

Emergency Preparedness Week Is Coming!

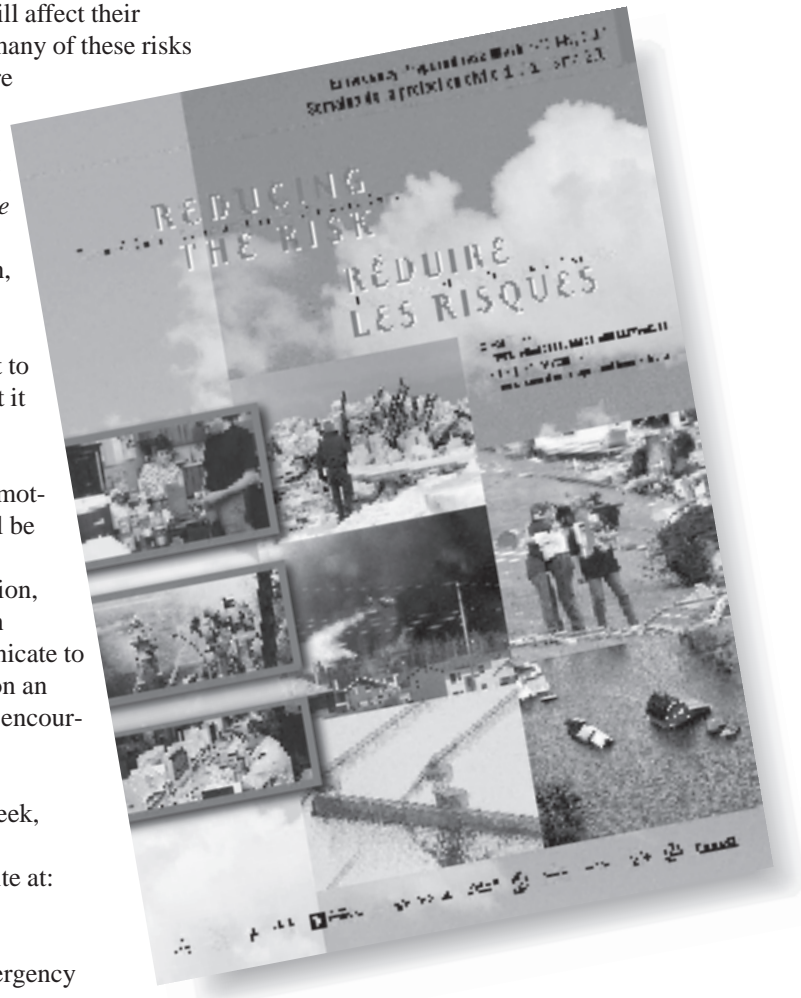
Over the course of their lives, many Canadians will have to face severe weather, fire, flood, or other unforeseen events that will affect their quality of life and leave a lasting memory. Although many of these risks are related to natural hazards beyond our control, there are ways to reduce the potential consequences.

With this in mind, the theme of this year's Emergency Preparedness Week (7-13 May 2001) is "*Reducing the Risk - Toward Safer Communities in the 21st Century*". The theme focuses on the concept of mitigation, which rests with understanding the risks inherent to where we live and work, and undertaking actions to reduce those risks. In this way, we can limit the extent to which an emergency affects us and potentially prevent it from escalating into a full-blown disaster.

All Yukon communities will receive packages for promoting Emergency Preparedness Week, and residents will be encouraged to participate in planned events. Elected officials will be asked to examine community prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The information packages will also help municipal officials to communicate to citizens the importance of becoming better prepared on an individual basis. In particular, school children will be encouraged to learn about emergency preparedness.

For more information on Emergency Preparedness Week,

1. Visit the Emergency Preparedness Canada web site at: www.emergencypreparednessweek.ca/index.html
2. Contact your local Municipal or Community Emergency Measures Coordinator
3. Or contact the Emergency Measures Branch, Yukon Government at:
Email: emo.yukon@gov.yk.ca
Phone: (867) 667-5220, or Toll Free, 1-800-661-0408, local 5220



Emergency Preparedness Week 2001: Reducing the Risk



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SARSCENE 2001 UPDATE



Since the last edition of MEMO Quarterly, much has been done to plan for SARSCENE 2001.

- ✓ The National Search and Rescue Secretariat has generated a list of potential presenters and is currently confirming the speakers' availability.
- ✓ A number of venues have been secured including, Mt. McIntyre Recreation Centre Westmark Whitehorse Hotel and Convention Centre, and the Transportation Museum
- ✓ WDSAR is identifying demonstration sites, potential sponsors and SARSCENE Games events
- ✓ RCMP, Parks Canada and Dept. of National Defense are determining areas of support.
- ✓ Ground transportation for delegates is being organized.
- ✓ A workshop budget has been prepared
- ✓ Social events and pre/post workshop activities are being planned

New Initiatives Fund Update

In August of 2000, the Emergency Measures Branch submitted two proposals to the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) for partial funding under the New Initiatives Fund Program. Both of the proposals have been approved, and work will soon be underway to complete the projects.

The Yukon SAR Dog Handler Qualifications Development proposal and the Yukon Ground SAR Certification Program Enhancement proposal are approved based on the submissions sent to the NSS in August of last year. Work is now under way to define the terms of reference required to complete work on both projects. Once this is done, consultants will be hired to work with volunteers, the RCMP and Emergency Measures to determine appropriate training and qualification standards for use in Yukon. Consultation with volunteer representatives, the RCMP and other partners in Yukon SAR is important to ensure that our future needs will be met. Both of these projects will be the first of their kind in Canada, and will undoubtedly be used by other jurisdictions to advance national SAR programs.

Work is expected to begin this spring, and the projects will be completed by March 31, 2002.



Volunteers Supported to Attend SARSCENE

Search and rescue volunteers from throughout the Yukon will be able to participate in SARSCENE 2001, to be held in Whitehorse September 12th to 16th. The Emergency Measures Branch will be sponsoring attendance at the workshop by purchasing a limited number of registrations and distributing them throughout the territory to SAR volunteers active in their respective SAR Societies.

Over the next month or so, letters will be sent to SAR Societies inviting their members to join the event. As participation is expected to vary between communities, Emergency Measures will purchase a block of registrations and allocate them to SAR Teams as equitably as possible. In addition to the registrations being paid for, SAR Societies sending members will also be compensated for travel using the normal task process for training. Accommodations will likely be provided at the Canadian Forces Cadet Camp, and transportation to and from the workshop venues will be provided.

This is a terrific opportunity to participate in this international event and receive the value of shared experiences with those



from other areas of Canada.

For more information about SARSCENE, visit the website at:
<http://www.nss.gc.ca/sswksps/ss2001/intro.htm>

or, visit the Whitehorse District Search and Rescue website at:
<http://www.wdsar.yk.ca/>





Emergency Exercise Held in Dawson City

On February 26th, an emergency exercise was held in Dawson City to test emergency plans, the Emergency Planning Group and to assist in the development of an emergency bylaw. Exercise “Klondike Energy” brought together many emergency planners and responders from Dawson City and other areas of the Yukon to solve problems associated with an extended major power failure during a severe winter storm. Although, the scenario is unlikely, it forced the implementation of emergency procedures to evacuate residents, ration power, fuel and food supplies. Many of these steps may be necessary in other types of emergencies.

Many real disasters present communication challenges. Communications between responders, planners and the public are sometimes difficult to coordinate when the infrastructure needed to transmit messages is damaged as a result of the emergency. Fortunately the Yukon has backup systems available to assist in these instances, and the Dawson Emergency Planning Group recognized the need for alternative communications.

Representatives from nearly all of the agencies involved in responding to an emergency participated in the exercise. Staff from public utilities such as Yukon Energy and Northwest Tel worked closely with the City Public Works Department to develop solutions for infrastructure problems. The city’s Fire

Department joined volunteers from other areas to assist in evacuating residents, and responding to vehicle accidents and house fires. The RCMP brought in additional members to maintain public safety. Medical and Social Services staff continued to provide the public with care and a comfortable facility for evacuees. The Tr’ondek Hwech’in First Nation also provided critical resources in the use of facilities, generators, people, vehicles, blankets and cots. The fact that all of these groups worked so well together shows the importance of continued development of partnerships in planning for and responding to emergencies.

Emergency exercises are a critical part of any community’s emergency planning. A tremendous amount of information can be gained and shared by all those involved which will better prepare us all for a disaster. The City of Dawson shared in the funding of this exercise with the Government of Canada through the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program administered by Emergency Preparedness Canada. This program encourages emergency preparedness by cost sharing in the development of plans, training, and purchase of needed equipment. For further information on the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program go to:

http://www.epc-pcc.gc.ca/publicinfo/fact_sheets/joint_emer_x.html



Major Air Disaster Wo

On February 20th and 21st, 2001, a workshop was held in Trenton, Ontario to open up discussion on the Canadian Force's existing Major Air Disaster response plan (MAJAID). As part of the Strategic Transition Initiative Project (STIP), headed by the National SAR Secretariat, this workshop involved provincial/territorial emergency planning representatives, major airline emergency planning representatives and representatives from key federal SAR response departments.

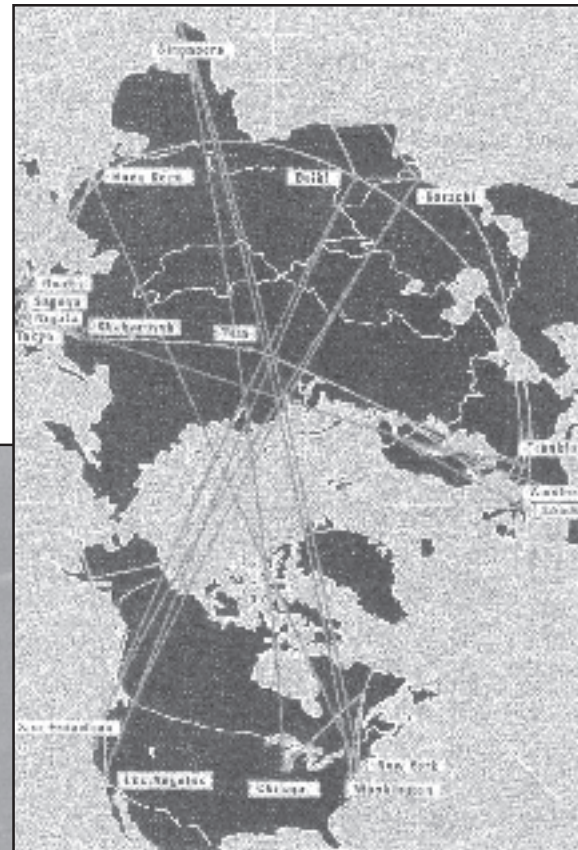
The MAJAID Plan is activated as a follow-on response to a search and rescue incident that, by its scope or the existing environmental conditions, exceeds the capability of the normal SAR system. While the imminent activation of polar routes to Asia has stimulated recent interest in arctic survival and rescue issues among various media both here and abroad,

Canadian search and rescue authorities have been consistently mindful of the challenges posed by the remoteness of much of our country. Search and rescue response to such a disaster in the remote northern parts of Canada's Arctic will be challenging to say the least, and the workshop allowed all partners in the National SAR Program to become more involved in its planning and execution.

The workshop's objectives were threefold: provide an overview of the Canadian Forces' response to a major air disaster, discuss the roles and expectations of the various stakeholders during an incident response, and identify conflicts and redundancies in the response and recommend planning changes to address these problem areas. Presentations made by staff from the Canadian Forces' included:



LEFT Workshop participants receive briefing.



Workshop Held

The four phases of response

- Initial response phase
- Deployment phase
- Rescue phase
- Withdrawal phase

Anticipated Deployment of Resources

- Crash Site: 60-80 personnel
- Forward Base: ~100 personnel
- Air crew: ~100 personnel
- Aircraft: ~30
- Equipment: ~30 tons

Potential Challenges

- Jurisdictional Issues
- Competing for limited resources at Forward Base
- Accommodations
- Logistical Support
- Aircraft requirements (ramp space, fuel, etc.)
- Power (generators, etc)
- Communications
- Information Distribution
- Medical Support/Patient Regulatory
- Family Support

Complicating Factors

- Incident site unknown
- Remoteness/distance to useable airfield
- Weather
- Time of year (daylight, open water/ice)
- Language/foreign affairs
- Dangerous cargo
- Terrorist involvement
- Media involvement

The MAJAID Plan does not currently incorporate the level of provincial or territorial resources and assistance that would be available during this kind of an incident. The Canadian Forces recognize the contributions that can be made by these jurisdictions and is now working on revising the plan to reflect the additional assistance that would be available.

The intent of this workshop was to raise awareness of northern response capabilities amongst those involved in the airline industry and government. Given the attendance, the workshop was obviously a success.

Emergency Transportation Exercise

An international planning exercise will be held in Victoria BC to enhance earthquake preparedness in Alaska by strengthening the cooperative working relationship developed between emergency response personnel in the US and Canada. "*Northern Response III*" is the third in a series of joint exercises between US and Canadian response personnel to address preparedness and response issues associated with providing emergency transportation support to southeast Alaska in an earthquake disaster.

Scenario: A magnitude 8.2 earthquake along the Fairweather Fault west of Sitka, Alaska devastates coastal communities from Sitka to Yakutat, with additional damage extending to communities as far away as Juneau and Petersburg, resulting in State and federal disaster declarations. The exercise focuses on providing emergency transportation support.

The primary objective of the exercise is to build on existing plans and procedures to facilitate the activation and use of a staging area in Whitehorse, YT to support a helicopter bridge for disaster response in southeast Alaska. Representatives from the Emergency Measures Branch and the Whitehorse Airport will be attending the exercise scheduled for May 22 – 24th, 2001.



Cook-Rees Memorial Fund Launches

The genesis of The Cook-Rees Memorial Fund lies in a tragic, but by no means uncommon, boating incident. In July 1998, Stratford-area residents Ronald Rees, Richard Rees and Gregory Cook set off for sail on the waters of Georgian Bay on what appeared to be a calm summer evening. When the three men failed to return to shore, the Canadian Coast Guard was called in for an exhaustive search; two of the three men's bodies, however, were never found.

Spurred by a desire to turn personal tragedy into a collective hope for the future, The Cook-Rees Memorial Fund For Water Search And Safety was formed by Ronald Rees' partner, Canadian singer/composer Loreena McKennitt, with the support and participation of the Cook and Rees families and their friends.

Contributions to the fund have since come from within the Stratford community, from across the country, and indeed, from around the world. Many people are choosing to direct funds in memory of loved ones and friends. A principal source of funds is the directed proceeds of the recently released album by Loreena McKennitt, "Live in Paris and Toronto." Driven by the dedication of the people behind it and the generous financial support of its many donors, The Cook-Rees Memorial Fund For Water Search And Safety is committed to making the water a safer place for Canadians to work and play.

The Cook-Rees Memorial Fund operates under the auspices of The Three Oaks Foundation, a registered charitable organization. The Fund contributes monies toward research, education and general programs to promote water safety, and helps to fund essential equipment and training to make the work of water-related rescue and recovery teams safer and more effective.

The Fund is particularly interested in supporting initia-

tives that fulfill well-defined needs; those that are not being addressed currently by other organizations, projects or programs, and those intended to support and improve existing work.

High priority will be given to initiatives that have specific targets, mechanisms for evaluating needs and effectiveness, and reflect the direction of the lead organizations in Water and Boating Safety and Search and Rescue.

For more information about The Cook Rees Memorial Fund for Water Search and Safety or to request an Application Package you can go to the website: www.cookreesfund.com

Or contact the Fund by mail at:

P.O. Box 21030,
Stratford, ON,
N5A 7V4

Loreena McKennitt's 2CD recording "Live in Paris and Toronto" is available in stores and a special mail order edition is available directly from her Quinlan Road label.

The website is: www.quinlandroad.com. Or write to:

P.O. Box 933,
Stratford, ON,
N5A 7M3 or phone
1-800-361-7959



ABOVE Sonar search equipment donated to the OPP by the Cook-Rees Memorial Fund For Water Search And Safety. Left to right: Peter Garapick, Supervisor, Office of Boating Safety, Canadian Coast Guard, Senior Constable John Steele, O.P.P. and Loreena McKennitt. Photo by Bill Sandford.



Yukon Has Two Certified Ice Rescue Instructors

By Debbie Brewster and Leah Battersby

During the week of February 19 – 23, 2001, Whitehorse District Search and Rescue volunteers Leah Battersby and Debbie Brewster participated in the Ice Rescue Instructors Course conducted by the Toronto Metro Police Marine Unit. Ten students from across Canada and Australia attended the course.

The course covered a wide variety of topics from ice rescue philosophy, safety considerations, risk assessment, ice characteristics, hypothermia, night rescue and instructional techniques. A variety of safety equipment from “high-tech” to “make your own” was used during the course. Some of the items can be easily made locally. Demonstrations were provided, and participants were given many opportunities to practice the safe use of a wide range of ice rescue equipment.

Toronto Metro Police Marine Unit has set a high standard for their instructors and expects the same from the participating students.

For the next two years, both Debbie and Leah will be available to assist in delivering ice rescue training to EMO member agencies. Community fire fighters, search and rescue volunteers or others may be interested in receiving this type of training to provide an awareness of the difficulties associated with ice rescue. The Emergency Measures Branch can be contacted to assist in co-ordinating this training, and as the instructors are volunteers, lots of lead-time will be required to schedule a course.

Whitehorse District SAR thanks the Emergency Measures Branch, Yukon Fire Marshal and City of Whitehorse Fire Department for their support.



Federal SAR Analyst In Yukon

On January 8, 2001, the Senior Analyst with the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) in Ottawa co-located to the Emergency Measures Branch office. Many of you will remember Ms. Barbara Rose who worked previously for the Branch as the Planning and Training Coordinator. As the NSS Senior Analyst, Barbara has returned to the Yukon to continue working on a variety of projects for the NSS. As part of an arrangement with the federal government, this presence will afford EMO greater accessibility to ongoing initiatives to revitalize the federal search and rescue program, including the New SAR Initiatives Fund, inter-jurisdictional exercises, and major disaster response planning.

The arrangement brings a funded position to the territory at no expense to the Yukon as the NSS will cover all administrative and payroll costs associated with the position. This demonstrates a commitment to enhance existing working relationships with federal SAR authorities and to promote a "seamless" SAR system in Canada. The initiative is timely given the Yukon SAR community's involvement in the upcoming International SARSCENE Workshop, and potential concerns over increased commercial air traffic in transpolar routes.



Situation Reports

December 30 High water levels in the Marwell Industrial area of the City of Whitehorse caused some damage to private property, and closed local roads for approximately one week. City of Whitehorse staff responded to the threat of flooding through their local Emergency Measures Organization with assistance from DIAND Water Resources, Yukon Energy Corporation, and YTG, Emergency Measures Branch.



Coming Events

Winter/Spring Semester

2001	EMO
Apr. 26	TDG – 1 st Responder Awareness – Watson Lake
June 5	TDG – 1 st Responder Awareness – Dawson City

2001	SAR
Apr. 21/22	GPS Navigation – Whitehorse
May 11 – 13	Spring Training Weekend – Whitehorse
May 19 - 20	SAR Manager – Whitehorse
June 2 – 3	Tracker 1 - Whitehorse

Fall/Winter Semester

2001	
Sept. 10 – 16	SARSCENE 2001

Other Courses TBA



The editors gratefully acknowledge the support and contributions made by numerous members of EMO to this issue of the Yukon's Emergency Measures Organization Newsletter.

Additional Copies can be obtained by writing to:

Emergency Measures Branch,
Community & Transportation Services
Government of Yukon
Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada, Y1A 2C6
Tel: (867) 667-5220 FAX: (867) 393-6266
E-mail: emo.yukon@gov.yk.ca

Yukon

Community and Transportation Services

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