

Part One — General Policy and Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to provide a prompt and coordinated response by the GNWT and its partners to territorial emergencies affecting all or part of the NWT.

Scope

The Plan provides:

- policy and guidance for responding to NWT emergencies by territorial emergency officials, and
- a framework for relationships with other governments and non-government agencies in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

This Plan also guides the response to emergencies ranging from a single agency response to the fully coordinated, collective emergency response of many or all response agencies.

The scope of events for which the arrangements in the Plan will be employed range from local incidents, to regional or territorial emergencies, or the territorial component of a declared national emergency.

This Plan does not apply to any normal or routine function of a Local Authority, any GNWT department or other agency.

Authority

This Plan is issued under the authority of the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*.

The Emergency Measures Officer is the Custodian of this Plan and may issue procedural amendments and addenda as required.

Definitions

- **“Agency”** in addition to its ordinary meaning, includes all territorial and federal government departments, agencies and crown corporations and other public and private corporations or organizations having emergency responsibilities assigned under the authority of this Plan.
- **“Coordinator”** means the Territorial Coordinator of the Emergency Measures Organization.
- **“CFNA”** means Canadian Forces Northern Area Headquarters, Department of National Defence.

- “**Director**” means the Director of the Emergency Services Division, the GNWT senior official responsible for the Emergency Measures Organization.
- “**Director of Communications**” means the Department of the Executive’s Director of Communications as the GNWT senior communications official during emergencies under the provisions of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol.
- “**Director General, INAC**” means the Director General, Northern Affairs Program, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- “**Emergency**” for the purposes of the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* means a present or imminent event that is affecting or could affect the health, safety or welfare of people, or is damaging or could damage property. In order to limit injury to people or damage to property, prompt action by members of the GNWT emergency response system, beyond the normal procedures of a single agency, is required.
- “**Emergency Measures Officer**” is the Deputy Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, appointed pursuant to the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* to formulate and recommend to the Minister plans for dealing with emergencies.
- “**Emergency Site Manager**” means the person appointed by the Minister to manage emergency operations when the GNWT has assumed operational control over the incident.
- “**EMO**” means the Emergency Measures Organization of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.
- “**GNWT**” means the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- “**Joint Support Plan**” means the GNWT and federal agencies Joint Support Plan for Major Emergencies.
- “**Local Authority**” means:
 - the council of a municipal corporation as defined in the Cities, Towns and Villages Act; the Hamlets Act; or the Charter Communities Act;
 - the council of a settlement corporation as defined in the Settlements Act; or
 - a council recognized under the *Indian Act*; or
 - an organization recognized by the Minister, pursuant to Sec. 1(c) of the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*, as representative of the community for the purposes of the Act.
- “**MAJAJD**” means the Canadian Forces’ Major Air Disaster Plan for responding to major air disaster disasters in Canadian territory.
- “**MARS**” means the Mutual Aid Resource Sharing Agreement for forest fire operations; with RWED representing the GNWT.
- “**Minister**” means the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, responsible for Civil Emergency Measures.
- “**National Emergency**” means an emergency declared under the *Emergencies Act*.

- **“OCIPEP”** means Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness as represented by the Regional Director for Alberta/NWT Region.
- **“On-site Advisor”** means the person appointed by the Chairperson of the GNWT Regional Emergency Response Committee to act as an on-site advisor to the Local Authority in responding to a local emergency.
- **“Region”** means a Region of the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- **“REOC”** means the Regional Emergency Operations Centre, the GNWT EOC for managing regional emergency operations and coordinating support to community emergencies.
- **“Senior Administrative Officer”** means the senior officer managing local government operations in a municipality incorporated under the *City, Towns and Villages Act*, the *Hamlets Act*, or the *Settlements Act*, or in an incorporated settlement, a community organization recognized by the Minister as representative of the population for the purposes of emergency preparedness, or a Band Council recognized under the *Indian Act*.
- **“State of Emergency”** means a declaration relating to all or any part of the Northwest Territories, made by order of the Minister under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*, at any time he/she is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist.
- **“State of Local Emergency”** means a declaration by a community government under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* relating to all or any part of the community, made by resolution, at any time the local authority is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist.
- **“Superintendent”** means the Regional Superintendent of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA). The Superintendent is Coordinator of the GNWT Regional Emergency Plan.
- **“TEOC”** means the Territorial Emergency Operations Centre, the GNWT EOC for managing territorial emergency operations and coordinating support to Regions and communities during emergencies.
- **“TERC”** means the Territorial Emergency Response Committee being the GNWT’s inter-agency committee established under this Plan to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Emergency Responsibilities

Local Authorities

The elected councils of community governments are the Local Authority for the purposes of the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*, and as such are responsible for the development and implementation of emergency plans and procedures to reasonably protect the general public, and minimize property damage and loss during emergencies.

Where the community is not a municipal corporation or does not have a council recognized under the *Indian Act*, an organization may enter into an agreement with the Minister to develop and implement emergency plans.

In fulfilling these responsibilities the Local Authority shall:

- prepare, approve and maintain emergency plans;
- control and direct emergency operations within areas under their jurisdiction;
- inform the Regional Superintendent of any local emergency and possible requirements for assistance;
- request assistance from the GNWT through the Regional Superintendent when the Local Authority's capacity or jurisdiction is exceeded, or may be exceeded;
- declare a State of Local Emergency under Section 14 of the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* when the situation warrants.

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)

The GNWT, through its Regions, is responsible for providing assistance to Local Authorities when requested, or assuming operational control when the Local Authority's capacity or jurisdiction is exceeded.

In fulfilling these responsibilities the GNWT shall:

- develop and maintain Regional Emergency Plans and the NWT Emergency Plan;
- implement plans and procedures for an integrated response to emergencies within any Region(s) affected, or through headquarters' control of inter-regional emergency operations;
- provide prompt and coordinated response to specific community requests for assistance;
- assume direction and control of emergency operations where a Local Authority does not exist, or when the event is a matter of GNWT jurisdiction;
- assume control of emergency operations when the Minister has declared a State of Emergency;
- communicate with federal points of contact to facilitate the provision of Government of Canada emergency assistance to the GNWT;
- coordinate GNWT assistance to federal emergency operations within National Parks, in federal Search and Rescue operations including MAJAIID responses, and in other areas under federal jurisdiction; and
- provide operational coordination of territorial emergency operations and GNWT departmental participation in the activation of the Joint Support Plan in a response to a major emergency.

Departmental Emergency Responsibilities

Departments and agencies of GNWT are responsible for:

- maintaining departmental emergency plans;
- responding directly to emergencies in which it has a designated lead agency responsibility;
- maintaining plans to ensure the continuity of vital business functions;
- providing resources or response as identified in Annex A; and
- participating as a part of a coordinated GNWT response at a regional or territorial level in accordance with the provisions of this Plan.

Requests for Assistance

GNWT Assistance

Local Authorities' requests for assistance will be directed to the Regional Superintendent of Municipal & Community Affairs (MACA). Requests must originate with an authorized representative of the Local Authority, and are contingent upon local resources being fully committed.

In addition to the Local Authority, requests for assistance may originate from:

- the RCMP regarding ground and inland water search and rescue,
- the Director of RWED's Forest Management Division or delegate with regard to forest fire emergencies,
- the Canadian Forces for support in air and marine search and rescue or other emergencies, and
- the Park Superintendent or designate for any emergency within a National Park.

Federal Government Assistance

The provision of emergency assistance from federal authorities resident in the region will be coordinated by the Regional Superintendent for that Region.

Support from federal authorities in other Regions or extra-territorial resources will be coordinated by the Director. Requests for extra-territorial federal support will be directed to OCYPEP through the Regional Director, Alberta/NWT Region.

Requests for federal support resident in the NWT to territorial emergency operations will be submitted by the Director to the senior manager of the appropriate department, or the Director General INAC (as appropriate) with information of the request forwarded to EPC.

There are two exceptions to this for which special channels exist.

- law and order which is a matter for the RCMP, and

- Canadian Forces' assistance to civil authorities which is arranged through the Emergency Measures Organization under standing Canadian Forces arrangements for the provision of essential services, including MAJAID.

The general nature of support, which may be available from federal agencies in the Northwest Territories is illustrated in Annex B. The list is intended to serve as only an indication of the range of support available. The actual provision of support is contingent upon a wide range of factors and is generally arranged by the Director in consultation with the TERC agencies involved in the specific operation.

GNWT Support to the Federal Government

Requests for GNWT support to federal agencies during emergencies will be provided in accordance with the provisions of this Plan or established Standing Arrangements.

Assistance of federal departments and agencies assuming emergency preparedness or Lead Agency responsibilities under any existing emergency plan or arrangement already approved by a Minister of the Federal Government, may be requested by activation of all or part of this Plan.

National Support Plan

National Arrangements are in place for provincial and territorial involvement in national emergencies through the National Support Plan. GNWT involvement in National Support Plan activities is to be coordinated under the arrangements established in this Plan.

NWT Joint Support Plan

Territorial Arrangements for an all-agency response to a Major Emergency in the NWT are provided in the NWT Joint Support Plan.

National/International Arrangements

The GNWT is represented on various national and international resource-sharing arrangements for emergencies such as the Mutual Aid Resource Sharing (MARS) Agreement for forest fire suppression (an RWED responsibility).

This Plan can be used to facilitate GNWT support a Lead Agent responding under standing national or international arrangements.

Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) and the Private Sector

There are non-government volunteer and private sector organizations located in many NWT communities. There are also several territorial organizations with an ability to provide resources during an emergency response.

Community, regional and territorial departmental plans should incorporate NGO's and private sector corporations' capabilities into their integrated response.

Annex C contains guidelines for including the private sector and NGO's in community and departmental emergency plans.

Emergency Finance Arrangements

Local Incremental Operational Costs

Incremental operational expenses incurred at the community level are paid, in the first instance, by the Local Authority. Should a Disaster Assistance program be implemented following an emergency under the Disaster Assistance Policy, these incremental costs may be eligible for reimbursement under that program. A detailed accounting would need to support the expenditures.

Departmental Emergency Expenditures

The GNWT does not allocate funds to departments specifically for emergency preparedness and response. Departments are expected to absorb those costs from within their budgets until an Emergency Appropriation Bill or Special Warrant is approved to reimburse department costs.

MACA will initiate the request for a Special Warrant or Emergency Appropriation Bill under Financial Administrative Manual Directive 9805, using data and substantiation provided by departments involved in emergency operations.

Payments for Disaster Assistance may be approved by Cabinet following an emergency under the Disaster Assistance Policy. In this instance, extraordinary departmental costs, beyond normal operating costs, may be eligible for reimbursement under this program.

Proper financial records to support all expenditures must be available for audit purposes. The Joint Support Plan requires special arrangements for accounting and cost recovery.

The declaration of a local or territorial state of emergency is not a prerequisite for eligibility under these emergency finance provisions.

Emergency Purchasing

Before and during GNWT emergency operations in response to an emergency or in support of a community or the federal government, departments will obtain resources using standard procedures.

If the Territorial Emergency Operations Centre (TEOC) is activated, departments will continue to employ standard procedures. If resources cannot be provided in this manner, the TEOC staff in consultation with the Departments of Executive and FMBS will develop other management options.

Business Continuity Planning

The human resources, assets and facilities of GNWT departments and agencies are vulnerable to natural, technical or societal catastrophes or disruptions. The overall expectation within the GNWT is that departments and agencies will have arrangements in place to ensure that critical business processes are continued when a crisis impacts upon their operation.

The purpose of business continuity plans is to ensure that critical business functions survive and are restored in a timely manner when a crisis occurs from a natural or technological event, criminal activity, malice or neglect.

Annex D contains additional guidance on the development of business continuity arrangements.

Communications

Timely and accurate public and media information is essential elements of successful emergency management. The Department of the Executive's Director of Communications will coordinate government public and media information in accordance with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol, which is attached as Annex L and forms a part of this Plan.

National Emergencies

Emergencies Act

The federal *Emergencies Act* was passed in 1988. This Act provides the means for declaring a national emergency.

A national emergency:

- allows the authorization of extraordinary regulations and orders,
- specifies the consultation that must occur with provincial/territorial authorities,
- places safeguards and constraints on Government actions in declaring and acting in a national emergency, and

- details the provisions for compensating persons or organizations that suffer loss as a result of invocation of the Act.

The Act authorizes the taking of “special temporary measures to ensure safety and security during national emergencies”. A national emergency is defined in the Act as “an urgent and critical situation of a temporary nature that:

- (a) seriously endangers the lives, health or safety of Canadians and is of such proportions or nature as to exceed the capacity or authority of a province or territory to deal with it, or
- (b) seriously threatens the ability of the Government of Canada to preserve the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Canada, and
- (c) that cannot be effectively dealt with under any other law of Canada”.

The Act is limited to four carefully circumscribed types of national emergencies, which are:

- **Public Welfare Emergencies including** severe natural disasters or major accidents affecting public welfare, and which are beyond the capacity or authority of a province or territory;
- **Public Order Emergencies which** constitute threats to the security of Canada, and are beyond **provincial**/territorial authority or capacity;
- **International Emergencies** such as acts that threaten Canada’s sovereignty, security or territorial integrity, or those of its allies; and
- **War Emergencies**, which are real or imminent armed conflict against Canada or its allies.

For each type of emergency the Act sets out the conditions that may cause events to be declared a “national emergency”, the essential steps and requirements for a declaration to be made, the length of time the declaration may stand, the areas for which special orders and regulations may be made and restrictions on the contents thereof, and the consultation that must occur with respect to the declaration, expiry or revocation of the declaration.

The jurisdictional prerogatives and leadership responsibilities of provincial and territorial authorities in the first two types of national emergency are respected.

The Act offers full protection for the fundamental rights and freedoms of Canadians during national emergencies, and guarantees parliamentary oversight.

Consultation for National Emergencies

Consultations for national emergencies involves two areas:

- Bilateral discussions for the development of national emergency arrangements; and
- Those required under the *Emergencies Act*.

The consultation process required by the Act is summarized, together with the consultation links, in Annex E.

