

# Nunavut Emergency Management

Department of Community and  
Government Services



## Annual Report: 2022-2023

Nunavut Emergency Management Services



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## 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 (NEM) Annual Report for 2022-2023.

NEM is committed to advancing the safety of Nunavummiut through territorial emergency preparedness and the direct support of Search and Rescue operations, ensuring our peoples' safety and security in the face of unforeseen challenges and emergencies.

I extend my gratitude to the dedicated individuals of our NEM Division and local Search and Rescue volunteers across our great territory who prepare and are ready to answer the call in times of crisis. Their dedication and tireless efforts serve as a testament to the strength and resilience of our territory.



**Hon. David Joanasie**  
**Minister, Community and Government Services**



## Introduction

The NEM division is committed to making a difference in the areas of safety and emergency preparedness in Nunavut. NEM oversees the provisions of search and rescue operations and emergency preparedness. The division is responsible for:

- Developing emergency preparedness plans and assisting Nunavut communities in creating their own plans; and
- Enhancing community-based ground search and rescue (GSAR) capabilities and preparedness across Nunavut by providing search and rescue (SAR) training to Search and Rescue Organizations and assisting with certain equipment and communication systems required to support local SAR operations.

NEM also provides advice, guidance, and ensures compliance with mandatory territorial and federal legislation as well as policy regarding emergency management. Some of the ongoing initiatives and priorities for NEM include:

- Collaborating 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 northern-based training to meet 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 fiscal year 2022-2023.



# Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) Training

NEM, in collaboration with the Nunavut Municipal Training Organization (MTO), was able to deliver seven Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) training sessions in 2022-2023 at a total cost of \$225,144.07. The training was a success with forty-four participants across the seven sessions.

Community GSAR training is a key function of NEM and strives to increase the effectiveness of community response in emergency situations. This training program was developed in collaboration with the MTO and Arctic Response and focuses on Nunavut specific training solutions including:

- Arctic Search and Rescue Technique.
- Lost person behavior.
- Training on the Garmin InReach units. These units are distributed to community 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.

The NEM training program impacts communities by increasing the proficiency and safety of local SAR operations. This includes expanding the skill set of volunteers and the continued integration of new technology.

*Table 1: 2022-2023 GSAR Community Training Numbers.*

Community	Number of Participants
Arctic Bay	5
Igloolik	5
Iqaluit	16
Kugaaruk	4
Resolute Bay	4
Sanikiluaq	8
Sanirajak	2





## 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 are 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. 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 1: Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) of Canada:



Canada's SAR Response Authorities	
Type of SAR Incident	Lead Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Aircraft Incidents</b>            Anywhere in Canada         </li> </ul>	Canadian Armed Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Maritime incidents</b>            On the oceans, coastal waters, and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River system         </li> </ul>	Canadian Coast Guard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Ground and Inland Water (GSAR)</b>            On land (e.g., hikers, hunters, lost persons);            On inland waterways (e.g., pleasure boaters, anglers, paddlers)         </li> </ul>	Provincial/territorial governments; usually delegated to the jurisdictional police force
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Marine Conservation Areas</b>            On land (e.g., hikers, mountain bikers);            On inland waterways (e.g., anglers, paddlers)         </li> </ul>	Parks Canada Agency

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

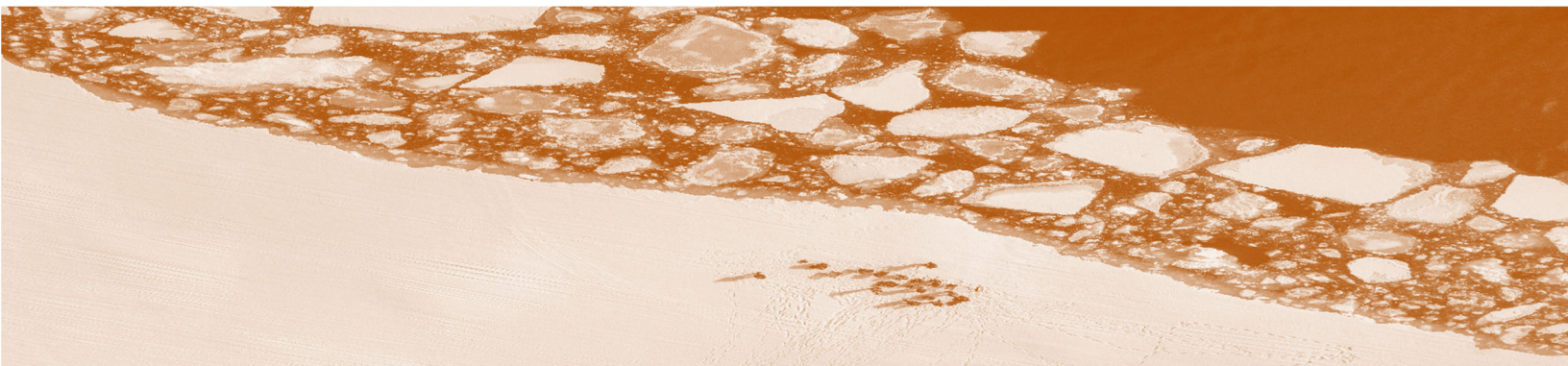
Figure 2: Canada's SAR Response Authorities



## Search and Rescue by Community Statistics

Table 2: SAR by Community 2022-2023.

Community	# of Tasking
Arctic Bay	4
Arviat	12
Baker Lake	19
Cambridge Bay	5
Kinngait (Cape Dorset)	4
Chesterfield Inlet	2
Clyde River	4
Coral Harbour	8
Gjoa Haven	10
Grise Fiord	0
Sanirajak (Hall Beach)	17
Igloolik	13
Iqaluit	2
Kimmirut	1
Kugaaruk	2
Kugluktuk	1
Pangnirtung	2
Pond Inlet	6
Qikiqtarjuaq	4
Rankin Inlet	7
Naujaat (Repulse Bay)	3
Resolute Bay	0
Sanikiluaq	11
Taloyoak	15
Whale Cove	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>





## Search and Rescue by Region Statistics

Table 3: SAR by Region 2022-2023.

Region	# of Tasking	Percentage of total Tasking
Qikiqtaaluk Region	68	44.2%
Kivalliq Region	53	34.4%
Kitikmeot Region	33	21.4%
Total	154	100%

## Search and Rescue by Month Statistics

Table 4: SAR by Month 2022-2023.

Month/year	# of Tasking	Percentage of total Tasking
April – 2022	19	12.3%
May – 2022	18	11.7%
June – 2022	15	9.7%
July – 2022	11	7.1%
August – 2022	16	10.4%
September – 2022	12	7.8%
October – 2022	12	7.8%
November – 2022	7	4.6%
December – 2022	18	11.7%
January – 2023	8	5.2%
February – 2023	6	3.9%
March – 2023	12	7.8%
Total	154	100%



# Community Emergency Preparedness

## Community Emergency Response Plan Training

NEM collaborates with the MTO in the delivery of Emergency Response training throughout Nunavut. This training provides municipalities with support in the ongoing development of their unique Community Emergency Response Plans (CERP) as required under the *Emergency Measures Act*. Each training sessions occurs over three days and focuses on an all-hazards approach framework that prepares municipalities to identify and assesses community specific risk. The training impacts communities by supporting a culture of emergency preparedness and resilience while also identifying key stakeholders in community specific emergency response 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)





## Community Emergency Response Plan Training Statistics

In the fiscal year of 2022-2023, the successful delivery of CERP training marked a significant milestone. The MTO received a contribution of \$265,000.00 from NEM to facilitate the provision of ten comprehensive CERP courses to a selection of communities across the territory. This collaboration ensured the effective dissemination of emergency preparedness knowledge and underscored the shared commitment to safeguarding our communities.

*Table 5: CERP Participation Numbers by Community.*

Community	Participants
Arctic Bay	8
Clyde River	20
Iqaluit	15
Kimmirut	9
Kugaaruk	8
Kugluktuk	11
Pangnirtung	17
Rankin Inlet	6
Sanikiluaq	10
Whale Cove	8

# Community Emergency Response

In fiscal year 2022-2023, the Government of Nunavut (GN) responded to three requests for assistance originating from the City of Iqaluit.

## Iqaluit – Request for Assistance #1

On August 12, 2022, the City of Iqaluit declared a Local State of Emergency due to an impending drinking water shortage. In support of the City of Iqaluit’s urgent need for expedited permits the GN escalated the emergency to a Territorial State of Emergency under the *Emergency Management Act*.

## Iqaluit – Request for Assistance #2

The City of Iqaluit further submitted a formal Request for Assistance (RFA) to the GN, seeking support in replenishing Lake Geraldine with equipment and supplies available in the NEM inventory. NEM responded by providing high-volume supply line and fittings. The city utilized the resources to transfer water from Un-named Lake into Lake Geraldine, with NEM providing over 10kms of supply lines.

*Figure 3: Picture of Supply Lines and Fittings.*



*Figure 4: Picture of Supply Lines and Fittings installed on the land.*



### Iqaluit – Request for Assistance #3

The third request for assistance occurred in February 2023, prompted by a Local State of Emergency in Iqaluit, caused by areas of the utilidor freezing within its water distribution system. The city requested bottled water for residents affected by prolonged efforts to thaw and repair water lines. NEM provided bottled water and contributed two Herman Nelson heaters along with generators to assist with thawing the utilidor lines.



Figure 5: Picture of Heaters Supplied by NEM



Figure 6: Picture of Generators Supplied by NEM

### After Action Reports – Outcomes of Previous Emergency Response

In the 2021-2022 NEM annual report, the department reported on the Iqaluit water emergency that spanned multiple months. During the Fall 2023 session, the Emergency Measures Review 2021: Water Contamination Incident in Iqaluit was tabled. This was a comprehensive review of the emergency response from the department, which included seven (7) recommendations to support the improvement of emergency management. This type of review is valuable in terms of identifying lessons learned and best practices to support in the improvement of future training and emergency response.



# 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. In fiscal year 2022/23, our efforts transcended the confines of printed media as we actively engaged with communities through a variety of channels. From eye-catching posters and informative flyers to practical refrigerator magnets and engaging handouts, NEM’s arsenal of educational resources served as tangible reminders of the importance of emergency preparedness and safety measures in every household and community centre across the territory. NEM had taken the opportunity to attend tradeshow which provided invaluable platforms for us to share insights, information, and resources related to emergency management which in turn allows us to share with all communities.

NEM continues to distribute Winter and Summer self-reliance posters to all Nunavut communities. This fiscal year NEM developed new 72-hour preparedness refrigerator magnets, fliers, and Emergency Preparedness quick reference guides to support family awareness in Nunavut. NEM conducted a Territory wide mail-out of 72-hour Preparedness refrigerator magnets and fliers to promote household readiness in Nunavut.



Figure 7: NEM Booth



Figure 8: NEM Brochures

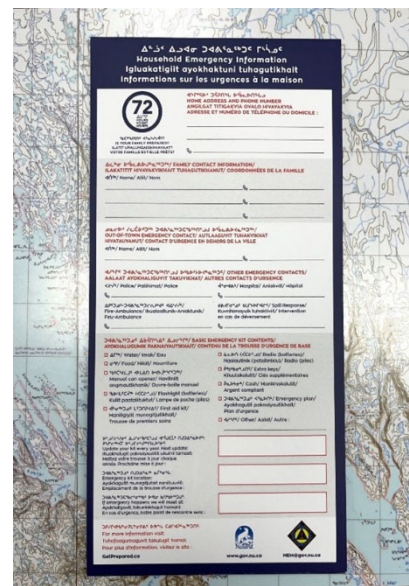


Figure 9: NEM 72 HOUR Pack Brochure



## Rescue Kits

### GoBags

NEM remains steadfast in its commitment to bolstering the capabilities of Search and Rescue operations across Nunavut. In line with this dedication, we continue to provide vital support to Municipal Ground Search and Rescue teams by supplying essential “Go Bags”. These meticulously curated bags are equipped with a comprehensive array of 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. We work to ensure that our responders are prepared and safe so they can focus on the search.

### GPS and InReach

NEM over the years has continued to enhance responder safety by providing all GSAR teams across Nunavut with the Garmin 276cx GPS units and In-Reach devices. These cutting-edge tools represent a significant advancement in navigation and communication capabilities for our responders. The Garmin 276cx GPS 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 while maintaining contact with command centers. By equipping our teams with these technologies, we are not only enhancing the safety of our responders but also bolstering the efficiency and efficacy of search and rescue operations across Nunavut. Together, with these resources at their disposal, our dedicated responders are better equipped to save lives and ensure the well-being of those in need across the territory.

### Community SPOT program

NEM continues to provide support to communities across Nunavut through the 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 users, NEM has created instructional cards and translated them into 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.



Figure 10: NEM “Go Bag”



Figure 11: Garmin GPS 276cx and InReach Communication

## Closing

The NEM Division is committed to supporting the development of safe, secure and resilient communities. As we reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges, it is important that we utilize lessons learned to continue to improve our program. Moving forward, we remain dedicated to empowering communities, strengthening partnerships and fostering a culture of preparedness. With gratitude to our partners and volunteers, we look ahead with optimism and determination that we will only improve on how we provide service to our communities. Thank you for your continued support as we strive to build a safer, stronger Nunavut for all.

