder safety by providing all GSAR teams across Nunavut with the Garmin 276cx GPS units and InReach devices. These cutting-edge tools represent a significant advancement in navigation and communication capabilities for our responders. The Garmin 276cx GOS units are renowned for their user-friendly interface and durability, specifically tailored to excel in the challenging Arctic environment. Paired with the InReach device, which offers reliable two-way communication and emergency SOS functionality, these tools empower GSAR responders to navigate treacherous terrain with precision and maintain vital contact with command centers. By equipping GSAR teams with these technologies, NEM is not only enhancing the safety of responders but also bolstering the efficiency of search and rescue operations across Nunavut. With these resources at their disposal, GSAR teams are better equipped than ever to save lives and ensure the well-being of those in need across the territory.



Figure 11: Garmin GPS 276cx and InReach Communication

Community SPOT program

NEM continues its commitment to providing vital support to communities across Nunavut through the ongoing delivery of the Community SPOT program. With over 500 SPOT devices strategically distributed throughout the territory, the program has proven instrumental in significantly reducing search times and expediting rescue efforts for individuals facing distress or becoming lost out on the land. Accessible through a sign-out process that is free of charge in all municipalities, these life-saving devices offer peace-of-mind to residents. To ensure ease of use for all users, NEM has undertaken the translation of instructional cards into all official languages, facilitating quick reference to the device’s functions in times of need.

Moreover, to maintain the program’s effectiveness, municipalities adhere to a structured schedule for replenishing batteries and operation cards, ensuring that each device remains fully functional and ready



for deployment at a moment's notice. It is the collective responsibility of municipalities to oversee the maintenance of the equipment, promptly reporting any instances of loss or damage to NEM for replacement.

Closing

The Nunavut Emergency Management Division remains committed to supporting and developing the safety, security and resilience of Nunavut's communities through training and education in addition to providing advice and guidance. The 2023-2024 fiscal year saw both achievements and challenges, in which lessons were learned as we continue to improve how we do business on a daily basis. Moving forward, NEM remains dedicated to ensuring active support to communities, strengthening capabilities, and fostering a culture of preparedness. By ensuring NEM staff have the tools, resources and supports needed to provide the same to our communities, we look forward to every future opportunity to ensure Nunavummiut have a safe community to live, work and play.

