



Resolution: Designating Sanirajak as the Regional Hub for Emergency Measures Services in Nunavut

Resolution Number: AGM 24-09

Title: Proposal to Establish Sanirajak as the Central Location for Nunavut Emergency Measures Services (EMS)

WHEREAS:

1. The establishment of a centralized Emergency Measures Services (EMS) hub is essential for efficient emergency response across Nunavut.
2. Sanirajak offers suitable infrastructure to support EMS operations, including available accommodations, a hangar for aircraft, and a runway capable of handling jets and Hercules planes, which is vital for rapid deployment during emergencies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Nunavut Association of Municipalities (NAM) formally supports the Hamlet of Sanirajak's proposal to become the designated EMS hub for the Nunavut region. Specifically:

1. NAM will advocate to the Government of Nunavut and relevant federal agencies for the establishment of an EMS base in Sanirajak to serve the entire territory.
2. NAM will highlight Sanirajak's existing infrastructure as an ideal location for EMS, allowing for efficient response and resource mobilization during emergencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

1. NAM will work in collaboration with the Hamlet of Sanirajak, emergency services stakeholders, and government authorities to assess the logistical and operational requirements for establishing an EMS hub.
2. NAM will support efforts to secure the necessary funding, resources, and personnel to establish a fully operational EMS facility in Sanirajak.

Supporting Information:

- **Rationale:** Establishing an EMS hub in Sanirajak provides a centralized, well-equipped location for rapid emergency response, benefiting all Nunavut communities by enhancing readiness and response capabilities.
- **Financial Impact:** Funding will be required for facility upgrades, staffing, and ongoing maintenance. However, these costs are offset by the benefits of a streamlined emergency response system.

- **Expected Benefits:** *Improved emergency response times, a centralized location for EMS resources, and enhanced safety*



January 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut representing the constituency of Amittuq, I am pleased to take this opportunity to write in support of the community of Sanirajak's longstanding call for the establishment of permanent search and rescue facilities and assets in our region of the territory.

The importance of Sanirajak's strategic and central location has long been recognized. I am pleased to note that the Nunavut Association of Municipalities recently passed a formal Resolution at its 2024 annual general meeting concerning this issue, a copy of which is attached for ease of reference. The Resolution states, in part, that:

"Whereas the establishment of a centralized Emergency Measures Services (EMS) hub is essential for efficient emergency response across Nunavut; and whereas Sanirajak offers suitable infrastructure to support EMS operations, including available accommodations, a hangar for aircraft, and a runway capable of handling jets and Hercules planes, which is vital for rapid deployment during emergencies. Therefore, be it resolved that the Nunavut Association of Municipalities formally supports the Hamlet of Sanirajak's proposal to become the designated EMS hub for the Nunavut region."

There have been a number of search and rescue incidents in the vicinity of Sanirajak and Igloodik in recent years. One of these incidents resulted in the tragic loss of life of a SAR Tech officer. I note that the 2024 edition of *The State of Search and Rescue in Nunavut* describe a recent search and rescue operation near Sanirajak:

"In March 2023, three harvesters – Joey Sarpinak, Sandy Kunuk, and 15-year-old John Kirk Amagoalik – left the community in a small aluminum boat to hunt walrus near the floe edge. Spotting a walrus, Kunuk shot at it three times before preparing a harpoon. At that moment, however, the wounded walrus surfaced at the back of the boat and began climbing on board, perhaps mistaking it for ice. The weight of the walrus caused the boat to capsize, and the three hunters were thrown into the water. Incredibly, despite being bogged down by their heavy clothing, each hunter was able to climb aboard the overturned hull. Still within cell phone range of the community, the three men were able to report their situation. Sanirajak's community SAR coordinator, George Innuksuk, immediately mobilized his volunteers ... they brainstormed solutions for how to get a rope

across to the stranded hunters, while the duty officer looked for air support, though he could find no helicopters with the hoist capability required to pluck the men from the capsized boat. Unfortunately, Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Trenton was only informed of the case four hours after the first distress call, causing a significant delay in deploying RCAF SAR aerial assets to the case."

Climate change and emerging challenges to Canada's Arctic sovereignty further reinforce the urgent need to make strategic investments in this area.

I look forward to tabling this correspondence and other relevant documents during the upcoming winter 2026 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abraham Qammaniq". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Abraham Qammaniq, MLA
Amittuq

c.c. Minister of National Defence
Minister responsible for Nunavut Emergency Management
Mayor and Council, Municipality of Sanirajak
President, Nunavut Association of Municipalities



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February 4, 2026

Hamlet of Iqaluit

Attention: Mayor and Council

[Dear Sir/Madam]

Re: Search and Rescue Base in Hamlet of Sanirajak

I am providing this letter seeking support from you with respect to the development of a Search and Rescue base in Sanirajak. As you are aware, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities passed a resolution in November 2024 in support of the initiative. Moreover, Sanirajak Council also passed a resolution in support of the Search and Rescue base in Sanirajak.

Current search and rescue coordination for Nunavut is covered by joint rescue coordination centers in either Trenton, Ontario or Halifax, Nova Scotia. We are all aware of the significant delay associated with meaningful responses to search and rescue given the locations of our respective municipalities in Nunavut. Much more rapid search and rescue capabilities are necessary and this, of course, was discussed and confirmed at the Nunavut Associations of Municipalities meeting in November 2024, The Hamlet of Sanirajak, given the support confirmed at the NAM meeting is currently moving forward in its efforts to develop a Search and Rescue base in Sanirajak. I am asking that you provide a letter of support for this initiative which will be shared with the Territorial Government along with the Government of Canada. In this regard, we can advise that the MLA for Amittuq, Abraham Qammaniq has already provided such a letter of support.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to this very important initiative as we all seek to provide further safety and security to our respective communities and for all residents of Nunavut.

Yours truly,

Mayor of Sanirajak
Manasee Ulayuk,