NWT EMERGENCY PLAN

2018

Government of Northwest Territories
Gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

(Intentionally blank)

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES EMERGENCY PLAN
MINISTERIAL SIGNATURE PAGE

The Northwest Territories (NWT) Emergency Plan (the Plan) has been developed by the NWT Emergency Management Organization (EMO) and a committee representing Government of the NWT (GNWT) departments and agencies with input and collaboration from other key stakeholders in emergency management from across the territories. The Plan has been developed under the authority of the NWT *Emergency Management Act* and provides the structure and guidelines on how the GNWT and its partners work together to support community governments and meet a collective responsibility in responding to territorial emergencies. The goal is to ensure a prompt and coordinated response by the GNWT and its partners to territorial emergencies affecting all or parts of the NWT and ensure the safety and security of residents and visitors.

The hazard environment in the NWT continues to evolve, primarily due to the effects of climate change. There is a need for continuous improvement using lessons learned and best practices to ensure the territory and communities remain ready to meet the challenge of new or evolving hazards. To keep pace with these changes, the Plan is a living document that will be amended as necessary through a planning process that is managed by NWT EMO and the Territorial Planning Committee in collaboration with emergency management partners.

Emergency management and preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Individuals and families, communities, governments, the private sector and non-government organizations must do their part to ensure the safety and security of people, property, the environment and economy. Through effective coordination and collaboration the GNWT is committed to working with partners to ensure the NWT is well prepared for any emergency that may come our way.

Honourable Alfred Moses
Minister
Municipal and Community Affairs

Dec. 12/18
Date

Record of Amendments

List of all amendments made to the plan since inception.

Amendment Number	Effective Date	Amended By (Please print)	Initials

Table of Contents

1.0 General 1

1.1 Purpose 1

1.2 Scope 1

1.3 Authority 1

1.4 Plan Administration 1

1.5 Training and Exercises 1

1.6 Emergency Financial Arrangements 2

1.6.1 Community Emergency Response Expenditures 2

1.6.2 Departmental Emergency Expenditures 2

1.6.3 EMO Emergency Purchasing 2

1.7 Business Continuity 2

1.8 Glossary of Terms and Acronyms 2

2.0 Comprehensive Emergency Management 2

2.1 Prevention / Mitigation 3

2.2 Preparedness 3

2.3 Response 3

2.4 Recovery 3

3.0 NWT Emergency Management System 3

3.1 Emergency Management Responsibilities 4

3.1.1 Local Authorities 4

3.1.2 Government of the Northwest Territories 4

3.1.3 Departmental Emergency Responsibilities 5

3.1.4 Head of the Emergency Management Organization (HEMO) 5

3.1.5 NWT Emergency Management Organization (EMO) 5

3.1.6 Territorial Planning Committee 6

3.1.7 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the Private Sector 7

3.1.8 First Nations on Reserve 7

3.1.9 Self-Government Arrangements 7

3.2 Territorial Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment 8

3.3 Territorial Coordination of Plans 8

3.4 Emergency Communications 8
3.4.1 Public Communications 9
3.4.2 Operational Communications 9
3.4.3 Public Alerting 9
3.5 Emergency Telecommunications 9
3.6 Federal and Other Province and Territory Assistance 9
3.6.1 Federal Assistance 10
3.6.2 Canadian Armed Forces Assistance 10
3.6.3 Mutual Aid Agreement 11
4.0 Prevention / Mitigation 11
5.0 Emergency Preparedness 12
6.0 Emergency Response 12
6.1 Concept of Operations 12
6.2 Incident Command System 13
6.3 GNWT Response Structure 13
6.3.1 Territorial Emergency Operations Centre 14
6.3.2 Regional Emergency Operations Centres 14
6.3.3 Departmental Emergency Operations Centres 15
6.3.4 Federal Government Operations Center 15
6.3.5 EOC Activation Levels 15
6.3.6 Resourcing of EOCs 16
6.4 Response Activation 16
6.4.1 Emergency Response Priorities 16
6.4.2 Activation Authority 17
6.4.3 Response Types 17
6.5 Requests for Assistance 18
6.5.1 Community Request for Assistance 18
6.5.2 Federal Request for Assistance 18
6.6 States of Emergency 18
6.6.1 State of Local Emergency 18
6.6.2 State of Territorial Emergency 18
6.7 National Emergencies 19

7.0 Recovery 19
7.1 Disaster Assistance 19
Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms 21
Appendix 2 – Department and Agency Specific Roles and Responsibilities 24
Education, Culture and Employment 25
Environment and Natural Resources 26
Executive and Indigenous Affairs 27
Finance 28
Health and Social Services 29
Industry, Tourism and Investment 31
Informatics Shared Services 32
Infrastructure 33
Justice 35
Lands 36
Municipal and Community Affairs 37
NWT Housing Corporation 38
Appendix 3 – Planning Guidance - Non-Government Organizations and the Private Sector 39
Appendix 4 – Government of Canada Assistance 40
Federal Policy for Emergency Management 40
Authorities and Legislation 40
An Emergency Management Framework for Canada 40
Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP) 41
Public Safety Canada Regional (AB/NWT) Roles and Responsibilities: 42
Federal Response to a Territorial Emergency 42
Request for Federal Emergency Assistance (RFA) Process 43
Appendix 5 – Procedure for Declaring a State of Emergency 44
Territorial State of Emergency 44
State of Local Emergency 45

List of Annexes

Annex A – Evacuation Guidelines
Annex B – Emergency Communications Protocol

1.0 General

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Northwest Territories (NWT) Emergency Plan (the Plan) is to facilitate a prompt and coordinated response by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and its partners to emergencies affecting all or part of the NWT.

1.2 Scope

The Plan describes the emergency management framework in the NWT, and the roles and responsibilities of departments and partners during emergencies. It includes:

- A description of the NWT emergency management system;
- A framework for relationships with other departments, governments and non-government agencies in preparing for and responding to emergencies; and
- GNWT procedures for the coordination of responses to territorial emergencies and in supporting communities during disasters.

1.3 Authority

The Plan is issued under the authority of the *Emergency Management Act (*the *Act)*.

1.4 Plan Administration

The NWT Emergency Management Organization (EMO) is the custodian of the Plan and may issue procedural amendments and addenda as required.

The Plan shall be fully reviewed every five years or as required and major amendments shall receive Ministerial approval.

Copies of the Plan will be distributed to key stakeholders and made publically available.

1.5 Training and Exercises

The NWT EMO will coordinate the delivery of territorial emergency management training programs sufficient to sustain the NWT emergency management system. The EMO may also provide advice and assistance to departments and communities for the development of their own emergency management training programs.

The NWT EMO will coordinate and participate in emergency management exercises to practice and improve the NWT emergency management system. These exercises may include municipal, regional, territorial and partner organizations. At least one territorial level exercise will be held every three years. Exercise formats will include: tabletop exercises, drills and field training exercises.

1.6 Emergency Financial Arrangements

1.6.1 Community Emergency Response Expenditures

Incremental operational expenses incurred by a community in responding to an emergency 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 be needed to support the expenditures.

1.6.2 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. Should response expenditures place an undue burden on departmental operations, MACA may coordinate a request for additional funding through a Supplementary Appropriation or Special Warrant pursuant to the Financial Administrative Manual.

1.6.3 EMO Emergency Purchasing

Before and during emergency response operations there may be a requirement for the immediate purchasing of materials and services not readily available within the GNWT. All emergency purchases will be made in accordance with the Financial Administration Manual (IB 705.03 Sole Source Authority for Urgent Contracting).

1.7 Business Continuity

Business continuity planning is the creation of plans and arrangements to maintain the essential functions of an organization when directly affected by an emergency. GNWT departments and agencies are responsible to maintain Business Continuity Programs to ensure critical business functions continue at required levels during and after emergencies.

1.8 Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

A list of definitions for terms and acronyms used in this Plan is provided at **Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms.**

2.0 Comprehensive Emergency Management

Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) is an integrated approach to the management of emergencies that includes all phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery), for all types of emergencies and disasters, and for all levels of government and the private sector. The GNWT has adopted CEM to broaden the emergency management programming focus from preparedness and response to include mitigation and recovery.

CEM provides a basis for all territorial, provincial and federal emergency management regimes in Canada and is outlined in “An Emergency Management Framework for Canada”, a framework developed and agreed upon by federal, provincial and territorial governments. CEM guides the NWT in establishing emergency management programs that are based on risk analysis and covers all four phases of

emergency management, and in developing a response system based on an incident command system that is supported by training and exercising.

2.1 Prevention / Mitigation

Prevention and mitigation refers to actions intended to eliminate or reduce the risk from hazards. These actions are prompted by the potential risk of a hazard, rather than an imminent threat. The decision to prevent or mitigate a hazard is reached through the risk management process. Therefore, these decisions will be influenced by the scope, costs, political perspectives, past experiences and other issues that contribute to risk management.

2.2 Preparedness

Preparedness increases the territory's ability to respond effectively to hazard impacts and to mitigate some of the long-term effects. It involves planning, training and education, resource management, and exercising. It builds better coordination and cooperation between agencies and key partners.

Emergency preparedness consists of activities that take place before an incident that increase an organization's or a community's readiness to respond. The degree of readiness reflects the risk assessment; the assignment of a responsibility to respond; and a commitment to put the plans, resources and infrastructure in place to ensure an appropriate response capability.

2.3 Response

Response is the actions taken during or immediately after a disaster or emergency to manage its consequences. Emergency situations are dealt with first by individuals. If individuals become overwhelmed, they call upon first responders, such as emergency medical services, hospitals, fire departments and police. When an emergency exceeds the normal capacity of first responders, the local authority provides assistance. If the event exceeds the local authority's capacity or is a major emergency, the GNWT will respond and provide assistance.

2.4 Recovery

Recovery is the measures taken to repair or restore conditions to an acceptable level after a disaster. It involves decisions and actions relative to the return of evacuees, rebuilding homes, replacing property, resuming employment, restoring businesses, and permanently repairing and rebuilding infrastructure. The process may take years and requires balancing the more immediate need to return a community to normalcy with the longer-term goal of reducing future vulnerability. Recovery also includes a return of the business of government back to normal which must be managed in a way that maintains a necessary level of government services while assisting impacted communities adjust to post-disaster realities.

3.0 NWT Emergency Management System

The approach to emergency management in the NWT relies on participation from everyone including individuals/families, communities, the territorial government and other governments. Emergency management is everyone's responsibility; every person residing in or visiting the NWT has a responsibility to themselves and their families to be prepared for emergencies.

The NWT emergency management system is comprised of a series of escalating responsibilities from the "bottom-up", with the intent of resolving the emergency at the lowest possible level. During an emergency, each higher level of the response will monitor the situation and take those measures necessary to assist and support those immediately engaged in response and prepare for direct involvement, should this be required.

The emergency management system includes those elements and entities required for effective emergency management including legislative, regulatory, and policy frameworks, emergency plans, and emergency management partners. Emergency management in the NWT begins with individual responsibilities for safety and security, and escalates to local authorities, regions, and the territorial government.

3.1 Emergency Management Responsibilities

3.1.1 Local Authorities

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

As per the *Act,* local authorities are defined as municipal councils or an authority that the Minister recognizes as representative of the community for the purposes of the *Act.*

In fulfilling these responsibilities the Local Authority shall:

- Establish and maintain an emergency management organization to develop and implement emergency plans and other preparedness, response and recovery measures for emergencies;
- Appoint a coordinator of the community emergency management organization and establish the duties of the coordinator;
- Prepare, or cause to be prepared, adopt and maintain emergency plans and programs; and
- Provide copies of community emergency plans or revisions to such plans to the Head of the EMO.

The Local Authority may:

- Enter into agreements with and make payments to organizations for the provision of services in the development or implementation of emergency plans or programs; and
- Conduct or authorize the conduct of emergency operations outside of its boundaries.

3.1.2 Government of the Northwest Territories

The GNWT provides overall coordination of territorial emergency preparedness and response, assuming responsibility for:

- Develop and maintain plans and programs for dealing with emergencies in the NWT; and
- Establish and maintain an emergency management system for the prompt and efficient management of emergencies including the implementation of required plans and programs.

3.1.3 Departmental Emergency Responsibilities

GNWT departments and agencies are responsible for emergencies that fall within their specific mandates and for supporting territorial level responses in accordance with this plan. This includes responsibility to:

- Develop and maintain department emergency plans for emergencies that fall within their specific mandate;
- Respond directly to emergencies that fall within the specific mandate of the department;
- Develop and maintain Business Continuity Plans to ensure continuity of vital business functions;
- Support the NWT EMO including Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to support incident action planning, and emergency personnel, materials and services to support a coordinated territorial emergency response;
- Support as required to NWT EMO mitigation project development;
- Support as required for recovery and the disaster assistance process;
- Maintain a senior official and alternate as representation on the Territorial Planning Committee;
- Support and participate in NWT EMO training initiatives and emergency management exercises to test and evaluate the Plan and improve the NWT emergency management system; and
- Support and participate in after action reviews and other system improvement initiatives as required after EOC activations and exercises.

Department specific roles and responsibilities are identified in **Appendix 2 – Department and Agency Specific Roles and Responsibilities.**

3.1.4 Head of the Emergency Management Organization (HEMO)

Pursuant to the *Act*, the Minister shall direct a public service employee of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) to be the Head of the Emergency Management Organization (HEMO). Under the direction of the Minister, the HEMO may require departments of the GNWT and public agencies, in consultation with the EMO, to carry out those functions and responsibilities set out in the territorial emergency plan. The HEMO shall:

- Administer the EMO and exercise powers and carry out duties as required by the *Act* and regulations;
- Authorize or require the implementation of territorial emergency plans at any time the Head considers appropriate; and
- Exercise any other powers and perform any other duties as directed by the Minister for the purposes of the *Act*.

3.1.5 NWT Emergency Management Organization (EMO)

The EMO is established pursuant to the *Act*. It consists of the territorial EMO situated within the Public Safety Division of MACA and includes five regional EMOs situated in MACA regional offices and led by MACA regional superintendents. The Head of the Emergency Management Organization (HEMO), under the direction of the Minister, is responsible for the administration of the EMO. EMO leads the activities

of the GNWT in relation to emergency mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery and is the lead authority for the GNWT's emergency management program. Pursuant to the *Act* the EMO shall:

- Lead the GNWT in the coordination of emergency management activities;
- Support the emergency management activities of local authorities;
- Coordinate or assist in the coordination of the response of the GNWT and public agencies to an emergency; and
- Exercise any other powers and perform any other duties as directed by the Minister for the purposes of the *Act*.

The EMO may:

- Promote public awareness of matters related to emergency management;
- Establish policies and programs respecting emergency management;
- Conduct exercises and provide education and training related to emergency management;
- Promote a common approach to emergency management, including the adoption of standards and best practices;
- Review and recommend modifications to territorial and local authority emergency plans and programs;
- Procure food, fuel, water, medicine, equipment, goods, materials and services of any nature or kind for the purposes of this *Act*;
- Authorize, review, evaluate or approve surveys or studies of resources and facilities that may be used for the purposes of this *Act*;
- Provide advice and assistance to local authorities in the development, implementation and maintenance of emergency programs and plans;
- Make recommendations to the Minister respecting emergency management, including the creation and maintenance of emergency programs;
- Authorize and require surveys or studies to identify and record actual or potential hazards, risks and vulnerabilities that could cause or exacerbate an emergency in all or part of the NWT; and
- Advise the Minister on any matter concerning this *Act* or the regulations.

3.1.6 Territorial Planning Committee

The Territorial Planning Committee (TPC) is created pursuant to the *Act*. It is the primary planning forum for government emergency preparedness. Membership includes senior representation from all GNWT departments and agencies. The TPC is Chaired by the HEMO. Subject to the approval of the Minister the TPC may:

- Coordinate and lead emergency management planning for the GNWT and public agencies;
- Provide advice to the Minister in respect of emergency management planning; and
- Develop and maintain the territorial emergency plans.

The TPC shall:

- Review territorial emergency plans annually; and
- Exercise any other powers and perform any other duties as directed by the Minister.

3.1.7 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the Private Sector

To ensure the most effective response to emergencies all available community resources need to be considered as part of preparedness and response. There are a number of non-government volunteer and private sector organizations located in many NWT communities. This includes church or faith-based groups, service clubs, volunteer organizations, companies with work camps, equipment and supply resources, and other agencies with resources and services that could be utilized during emergencies. These organizations can provide a wide range of skills, manpower and equipment and may also have extensive expertise and connections with vulnerable populations. Community and GNWT planners should incorporate NGOs and private sector corporations' capabilities and resources into established emergency plans through established agreements.

Guidance for including NGOs and the private sector into community and GNWT emergency plans are included at **Appendix 3 – Planning Guidance – Non-Government Organizations and the Private Sector.**

3.1.8 First Nations on Reserve

First Nations on Reserve in the NWT have a responsibility for the development and implementation of emergency plans to reasonably protect the public, and minimize property damage and loss during emergencies. The federal department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) is responsible to support emergency management on First Nations on Reserve communities. To ensure emergency management services provided to First Nations on Reserve are comparable to those provided to other communities in provinces and territories, INAC negotiates agreements with each province and territory to provide emergency management services in exchange for reimbursement of eligible expenses.

The NWT has an established agreement with INAC to ensure First Nations on reserve in the NWT (Hay River Dene (K'atlodechee) First Nation and Salt River First Nation), have access to emergency response, recovery, preparedness and mitigation programs consistent with programs delivered to other NWT communities.

3.1.9 Self-Government Arrangements

Self-government is based upon the recognition of historic rights and puts resources and responsibilities back in the hands of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal and treaty rights have been recognized in the courts and are enshrined in the Constitution of Canada. Land claim and self-government agreements are negotiated on the basis of these rights. This includes land and resources agreements, self-government agreements and combined land, resources and self-government agreements.

A number of NWT Aboriginal groups have self-government and/or land claim agreements in place including the Tlicho, Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, Sahtu and Deline. Others continue negotiations toward that objective. With these arrangements, aboriginal groups have assumed responsibility for many governance functions from the GNWT. The GNWT through the NWT EMO provides emergency management programs and services to all NWT communities while being respectful of self-government arrangements.

3.2 Territorial Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

MACA maintains an updated territory wide Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (HIRA) to inform communities and GNWT departments of hazards specific to their environment.

The NWT HIRA can help identify hazards that exist in the territory, both natural, technological, and human-induced; how frequently they might occur; how severe their impact may be on communities, critical infrastructure, property, and the environment, in the past, now and in the future; and which hazards pose the greatest threat to communities. This information can be used in updates to territorial and community emergency plans, in the development of territorial or community disaster risk mitigation plans, to improve emergency response protocols and structures, and to guide the development of emergency response exercises, and training and awareness programs.

The HIRA is a critical part of the NWT emergency management program and should be re-evaluated and updated every five years.

The top five hazard risks in the NWT are:

- Wildfire
- Flood
- Severe Weather
- Transportation Incidents; and
- Critical Infrastructure Failure

Wildfire and flood in particular were found to be the highest risk hazards throughout the NWT. These hazards have frequently caused extensive damage to people, property, the environment and the economy. Both of these hazards are also expected to increase in frequency and severity due to climate change, causing more extensive damage in the future.

3.3 Territorial Coordination of Plans

Departments are responsible for planning and response to emergencies that fall within their mandates. While departmental plans deal with specific emergencies, the NWT Emergency Plan provides for high level coordination when more than one department is involved, consequence management to impacts on communities and residents, and support to department plans requiring coordination of support from multiple departments.

In order to achieve these objectives, the NWT Emergency Plan includes the following Annexes:

- Evacuation Guidelines – to guide action plan development for community evacuations; and
- Emergency Communications Protocol – to guide coordination of communications.

3.4 Emergency Communications

Clear communications by appropriate authorities are a critical before, during and after an emergency. Well-conceived and effectively delivered emergency messages can help prepare residents, ensure public safety, protect property, facilitate response efforts, elicit cooperation, instill public confidence, and help

families reunite. Emergency communications may include alerts and warnings; instructions on evacuations; road and facility closures; self-protective actions; and information on response status, available assistance, and other matters that relate to preparedness, response and recovery.

3.4.1 Public Communications

Public communications is a critical and continuous process. It requires coordination to ensure consistency and accuracy and must be timely, clear and easily understood by residents of the NWT. The GNWT Communications Group will guide government-wide public communications in accordance with the Emergency Communications Protocol.

3.4.2 Operational Communications

Operational communications are essential to the development of situational awareness and objectives necessary for the effective management and coordination of emergency operations. Complete, accurate, and timely communication must be maintained between all departments, all levels of government, and all response elements.

3.4.3 Public Alerting

The Territorial Public Alerting System (TPAS), NWT Alert Ready, provides public alerts to NWT residents during emergencies and disasters and is part of the national public alerting system "Alert Ready". It is designed to immediately deliver critical and potentially life-saving alerts to residents through television and radio networks across the NWT. When required the NWT EMO will use the TPAS to advise and update the public on emergency critical information including, information on risk, protective measures and instructions when residents are impacted by emergencies.

3.5 Emergency Telecommunications

In an emergency, effective telecommunications is critical to establish situational awareness, ensure the efficient exchange of information, coordinate response activities, exercise command and control, and provide for responder safety.

The primary communications systems for management of territorial emergency response are telephone voice and data using government systems. During major emergencies, departments or agencies with operational mandates may have specialized systems that could be used to augment NWT EMO operational communications requirements.

During communications outages, the NWT EMO maintains sufficient telecommunications equipment and modes to communicate between the territorial EOC and regional EOCs and between regional EOCs and communities. Departments and agencies are required to ensure sufficient back-up communications capability to communicate with the territorial EOC, regional EOCs and internally to support response activities during emergencies.

3.6 Federal and Other Province and Territory Assistance

Should an emergency threaten to overwhelm the resources of the NWT or specialized equipment and expertise be required; there are agreements in place where the resources of the federal government and resources from other provinces and territories can be called upon to assist.

3.6.1 Federal Assistance

The federal government under the National Emergency Response System may be called upon to provide federal assistance to province and territories during emergencies. Under the *Emergency Management Act*, the Minister of Public Safety is the federal Minister responsible for coordinating the Government of Canada response to an emergency.

The Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP) is the all-hazards plan for a coordinated federal response to emergencies. Federal departments frequently manage emergencies or provide support to a province or territory for events related to their specific mandate, within their own authorities and without requiring coordination from Public Safety Canada. Examples are Environment and Natural Resources Forestry Management Division with an agreement to bring in outside wildfire fighting resources and the Department of Health and Social Services with Health Canada/Public Health Agency of Canada for the coordination and provision of healthcare professionals from across the country during emergencies.

When an emergency requires an integrated Government of Canada response, the Public Safety Canada Prairies/NWT Region coordinates the response on behalf of federal government institutions in the region. This is also known as the "single window" concept. It is intended to facilitate interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination, without unduly restricting operations. This concept does not exclude or discourage interactions between supporting federal departments and supported provincial/territorial ministries. However, federal/provincial/territorial representatives share pertinent information with the Public Safety Regional Office/ Federal Coordination Centre and the Government Operations Centre in order to maintain situational awareness.

The National Emergency Response System describes the process for a provincial or territorial request for federal emergency assistance. The Public Safety Regional Director for the Prairies/NWT region is the federal agent responsible to respond to requests for federal assistance by the NWT.

The National Emergency Response System can also be used in instances where provinces or territories support a federal response to an emergency under federal jurisdiction. All GNWT support to federal departments and agencies will be provided in accordance with the provision of this plan.

Government of Canada assistance to provinces and territories is detailed in **Appendix 4 – Government of Canada Assistance.**

3.6.2 Canadian Armed Forces Assistance

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is organized, equipped and trained to defend Canada and, in cooperation with Canada's allies, protect and advance Canada's interests in the world community. While the CAF focuses on military tasks, the inherent flexibility of military units makes the CAF a potential source of assistance which may be called upon to support Canadian civilian authorities during time of emergencies.

Although the Canadian Forces are a potential source of assistance to civil authorities, any response to requests from civil authorities or the public is strictly bound by legal and administrative constraints. The following conditions must be met before the Canadian Armed Forces consider a request for assistance:

- No other government or private resources are available for the task
- Provision of assistance must not reduce or degrade defence capabilities
- Provision of assistance will not erode public respect or confidence in the Canadian Armed Forces
- Provision of assistance will not result in the Canadian Armed Forces competing with the private sector
- The assistance task is not one of a continuing nature
- Assistance requested is not in the nature of a general store or free labour pool

Joint Task Force (North) (JTFN) is responsible for Canadian Armed Forces operations and administration in northern Canada, namely the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut. JTFN is headquartered in Yellowknife, NWT, and is part of Canadian Joint Operations Command.

The EMO maintains a direct liaison relationship with JTFN on emergency management issues. To facilitate coordination of federal assistance (including military) during an emergency, Public Safety Canada acts as the primary point of contact for receiving and processing requests for assistance through the Public Safety Arctic Regional Office.

3.6.3 Mutual Aid Agreement

In July 2009, the Minister Responsible for Emergency Management signed a Memorandum of Understanding with all provinces and territories on the provision of inter-jurisdictional emergency management assistance. The purpose of the Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) agreement is to promote and facilitate emergency management assistance between provinces and territories, before, during and after a major event.

The EMMA is supported by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which outline the process of requesting and receiving assistance from other provinces and territories. When an impacted province or territory has activated their emergency management structure and has determined that additional resources and assistance will be required to adequately support emergency response efforts, the EMMA network can be accessed.

4.0 Prevention / Mitigation

Prevention and mitigation refers to actions intended to eliminate or reduce the impact of disasters to protect lives, property, the environment and reduce economic disruption. It includes structural mitigation measures (e.g. construction of dykes, drainage system improvements, relocation of buildings, etc.) and non-mitigation measures (e.g. building codes, land-use planning, and insurance incentives). It involves a wide range of projects and activities and a large number of stakeholders including communities, GNWT departments and regional staff. NWT EMO works with stakeholders to identify and support potential mitigation projects and facilitate access to federal mitigation programs including the National Disaster Mitigation Program.

5.0 Emergency Preparedness

A key area in being prepared for emergencies is having an emergency plan in place. NWT EMO acts as a resource to key stakeholders by providing advice, contacts and resource material in the development of emergency plans. The EMO assists communities by conducting community emergency planning and tabletop exercise workshops to develop and validate emergency plans.

Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Individuals and families should have a plan, an emergency kit and emergency contact information to stay connected. To promote emergency preparedness in the NWT, EMO conducts public awareness campaigns through radio and newspapers, and develops emergency preparedness literature for distribution to residents.

6.0 Emergency Response

6.1 Concept of Operations

The approach to emergency management in the NWT relies on participation from everyone including individuals/families, communities, the territorial government and other governments. An individual affected by an emergency is expected to have taken prudent precautionary measures beforehand and must provide for their own initial response. When an emergency is of the type or magnitude that exceeds an individual's capabilities, the Local Authority will respond. When the Local Authority's capacity to manage the response using community resources is exceeded, territorial assistance may be requested or offered. Should the territory require additional resources, the GNWT may request assistance from the Government of Canada or other provinces and territories under a mutual aid agreement.

Generally, response to emergencies may escalate through a number of levels of command and control as follows:

- The majority of emergencies are dealt with at the local level. Local Authorities are required to have emergency plans in place and enact them when an emergency event impacts the community. Direction and control of response operations is conducted by local officials. The regional EMO will be notified and provided situational awareness to monitor the situation for possible GNWT involvement.
- Should the Local Authority request assistance to deal with an emergency, or become overwhelmed by the nature of the incident, GNWT support is provided. While community response operations will remain under the direction and control of the Local Authority, GNWT support is directed and controlled by the regional EMO as a designated incident manager. In circumstances where the Local Authority is overwhelmed, the community is not established as a municipal corporation or the emergency extends beyond the boundaries of a community, the regional EMO may take some or all responsibility for direction and control of emergency response operations.
- When an event impacts a large area involving more than one community or region, or is seen as beyond the capacity of Local Authorities, the Minister may impose territorial control over the emergency response. The Minister may invoke territorial control by declaration of a State of Emergency.

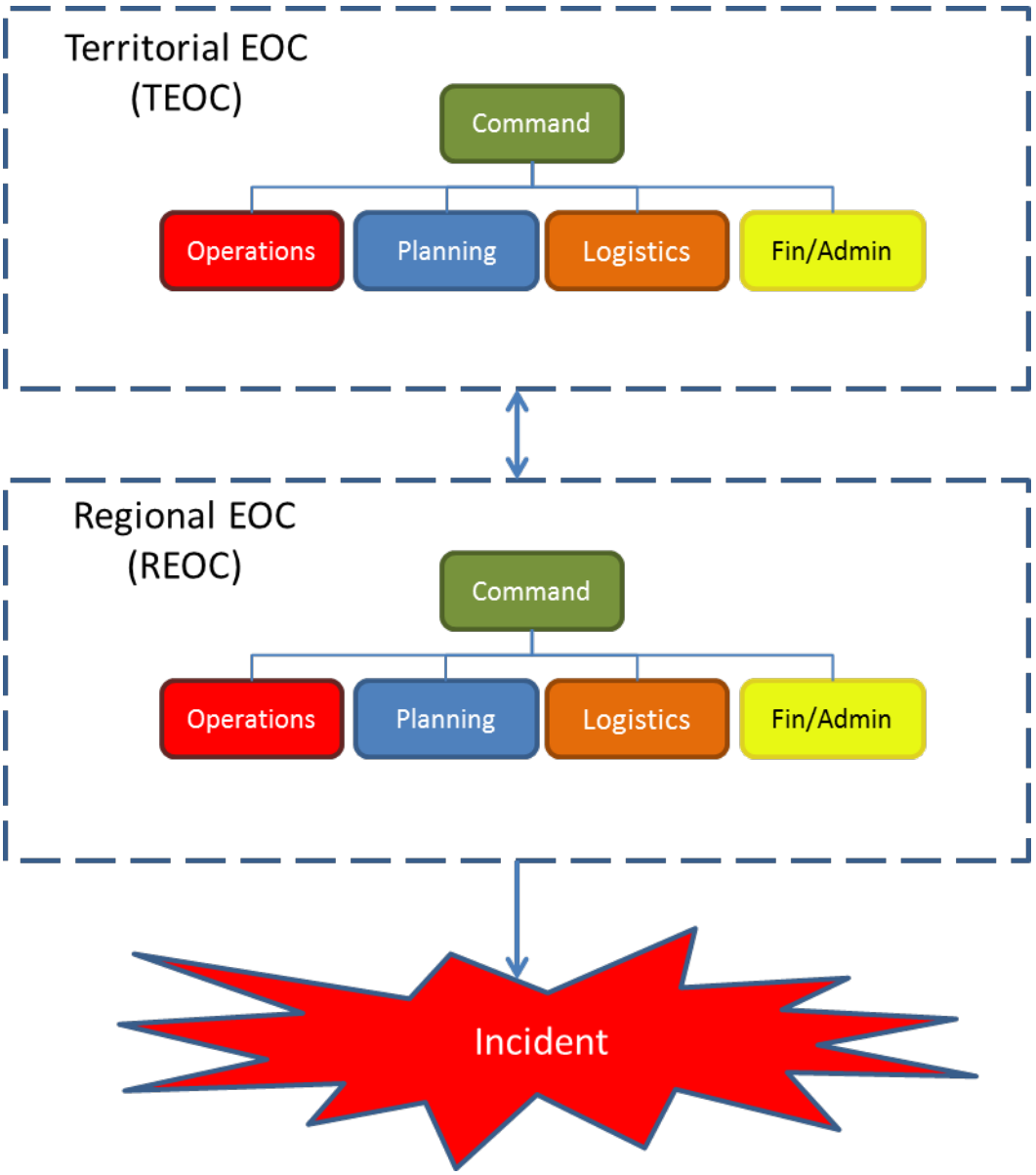
Should an emergency take place outside a community boundary or in an unincorporated area, requiring a multiple department response from the GNWT, the NWT EMO will coordinate and provide direction and control as required.

6.2 Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is an incident management tool designed as a standardized and coordinated approach to managing emergencies that provides functional interoperability at all levels of emergency management. ICS breaks up tasks into functional areas of Command, Operations, Planning, logistics and Finance/Administration. The NWT EMO has adopted ICS as its response model for the purposes of the NWT Emergency Plan.

6.3 GNWT Response Structure

The basic structure established for the response to emergencies follows the ICS model. Regional EOCs and Incident Management Teams support communities during emergencies. The Territorial EOC and Incident Management Team supports regions in their response and leads territorial level responses and/or responses to requests for assistance from the federal government.



6.3.1 Territorial Emergency Operations Centre

The territorial EMO is responsible for the Territorial Emergency Operation Centre (TEOC). The TEOC may be activated to support the response to emergencies within the territory. It will coordinate overall territorial response, ensure communications with appropriate EOCs, provide regular situational reports and coordinate the involvement of other departments and key stakeholders.

6.3.2 Regional Emergency Operations Centres

The regional EMO is responsible for the Regional Emergency Operation Centre (REOC). The REOC may be activated to monitor a risk situation, respond to a request for assistance from a community or to support a territorial response to an emergency. The MACA Regional Superintendent, as the incident manager, may assign an Incident Management Team to provide community liaison, operational support

and assist in providing situational awareness to the REOC. The REOC provides overall coordination of a regional response and timely support to communities needing assistance.

6.3.3 Departmental Emergency Operations Centres

Other GNWT departments have Departmental Emergency Operation Centres (DEOC's). These DEOC's provide coordination and support for emergency response that fall within the specific department's mandate. When required the TEOC and REOC's will set up liaison arrangements with a DEOC to share information and coordinate response activities.

6.3.4 Federal Government Operations Center

The Government Operations Centre (GOC) provides an all-hazards integrated federal emergency response to events (potential or actual hazards, natural or human-induced, either accidental or intentional) of national interest. It provides 24/7 monitoring and reporting, national-level situational awareness, warning products and integrated risk assessments, as well as national-level planning and whole-of-government response management. The GOC is kept informed of territorial emergencies through situational awareness reports to the Public Safety Canada Prairies/NWT Regional Office.

During a response, the activities of federal government institutions must be closely coordinated if the Government of Canada is to respond effectively. Therefore a regional Federal Coordination Centre (FCC) is stood up to carry out this responsibility and enhance the Federal Government's capability to respond to emergencies. The Federal Coordination Centre also becomes the single point of contact for provincial/territorial emergency operations centres during a major response within that region.

6.3.5 EOC Activation Levels

The TEOC and REOCs will monitor and respond to emergency incidents or potential incidents according to three levels of activation. The level of activation will depend on the severity of the incident and the appropriate type and level of staffing required to monitor and/or respond. Assistance and augmentation from departments will be requested as circumstances dictate. The following EOC activation levels will be used by the TEOC and REOCs:

Activation Level	Definition	Requirements
Monitoring	• Active monitoring and sharing of information pertaining to a pending or potential emergency.	• Done by NWT EMO staff. There is no requirement for designated GNWT staff to report to the EOC.
Partial Activation	• Information on the occurring, pending or potential emergency dictates a requirement for limited or targeted response including multi-agency coordination and reporting. For example, supporting a community in responding to a small scale or localized emergency incident.	• Done by NWT EMO staff with MACA augmentation. May require other designated GNWT staff to report to the EOC.
Full Activation	• Information on the occurring, pending or potential emergency dictates a requirement for a multi-agency and/or	• Designated GNWT staff would be called to territorial and regional EOCs to assist.

Activation Level	Definition	Requirements
	multi-jurisdictional large scale response. For example, emergencies that impact multiple communities and/or regions of the NWT or national emergencies.	

6.3.6 Resourcing of EOCs

All departments and agencies of the GNWT are required to support an emergency response by providing staff and resources in accordance with the Plan. Part of that support is a requirement to provide staff when required to work in the TEOC and REOCs and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to support incident action planning.

When an event occurs and the TEOC and/or REOCs are activated the initial response will be conducted by NWT EMO and MACA augmentation staff. Once the situation is assessed and the Incident Commander identifies that additional augmentation is required from other departments, a request will be made through Deputy Ministers for additional designated and trained staff. The NWT EMO will maintain a contact list of SMEs specific to each hazard risk area, with identified alternates. When required, SMEs will be contacted directly and requested to assist incident action planning.

The NWT EMO will provide training and exercise opportunities for identified EOC support staff to obtain sufficient training and experience to fill EOC positions.

6.4 Response Activation

6.4.1 Emergency Response Priorities

Emergency response priorities help guide decision making on response activities. The following emergency response priorities are used within the NWT. The response priorities are listed in order of priority and should be use when developing operational plans and for general decision making within the EOCs.

Priorities in conducting emergency response operations are:

1. Provide for the safety and health of all responders
2. Save lives
3. Reduce suffering
4. Protect public health
5. Protect critical infrastructure
6. Protect property
7. Protect the environment
8. Reduce economic and social losses

6.4.2 Activation Authority

At the territorial level, when deemed necessary, it is the responsibility of the HEMO to activate the plan, the TEOC and staffing for ICS functional management including SME support to planning. It is also the territorial EMO responsibility to demobilize and stand-down elements of the emergency response when no longer required.

At the regional level, when deemed necessary, it is the responsibility of the Regional Head of EMO to activate the plan, the REOC and staffing for ICS functional management including SME support to planning. It is also the regional EMO responsibility to demobilize and stand-down elements of the emergency response when no longer required.

6.4.3 Response Types

The NWT EMO adapted the ICS response types to guide decision making and understanding of response requirements. The ICS model consists of General and Command Staff and the use of Incident Management Teams to achieve operational objectives. The established ICS Types are as follows:

Incident Type	Resources	Time Span
Type 5 – increased risk to a community or a developing situation.	• Possibly one or two single resources required. Command and General Staff positions are not activated. • ICS Form 201 required, no Incident Action Plan required.	Incident is contained within the first operational period and often within a few hours.
Type 4 – minor incident within the capabilities of a community.	• Command and General Staff functions are activated only if needed. Several resources are required to mitigate the incident. • ICS Form 201 required, no Incident Action Plan required.	Limited to one operational period in the control phase.
Type 3 – an incident resulting in moderate to severe impact to a community.	• The community requires operational support. Some or all of the Command and General Staff positions may be activated. The Operations Section may be expanded and/or an Incident Management Team with appropriate resources assigned. • A written Incident Action Plan may be required for each operational period.	The incident may extend into multiple operational periods.
Type 2 – an incident resulting in severe impacts to a community	• Territorial resources are required to safely and effectively manage the incident. Most or all Command and General Staff positions are filled. The Operations Section could grow with an increase in personnel. • A written Incident Action Plan is required.	The incident is expected to go into multiple operational periods
Type 1 - major incident or imminent event with wide spread damage or incidents affecting	• This type of incident is the most complex to safely and effectively manage. All Command and General Staff positions are activated. Operational personnel may expand and resources from the federal government	The incident is expected to go into multiple operational periods.

Incident Type	Resources	Time Span
multiple communities and regions	and/or other provinces and territories are likely involved. • A written Incident Action Plan is required for each operational period.	

6.5 Requests for Assistance

6.5.1 Community Request for Assistance

Community and First Nations on Reserve in the NWT requests for assistance will be directed to regional EMOs. Requests must originate from an authorized representative of the community government making the request and is contingent on local resources being fully committed.

6.5.2 Federal Request for Assistance

The federal government is responsible to maintain emergency plans and respond to emergencies involving federal jurisdiction in the NWT. When federal resources resident in the NWT are fully employed, the federal government may request assistance from the NWT. Requests for regional assistance from a federal department resident in a particular region may be directed to the EMO of that region. Should the assistance involve more than one region or is a major emergency, requests should come from Public Safety Canada to the territorial EMO.

6.6 States of Emergency

The *Act* provides a provision to declare a State of Emergency, should an emergency exist and additional powers are required to respond to the emergency by the Minister or Local Authority.

The procedure for declaring states of emergency is included in **Appendix 5 – Procedure for Declaring a State of Emergency.**

6.6.1 State of Local Emergency

If a Local Authority is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist within the community, the local authority may, by bylaw/resolution, declare a state of local emergency to exist in all or part of the community. A declaration of a state of local emergency must identify the nature of the emergency and the area of the community in which it exists. On making a declaration, the local authority shall notify the population of the affected area and send a copy of the declaration immediately to the Minister through the regional EMO.

On making a declaration of a state of local emergency the local authority may, for the duration of the declaration, do all acts and take all necessary action required to deal with the emergency.

6.6.2 State of Territorial Emergency

If the Minister is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist, the Minister may, by order, declare a state of emergency to exist in all or part of the NWT. The declaration of a state of emergency must identify the nature of the emergency and the area of the NWT in which it exists. On making a

declaration the Minister shall notify the population of the affected area, without delay, of the declaration and its contents.

On making a declaration of a state of emergency, the Minister may, for the duration of the declaration, do all acts and take all necessary action required to deal with the emergency.

6.7 National Emergencies

Within Canada's constitutional framework, the provincial and territorial governments and local authorities provide the first response to the vast majority of emergencies. If an emergency threatens to overwhelm the resources of any individual province/territory, the federal government may intervene at the specific request of the province/territory.

The National Emergency Response System is the mechanism used to respond to major domestic emergencies. It provides for the harmonization of joint federal, provincial and territorial response by supporting and facilitating procurement and logistics coordination between all levels of government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and international stakeholders. It describes emergency response interactions and linkages between individual provinces/territories and Public Safety Canada.

The federal government collaborates with provinces and territories through an annual meeting of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers responsible for emergency management, and regular meetings at Deputy Minister, senior official and working group levels. The Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management provides a forum for federal, provincial and territorial discussions on emergency response integration whereby recommendations are formulated and proposed to Deputy Ministers. Working groups are established as required to support the intergovernmental collaboration on issue-specific multi-stakeholder projects.

7.0 Recovery

Emergencies or disasters can cause physical or psychological trauma, damage infrastructure, displace residents, disrupt services, and affect businesses, facilities and community programs. The recovery phase of an emergency or disaster can begin during the response period and last for years. It can affect all facets of a community and include returning of evacuated residents, the winding down of response operations and rebuilding of damaged areas.

The recovery phase must be managed in a way that maintains the needed level of government service while assisting the community to adjust to the post-disaster realities. An orderly transition to the recovery phase is required to support the new needs of the community and the issues facing government.

7.1 Disaster Assistance

The GNWT may provide financial assistance to community governments, small businesses, and residents of the NWT who have suffered damage as a result of a disaster. The GNWT's Disaster Assistance Policy (DAP) may provide financial support to assist individuals, small businesses and community governments in recovering from a disaster and restoring damaged property to its pre-disaster condition.

The DAP is similar to disaster assistance programs established in other jurisdictions in Canada and is closely aligned with the federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA). DFAA provides financial assistance to provinces and territories to help them cover costs relating to a disaster.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Terms and Acronyms	Definition
AAR	**After Action Review** - a structured review or de-brief process for analyzing what happened, why it happened, and how it can be done better by those involved in an emergency exercise or event.
Act	For the purposes of the NWT Emergency Plan, *Act* means the *Emergency Management Act.*
Agency	A business or organization established to provide a particular service. For the purposes of the NWT Emergency Plan, agency 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.
CEM	**Comprehensive Emergency Management -** an integrated approach to the management of emergencies that includes all phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery), for all types of emergencies and disasters, and for all levels of government and the private sector.
DAP	**Disaster Assistance Policy** – a GNWT policy that guides the provision of financial assistance to community governments, small businesses, or residents of the Northwest Territories who have suffered damage as a result of a disaster.
DEOC	**Departmental Emergency Operations Centre** – an Emergency Operations Centre located within a GNWT department.
DFAA	**Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements** – a federal government program that provides financial assistance to provincial and territorial governments following large-scale natural disasters.
Emergency	For the purposes of the NWT Emergency Plan, 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.
EMMA	**Emergency Management Mutual Aid Agreement –** an agreement by provinces and territories to provide assistance to each other during emergencies.
EOC	**Emergency Operations Centre –** the physical location where an organization comes together during an emergency to coordinate response and recovery actions and resources.
GNWT	**Government of the Northwest Territories.**
GOC	**Government Operations Centre** – the federal government EOC that provides an all-hazards integrated federal emergency response to events of national interest.
HIRA	**Hazard Identification Risk Assessment –** a process used to identify and evaluate both existing and potential hazards.
HEMO	**Head of the Emergency Management Organization.**
ICS	**Incident Command System -** a standardized on site management system designed to enable effective, efficient incident management by integrating

	a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure.
IMT	**Incident Management Team –** under ICS, the team assigned to manage an incident and includes the Incident Commander, Command Staff (liaison, safety and communications) and General Staff (operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration).
Local Authority	For the purposes of the *Emergency Management Act* means: • A municipal council, or • An authority that the Minister recognizes as representative of a community other than a municipality.
Minister	The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, responsible for Emergency Management.
NERS	**National Emergency Response System** – a component of Canada's emergency response management system that provides for the harmonization of joint federal, provincial and territorial response to emergencies.
NWT EMO	The NWT Emergency Management Organization consisting of the Territorial EMO resident in the Public Safety Division of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Regional EMOs resident in the five MACA regional offices.
Regional EMO	The regional portion of the NWT EMO, Regional EMOs are resident in the five MACA regional offices.
REOC	**Regional Emergency Operations Centre** – an EOC used by a regional EMO for managing regional emergency operations and coordinating support to community emergencies.
SAO	**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.*
SOPs	**Standard Operating Procedures** – established or prescribed methods to be followed routinely for the performance of designated operations or in designated situations.
State of Emergency	A declaration relating to all or any part of the Northwest Territories, made by order of the Minister under the *Emergency Management Act*, at any time he/she is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist.
State of Local Emergency	A declaration by a community government under the *Emergency Management Act* relating to all or any part of the community, made by bylaw or resolution, at any time the local authority is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist.
SME	**Subject Matter Expert –** An expert in the field; someone who has specific knowledge concerning a subject.
TEOC	**Territorial Emergency Operations Centre** – the GNWT EOC for managing territorial emergency operations and coordinating support to Regions and communities during emergencies.

Territorial EMO	The territorial portion of the NWT EMO resident in the Public Safety Division of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.
TPAS	**Territorial Public Alerting System** – the NWT alerting system to provide public alerts to NWT residents during emergencies and disasters and is part of the national public alerting system “Alert Ready”.
TPC	**Territorial Planning Committee**

Appendix 2 – Department and Agency Specific Roles and Responsibilities

Education, Culture and Employment

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for the following:

- Provide for the evacuation of schools and the movement of students to safe areas as required;
- When requested, assist communities in meeting the needs of disaster victims by providing early emergency financial assistance to meet immediate needs incurred during an emergency;
- Assist communities in meeting the needs of disaster victims by providing or arranging the use of school infrastructure during emergencies; and
- Provide emergency French translation services.

Environment and Natural Resources

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is responsible for the following:

Environment:

- Coordinate GNWT response to hazardous goods spills, clean-up operations, cause investigations and disposal arrangements;
- Provide technical personnel and advice to local authorities, NWT EMO and other agencies respecting environmental protection matters;
- Provide situational awareness of suspected and/or confirmed contamination on territorial waters due to an environmental emergency;
- Provide damage assessment information within areas of departmental interest;
- Provide damage assessments of the economic impact of environmental emergencies;
- Provide advice on disaster assistance and recovery options and the impact on business and industrial recovery;
- Provide advice and technical expertise on dangerous goods management and response;
- Provide advice and technical expertise for hazardous materials or wastes, including suspect substances; and
- Provide situational awareness of air, water and land pollution monitoring, reporting and clean-up activities.

Forest Management:

- Provide situational awareness to NWT EMO and communities on wildfire conditions, behavior and risk, and recommend appropriate courses of action; and
- Provide special firefighting and safety equipment and other specialized materials and supplies in support of emergency response operations.

Water Resources:

- Provide situational awareness to NWT EMO and communities on flood conditions, behavior and risk, and recommend appropriate courses of action;
- Provide meteorological and hydrological data and forecasts to the NWT EMO during emergency operations; and
- Provide technical assistance for groundwater, hydrology and sewage problems during emergencies.

Wildlife:

- Provide technical personnel and advice to local authorities, NWT EMO and other agencies respecting wildlife emergencies, risk and impacts.

Executive and Indigenous Affairs

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of the Executive and Indigenous Affairs is responsible for the following:

Cabinet Communications:

- Enact and coordinate the Emergency Communications Protocol when required or requested by the NWT EMO.

Finance

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Finance is responsible for the following:

Human Resources:

- Assist in the seconding of government employees to emergency response organizations and activities and provide advice on how it may affect terms and conditions of employment.

Health and Social Services

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for the following:

- Execute the department emergency response plan, which could include, among other things, the actions outlined below;
- Carry out operational coordination of health care resources across sectors in order to meet the requirements of the emergency, in coordination with the TEOC and other departments and stakeholders where required. The Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Minister of Health and Social Services have statutory authority over public health matters and resources;
- Ensure continuity of essential health-care services;
- Maintain a list of appropriate data on patients hospitalized for casualties or diseases related to the emergency;
- Provide and coordinate comprehensive assessments of the health impact of emergencies and the ability to continue providing essential health services;
- Provide liaison with the Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response and the Center for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control, Health Canada; the Public Health Agency of Canada; provincial counterparts; and other jurisdictions as potential sources for consultation and/or direct assistance;
- Assist Regional health officials, and public and private health care institutions with the identification, treatment, and control of all conditions related to public health;
- Determine the need for additional health care providers, equipment, and supplies during an emergency;
- Provide advice on regulation and inspection of domestic water supplies affected by the emergency;
- Provide advice on public health issues concerning the sanitary control, handling, and disposal of solid waste and other refuse during an emergency, consistent with all applicable laws;
- Provide advice on aspects of the identification, processing, storage, movement, and disposition of the deceased;
- Provide technological assessment, toxicological analysis, and other support services to local authorities in emergencies, as required;
- Work with healthcare providers and institutions to manage/redeploy health resources (people, supplies and equipment) as required by the emergency;
- Provide critical incident stress debriefing for victims and emergency response personnel; and
- Provide for the evacuation of health facilities and the movement of patients to safe areas when required.
- Assist affected communities in the delivery of emergency social services;
- When requested, assist communities in meeting the needs of disaster victims by providing or arranging for:
    - emergency shelter, food and clothing,
    - victim registration and inquiry services, and
    - personal services.

- Liaise with private social service organizations, including the Red Cross, during an emergency and act as the link between them and the Territorial Emergency Operations Centre; and
- Provide assessments of the impacts of emergencies on the delivery of essential social services, including an evaluation of the need for special assistance to meet unique human service demands.

Industry, Tourism and Investment

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is responsible for the following:

Tourism and Parks:

- Evacuate and close Territorial Parks as required or if requested by the NWT EMO; and
- When requested, assist emergency response operations by providing or arranging the use of park's infrastructure during emergencies.

Informatics Shared Services

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, Informatics Shared Services is responsible for the following:

- Provide emergency geomatics services when requested by the NWT EMO.

Infrastructure

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Infrastructure is responsible for the following:

Asset Management (Electrical/Mechanical Safety, Infrastructure Operations, Design and Technical Services):

- Provide initial damage assessments and estimates of government owned and/or occupied buildings and Crown facilities;
- Coordinate the relocation of government offices and acquisition of new office space when necessary during an emergency;
- Provide accommodation services for office and special purpose space needed for GNWT personnel during an emergency;
- Provide technical advice on electrical installations, pressure vessels and other mechanical installations which may affect the response to an emergency;
- Manage emergency supplies/purchases including receiving, storage and redistribution.
- Provide emergency postal/courier services; and
- Provide engineering, architectural, project management, contract and administrative support to emergency response, recovery and reconstruction projects.

Procurement and Shared Services:

- Provide emergency procurement services to support emergency response efforts (i.e. emergency relief supplies, space, office supplies and equipment, telecommunication, communications, and other emergency equipment).

Fuel Services:

- Provide situational awareness to NWT EMO and communities on fuel supply issues related to emergencies, and recommend appropriate courses of action;
- Provide technical advice on fuel availability and distribution issues during an emergency; and
- Provide specialized equipment and technical personal and advice on environmental emergencies related to fuel distribution and storage.

Technology Services Centre:

- Provide priority technical services to the NWT EMO and the TEOC/REOCs during emergencies.

Transportation:

- Assist with the movement of emergency response personnel and equipment to/from the affected areas as requested and where possible;
- Coordinate transportation assets to evacuate affected persons from the risk area to a safe designated location;
- Provide transportation equipment and operators when requested and when available;
- Provide mobile radio systems when required;
- Provide the use of Airport facilities and services;
- Provide damage assessments of public transportation facilities;
- Provide transportation of and/or arranging for the transportation of emergency materials and supplies;
- Authorize the closure or restricted use of airports, highways, roads and ferries when required during emergencies; and
- Provide situational awareness to NWT EMO and communities on highways and airports as it relates to impacts on the supply system during emergencies and recommend appropriate courses of action.

Justice

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Justice is responsible for the following:

Coroner's Office:

- Enact and coordinate the Mass Fatality Plan when required;
- Provide coroner services as required during emergencies; and
- Provide advice on aspects of the identification, processing, storage, movement, and disposition of the deceased.

Community Justice and Community Policing:

- Coordinate requests for Canadian Forces assets and resources in support of law enforcement operations during emergencies;
- Provide technical advice on law enforcement to the NWT EMO;
- Develop public order plans for events of a territorial nature; and
- Coordinate law enforcement and traffic control support throughout the territory during emergency operations.

Corrections Service:

- Ensure the protection and security of correctional institutions populations and evacuations if required; and
- Ensure continuity of care and protective measures for correctional institutions and persons under custody.

Lands

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Lands is responsible for the following:

- Provide personnel and resources to support remote area evacuations when required;
- Provide technical personnel and advice to NWT EMO respecting land use matters during response and recovery activities; and
- Provide situational awareness to NWT EMO on land use and infrastructure in remote areas at increased risk.

Municipal and Community Affairs

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is responsible for the following:

Emergency Management:

- Coordinate and manage volunteers during major emergencies.

Office of the Fire Marshal:

- Provide technical personnel and advice to local authorities, NWT EMO and other agencies respecting fire safety and protection during emergencies and recovery operations.

Consumer Affairs:

- Provide technical advice on consumer protection measures during emergencies and recovery.

Corporate Affairs:

- Coordinate the process for declaring a State of Territorial Emergency when recommended by the NWT EMO.

NWT Housing Corporation

In addition to the common roles and responsibilities of all government departments and agencies identified in section 3.1.3, the NWT Housing Corporation is responsible for the following:

- When required, support the provision of shelter and accommodation for evacuated people who cannot return to their homes for some time due to the nature of the emergency or impact; and
- Provide advice to assist in the determination of appropriate options for longer-term emergency housing, when needed.

Appendix 3 – Planning Guidance - Non-Government Organizations and the Private Sector

General

There are a number of Non-Government Organizations and private sector corporations with a presence in NWT communities that can contribute considerably to emergency preparedness and response.

Guidelines

Local authorities and GNWT departments may enter into agreements with Non-Government Organizations and private sector corporations to obtain their services for emergency preparedness and response through a Memorandum of Understanding or a Letter of Undertaking. These agreements should indicate the type of services provided, procedures for provision of services and limitations on employment if necessary. The procedures for initiating the service support in an emergency should be reflected in community or departmental emergency plans.

Non-Government Organizations

Non-Government Organizations including volunteer groups must be assigned to an appropriate emergency response agency to ensure coordination of preparedness, callout and employment during response activities.

Volunteers need to be registered with local authorities and GNWT departments to be protected under the Worker's Compensation Act. Registration should occur during preparedness activities in order to ensure coverage during training. Registration information should include the volunteer's name, health number (or other identifying element) and the general skill/employment for which they are registered. The deployment of registered volunteers during an emergency or for emergency training should be recorded, including dates and times.

Private Sector Corporations

Many communities have private sector corporations represented who are able to contribute to emergency preparedness and response. Some also manage resources considered critical infrastructure in communities that may require additional coordination and prioritization during emergencies to ensure critical functions and services are maintained. Key private sector corporations in the NWT include communications providers, power suppliers, transportation companies, oil and gas development and mining and resource development companies. These corporations need to be included in the emergency planning, preparedness and response process. Community and GNWT planners need to negotiate suitable arrangements in support of emergency plans specific to the availability and presence of public sector capabilities. While some of these arrangements will be mutually beneficial, as in the case of critical infrastructure availability, some related to extraordinary services, may require contractual arrangements.

Appendix 4 – Government of Canada Assistance

Federal Policy for Emergency Management

The Government of Canada has adopted an all-hazards approach to emergency management, encompassing four interdependent, but integrated functions: mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Effective emergency management dictates the need for a seamless relationship across all of these emergency management functions.

Within the respective Minister's area of responsibility, federal institutions are responsible for developing, testing, and maintaining mandate-specific emergency management plans and identify risks that are within or related to their area of responsibility, as outlined in the Emergency Management Act. A risk-based emergency management cycle should be embedded within an institution's broader integrated planning processes.

The risk assessment aims to gain an understanding of potential risks associated with all types of natural and human-induced hazards and disasters. Such an assessment would also identify the potential impacts of these events on people, property and the environment. Risk assessment can provide the basis on which appropriate prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures can be planned, provide information on likely damage impacts and operating difficulties, and facilitate rapid emergency responses, based on acceptable risk tolerance levels.

Public Safety Canada will lead the coordination of federal government emergency management activities including public communications into a common horizontal approach and will facilitate collaboration and seamless relationships across all federal institutions. In consultation with other government departments, in support of this Policy, Public Safety Canada will provide operational tools, guidelines, and best practices for undertaking all phases of emergency management planning, including conducting risk assessments

Authorities and Legislation

Emergencies Act

An *Act* to authorize the taking of special temporary measures to ensure safety and security during national emergencies and to amend other acts in consequence thereof

Emergency Management Act

The *Act* recognizes the roles that all stakeholders must play in Canada's emergency management system. It sets out the leadership role and responsibilities of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, including coordinating emergency management activities among government institutions and in cooperation with the provinces and other entities. Responsibilities of other federal ministers are also set out in the *Act*.

An Emergency Management Framework for Canada

The federal government is dedicated to working collaboratively with provinces and territories to support communities when disasters strike. The Framework establishes a common approach for a range of collaborative emergency management initiatives in support of safe and resilient communities.

Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP)

The Minister of Public Safety is responsible for promoting and coordinating emergency management plans, and for coordinating the Government of Canada's response to an emergency.

The Federal Emergency Response Plan (FERP) applies to domestic emergencies and to international emergencies with a domestic impact. This plan has both national and regional level components, which provide a framework for effective integration of effort both horizontally and vertically throughout the Federal Government.

The FERP is designed to harmonize emergency response efforts by the federal and provinces/territorial Governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. The FERP is the all-hazards plan for an integrated and Government of Canada response to emergencies and which include 13 emergency support functions which the Federal Government can implement in response to an emergency.

Each of these functions addresses a need that may arise before or during an emergency:

#	EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION	MINISTER(S) WITH PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1	Transportation	Transport Canada
2	Telecommunications	Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada
3	Agriculture and Agri-Food	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada/ Canadian Food Inspection Agency
4	Energy Production and Distribution	Natural Resources Canada
5	Public Health and Essential Human Services	Health Portfolio, Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada
6	Environment	Environment and Climate Change Canada
7	Human and Social Services	Employment and Social Development Canada
8	Law Enforcement	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
9	International Coordination	Global Affairs Canada
10	Government Services	Public Services and Procurement Canada
11	Logistics Operations Management	Public Safety Canada

12	Communications	Public Safety Canada, Communications Directorate
13	Border Services	Canada Border Services Agency

Public Safety Canada Regional (AB/NWT) Roles and Responsibilities:

In the regions, Public Safety Canada:

- Main point of contact for EMO's on a day to day basis and during emergencies
- Provide support/surge capacity to lead primary federal department
- Coordinates efforts of regional federal family
- Ensures seamless operations and communications link to Government Operations Centre (GOC)

Coordination efforts include:

- Regional crisis management machinery
- Strategic planning & advice
- Provision of situational awareness
- Identification and assessment of risks
- Information sharing between stakeholders
- Public communications amongst stakeholders
- Provision of surge capacity
- Requests for Federal Assistance (RFA)

Federal Response to a Territorial Emergency

The federal government would be involved in an emergency in the following circumstances:

- The territorial government requests federal resources
- The federal government implements the national support plan or portions of it
- A federal department is the lead department and may require resources from other federal departments, and
- Federal assets have been or may be impacted by the emergency in which business recovery / continuity efforts need to be implemented.

During a significant emergency event in the Northwest Territories, a Regional **Federal Coordination Centre** (FCC) will be activated. The key role of the FCC during an emergency is to act as a coordination centre for the federal departments with responsibilities to the Northwest Territories. The FCC will link to the territorial government by providing a direct federal point of contact for information sharing, assistance and advice, including assistance to the territorial government in any request for federal resources, and providing regular updates on federal government activities, both at the national and regional levels.

The **NWT Federal Coordination Working Group** (FCWG) is stood up during emergencies and is chaired by PS Canada's Regional EM Manager or Senior Program Officer designate. The FCWG is a permanent committee of regional federal emergency managers, mandated with managing the federal regional response to an event. The FCWG enhances horizontal planning and response at the regional level, and ensures influence of regional input at the national level.

Request for Federal Emergency Assistance (RFA) Process

A request for assistance is the formalization of the need, at the request of a territory, for the federal government to provide support towards emergency response efforts.

A territorial request for assistance during an emergency specifies the additional support or resources that the affected region determines are required for a successful emergency response.

The Public Safety Canada offices in each region are the primary agent responsible for the receipt of territorial requests for assistance. PS offices are required to support the territories with these requests as well as liaise with federal coordinating committees and the Government Operations Centre to expedite the federal response.

When a territory determines that there is a need for federal government support, the process is initiated by a verbal request and may be followed by a formal letter between Ministers. Should a letter be required the federal government will inform the territory and coordinate efforts through the respective Public Safety Canada office.

Appendix 5 – Procedure for Declaring a State of Emergency

Territorial State of Emergency

General

The *Emergency Management Act* provides for a State of Emergency to be declared, should the need arise. The declaration of a State of Emergency provides additional powers to the Minister and those designated by the Minister to do all acts and take all necessary proceedings, for the duration of the order, to deal with an emergency.

Procedure

The NWT EMO will recommend to the Minister the need for declaring a State of Emergency.

The Minister will complete a Declaration of a State of Emergency in accordance with Section 14 of the *Emergency Management Act.*

The Department of the Executive's Press Officer will provide a formal release regarding the details of the Declaration.

Termination

The State of Emergency is terminated by either the lapse of fourteen (14) days or by a pronouncement by the Minister.

Format for a State of Emergency

WHEREAS an emergency exists in _____ due to _____.

THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 14 of the *Emergency Management Act*, I hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists in _____.

_____ and designated officials in charge of emergency operations may do all acts and take all necessary proceedings to protect life and property.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Signature: _____

State of Local Emergency

General

The *Emergency Measures Act* provides for a State of Local Emergency to be declared by the Local authority, should the need arise. The declaration of a State of Local Emergency provides additional powers to the Local Authority to do all acts and take all necessary proceedings, for the duration of the order, to deal with an emergency.

Procedure

The community Emergency Coordinator will recommend to the Mayor/Chief the need for declaring a State of Local Emergency.

The Mayor/Chief will complete a Declaration of a State of Local Emergency in accordance with Section 18 of the *Emergency Management Act.*

A special meeting of Council/Band will be called and the State of Local Emergency enacted through bylaw/resolution.

The community Emergency Coordinator is responsible to ensure a copy of the declaration is provided immediately to the Minister through the Regional EMO and that residents are notified by the most effective means available.

Termination

A State of Local Emergency is terminated by the lapse of seven (7) days unless cancelled by the Minister or terminated or renewed by the Local Authority.

Format for a State of Local Emergency

Whereas the _____(insert community name) is threatened due to _____(insert the nature and condition of the emergency)

Therefore the Council declares that a State of Local Emergency exists in _____(community name).

Date: _____ Time: _____

Signatures: _____

NWT EMERGENCY PLAN – ANNEX A

EVACUATION GUIDELINES

2018

Government of Northwest Territories
Gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

(Intentionally Blank)

Table of Contents

1.0 General 4
1.1 Introduction 4
1.2 Authority 4
1.3 Purpose 4
1.4 Guideline Development and Maintenance 5
2.0 Roles and Responsibilities 5
2.1 Local Authorities 5
2.2 NWT EMO – Region 6
2.3 NWT EMO - Territorial 6
2.4 GNWT Departments and Agencies 6
3.0 Evacuation Guidance 7
3.1 Types of Evacuations 7
3.1.1 No Notice Evacuation 7
3.1.2 Pre-Planned Evacuation 8
3.1.3 Evacuation of Private Industry and Commercial Sites 8
3.2 Concept of Operations 8
3.2.1 Communities 8
3.2.2 Unincorporated areas 9
3.3 Planning Considerations 9
3.3.1 Risk Assessments 9
3.3.2 Maintaining Family and Community Unity 9
3.3.3 Cultural and Family Familiar Surroundings 10
3.3.4 Use of Resources 10
3.3.5 Number of Evacuees Requiring Support 10
3.3.6 Evacuation Duration 10
3.3.7 Emergency Shelters/Shelter-in-Place 10
3.4 Evacuation Terminology 11
3.4.1 Evacuation Notice 11
3.4.2 Evacuation Alert 11
3.4.3 Evacuation Order 12
3.4.4 Evacuation All Clear 12
3.5 Evacuation Phases 12
3.5.1 Warning 12
3.5.2 Evacuation 16
3.5.3 Hosting 17
3.5.4 Return to Community 19
3.6 Finance and Administration 21
4.0 Evacuation Action Planning 22

4.1 NWT EMO Planning 22
4.1.1 Major Planning Steps 22
4.1.2 Planning Activity Checklist 24
4.2 Community Planning 25
4.2.1 Community Evacuation and Reception Action Plan Template 25
Appendices 29
Appendix 1 – Sample Evacuation Communications Templates 30
Evacuation Notice 30
Evacuation Alert 31
Evacuation Order 32
Evacuation All Clear 33
Appendix 2 – Sample Evacuee Registration Form 34
Appendix 3 – Host Community Selection Protocol 35

1.0 General

1.1 Introduction

Each year the Northwest Territories (NWT) faces a number of events that threaten the safety and security of residents. The top hazards in the NWT are wildfire, flood, severe weather, transportation incidents and critical infrastructure failure, all of which could lead to an evacuation or partial evacuation of a community. For example, in the past five years there have been 11 partial or full evacuations of communities and four evacuations of remote cabin areas in the NWT.

The evacuation of a community or any area impacted by an emergency is a very serious undertaking. Evacuating residents, while ensuring their safety, can impact on their health and create anxiety and stress. Returning residents to an impacted community or area may increase stress and uncertainty leading to psychosocial impacts. Evacuations require detailed planning and a high degree of cooperation and coordination with departments, communities and businesses to ensure the safety and security of residents and reduce the impact of an event.

Planning for evacuations in the NWT can be complicated by a number of factors. Of the 33 NWT communities, Yellowknife has roughly half the population with around 20,300, regional centres have a population of 800-3700 and more remote and isolated communities have populations of 70-1000. Each of these community groups has different emergency response capacity and capability to support and/or conduct evacuations. Other factors like climate/weather, remoteness/distance, limited all-season roads, a reliance on ice roads, airport limitations, limited critical infrastructure back-up and resource availability require consideration.

1.2 Authority

The authority to evacuate a community or area of the NWT is contained in the *Emergency Management Act*. Upon declaring a state of emergency, the Minister responsible for emergency management may, for the duration of a declaration, cause the evacuation of persons and the removal of personal property and animals from any area within the NWT that is or may be affected by the emergency.

Under a state of local emergency, a community government may do any act or thing to mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of the emergency.

Departments with responsibility for specific emergencies that fall within their mandate have a critical responsibility to advise on the level of risk associated with those emergencies and recommend an evacuation when warranted.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of the Community Evacuation Guidelines (the Guidelines) is to facilitate a timely and coordinated evacuation of residents from one or more communities or unincorporated areas in the NWT. The Guidelines provide advice and direction with which to develop specific action plans for the safe and efficient movement of populations at risk away from hazard areas, and their eventual return.

The Guidelines are intended as a supplemental document to the Northwest Territories Emergency Plan and should be used in conjunction with the plan when creating detailed evacuation action plans for specific incidents. They are meant to guide and integrate territorial and community planning and response activities involving evacuations.

The objectives of the Guidelines are to provide guidance and direction to expedite:

- The warning of the potential need to evacuate and preparations;
- The evacuation of persons from hazard areas;
- The hosting of evacuees during the evacuation period; and
- The safe return of evacuees.

1.4 Guideline Development and Maintenance

These Guidelines are developed and maintained by the Northwest Territories Emergency Management Organization (NWT EMO) in consultation with territorial, federal and non-government emergency management partners. Updates to the Guidelines will be undertaken as required based on lessons learned from exercises and incident responses.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The *Emergency Management Act* requires communities to have emergency plans in place which includes plans for evacuation. The NWT Emergency Plan identifies a requirement for the GNWT to have plans and programs to deal with emergencies and through the NWT EMO, to assist communities in emergency response operations including the evacuation of persons and property. The following is a description of roles and responsibilities specific the community evacuation process:

2.1 Local Authorities

Local Authorities must maintain awareness of changing risk levels to the community and work with the NWT EMO and other regional officials to identify a need to evacuate. In order to ensure a successful evacuation once an evacuation appears to be imminent and/or a decision to evacuate is made, Local Authorities in the evacuating community are expected to perform the following functions:

- When required declare a “state of local emergency”;
- Provide sufficient warning to residents of the need to evacuate and instructions on what is required of them;
- Identify priority groups and provide for the staging of evacuees, including local transportation;
- Register all evacuees (when practical);
- Once notified of host community, work with NWT EMO and other regional officials to carry out evacuation of residents;
- Once evacuated, provide regular situational updates to evacuated residents and represent their concerns;
- When returning evacuees, work with NWT EMO and other regional officials to ensure community is safe to return and identify priority groups; and
- Maintain a record of decisions and costs associated with the evacuation.

2.2 NWT EMO – Region

The Regional EMO and other regional officials work with local authorities to advise on risk levels and to assist in determining the need to evacuate. In order to ensure a successful evacuation once an evacuation is imminent and/or a decision to evacuate is made, the Regional EMO will perform the following functions:

- Work with communities and advise on risk levels, evacuation assistance requirements and need to declare a "state of local emergency";
- If the regional centre seems impractical as a host community give the emergency situation, engage the Territorial EMO to determine alternate arrangements;
- Activate host community, providing sufficient notice, and work with the host community to ensure evacuee fundamental needs are met (dedicated point of contact for families and relatives, food, lodging, medical, communications, etc.);
- In cooperation with the Local Authority, determine evacuation method and coordinate evacuation transportation requirements to host community;
- Work with Local Authority to ensure community is safe and coordinate and support the return of residents; and
- Maintain a record of decisions and costs associated with supporting the evacuation.

2.3 NWT EMO - Territorial

The Territorial EMO provides assistance to the Regional EMO when required to support community evacuations. In order to ensure a successful evacuation once a decision to evacuate is made, the Territorial EMO is expected to perform the following functions:

- Provide requested assistance to the Regional EMO in supporting community evacuations; and
- Maintain situational awareness of evacuation events and share with key stakeholders and senior government officials using sitreps and other executive communications.

2.4 GNWT Departments and Agencies

GNWT departments and agencies work together through the NWT EMO to support the evacuation of communities and unincorporated areas when required providing the following:

- **Education, Culture and Employment** – to assist communities in meeting the needs of disaster victims by providing or arranging the use of school infrastructure during emergencies and providing for the evacuation of schools and the movement of students to safe areas when required.
- **Environment and Natural Resources** – provide situational awareness to NWT EMO and communities on flood and wildfire conditions, behavior and risk, and recommend appropriate courses of action.
- **Executive** – to enact and coordinate the Emergency Communications Plan when required or requested by the NWT EMO.

- **Health and Social Services** – to work with healthcare providers and institutions to manage/redeploy health resources (people, supplies and equipment) as required by the emergency. This includes:
    - Providing critical incident stress debriefing for victims and emergency response personnel;
    - Providing for the evacuation of health facilities and the movement of patients to safe areas when required;
    - Assisting affected communities in the delivery of emergency social services;
    - Assisting communities in meeting the needs of disaster victims by providing or arranging for:
        - emergency shelter, food and clothing,
        - victim registration and inquiry services, and
        - personal services.
    - Liaising with private social service organizations, including the Red Cross, during an emergency and act as the link between them and the Territorial Emergency Operations Centre; and
    - Providing assessments of the impacts of emergencies on the delivery of essential social services, including an evaluation of the need for special assistance to meet unique human service demands.
- **Industry, Tourism and Investment** – to evacuate and close Territorial Parks as required or if requested by the NWT EMO. This includes assisting emergency response operations by providing or arranging the use of parks infrastructure during emergencies.
- **Infrastructure** – to coordinate transportation assets to evacuate affected persons from the hazard area to a safe designated location.
- **Justice** – to coordinate law enforcement and traffic control support throughout the territory during emergency operations and to provide for the evacuation of corrections facilities and the movement of populations to safe areas when required.
- **Lands** – to provide personnel and resources to support remote area evacuations when required.
- **NWT Housing Corporation** - To support the provision of shelter and accommodation for evacuated people who cannot return to their homes for some time due to the nature of the emergency or impact; and provide advice to assist in the determination of appropriate options for longer-term emergency housing, when needed.

3.0 Evacuation Guidance

3.1 Types of Evacuations

3.1.1 No Notice Evacuation

There may be times when there may be little to no advanced notice of a need to evacuate. Urgent evacuations of people at risk from emergency situations must be effected immediately to save lives and protect public safety. The individual responsible for implementing an evacuation for a community must immediately assume command at the scene of the emergency and coordinate the evacuation. Should

support be required from NWT EMO or the evacuation involve an unincorporated area, any GNWT official may be designated to assume command and act as the Incident Commander for NWT EMO until a transfer of command is effected or the incident if resolved.

3.1.2 Pre-Planned Evacuation

In the majority of emergencies there is some indication and warning that an evacuation will be required and time leading up to the requirement to evacuate a community or unincorporated area. As responsibility to action an evacuation rests with a number of authorities, these guidelines represent a common approach that can be followed by all. The approach is based on a four stage process (Warning, Evacuation, Hosting and Return to Community) which will be used throughout the NWT to guide evacuation planning. A consistent approach to evacuations will build public understanding and confidence in the evacuation process and promote support and cooperation during evacuations.

3.1.3 Evacuation of Private Industry and Commercial Sites

In the case of evacuations involving private operations, such as mining operations or fly-in lodges, those entities are responsible for coordinating and bearing the cost of evacuation. NWT EMO may assist should circumstances warrant.

3.2 Concept of Operations

Evacuation is the process of temporarily relocating persons and property from an area where a present or imminent situation has or may result in the loss of life, serious harm or damage to the safety health or welfare of people, or damage to property or the environment. Depending on the nature and scope of the event, evacuations may be either local affecting a single building, a group of buildings, neighborhood or a whole community.

Where pre-arrangements between communities exist, local authorities may order and conduct an evacuation. Where arrangements are not in place with a host community, the NWT EMO will select a host community, call for the evacuation and assist in implementing an evacuation order. Under these circumstances, the order would be issued by the community and local officials would work with NWT EMO and a host community to facilitate the evacuation.

Should a community be overwhelmed by an emergency or an unincorporated area requires evacuation, the NWT EMO may effect an evacuation. Pursuant to the *Emergency Management Act*, the GNWT possesses authority to cause an evacuation of persons from a community should circumstances warrant. A declaration of a state of local emergency ceases to have force or effect on the making of an order by the Minister declaring a state of emergency in the same area.

3.2.1 Communities

Communities are expected to maintain awareness of changing risk levels, advise residents of risk conditions and communicate risk and evacuation information, and conduct local evacuation activities to prepare the community. NWT EMO will activate a host community, arrange transportation to the host community for those requiring assistance, and support community evacuation activities as requested. Once the incident is stabilized, community officials and the NWT EMO will work together to bring the

community to a safe condition and restore critical services. NWT EMO will arrange transportation to return residents when it is safe to do so.

Key control and coordination points include the following:

- Community emergency response coordinator and community EOC for control and coordination of community preparedness, local evacuation activity, immediate recovery actions and public communications relating to this activity;
- Regional NWT EMO Incident Commander and supporting EOC for control and coordination of transportation, activation of regional center as host community, support to community evacuation and return of residents activities and public communications relating to this activity; and
- Territorial NWT EMO Incident Commander and supporting EOC for higher level coordination, selection and activation of an alternate host community, support to the regional EOC, requesting and coordinating outside resources when required and public communications relating to this activity.

3.2.2 Unincorporated areas

Unincorporated areas are groups of cabins and homes in remote areas without an organized structure or representing government. When evacuation is required of such areas, the Regional NWT EMO must take the lead and assume total responsibility for warning, preparing, evacuating the area at risk and ensuring the safe return of residents. The Territorial NWT EMO will assist as required.

3.3 Planning Considerations

3.3.1 Risk Assessments

Real-time risk assessment refers to an ongoing process of determining the level of risk facing a community so that appropriate action(s) can be taken to protect life, property, critical infrastructure, the environment and the economy. A real-time risk assessment helps inform the decision to evacuate, the timing of evacuations, prioritization of resources, when it is safe to return, etc. The assessment must come from the subject matter expert in the area of concern, be informed by up-to-date information and be shared with those who may be involved in the potential evacuation. Local knowledge is important for informing the real-time risk assessment process as local residents often have specific information on risks to their community and the region that should be considered.

GNWT departments (Incident Commanders and Subject Matter Experts) are responsible for assessing the risk for the types of emergencies which fall within their specific mandates. The NWT EMO is responsible for real-time risk assessments for hazards that have not been assigned to a specific department.

3.3.2 Maintaining Family and Community Unity

Family and community unity during an evacuation is very important to reduce stress and maintain the wellbeing of evacuees. Family units should be kept together during an evacuation and whenever possible all evacuees from a community should be hosted together in order to maintain community

cohesion and facilitate support services. Where it is not feasible to host a community together, every effort should be made to ensure family units are maintained.

3.3.3 Cultural and Family Familiar Surroundings

Hosting evacuees in a community with close family and cultural ties can reduce stress and provide additional support networks to assist evacuees in coping with the impacts of the emergency and the temporary relocation. Whenever possible, evacuees will be hosted in a regional centre or other community with close cultural and family ties.

3.3.4 Use of Resources

Given the importance and immediate nature of evacuations, the limited resources available and remote and isolated nature of most of NWT communities, all resources available including the private sector must be considered to ensure a timely and effective evacuation. In addition, regional centre capacity to host evacuees must be respected in making decisions on hosting arrangements. Every effort must be made to optimize use of resources and expedite the evacuation.

3.3.5 Number of Evacuees Requiring Support

Communities in the NWT have strong family and cultural ties. During a community evacuation the majority of evacuees will likely make arrangements to stay with family and friends in other communities. Some will also go camping, stay in cabins or camps, or visit other areas of Canada until the risk period is over. Based on past experience and lessons learned in previous evacuations, it is estimated that up to 30% of the population of an evacuating community will need shelter arrangements in a host community. For planning purposes 30% of the evacuating population should be used as a starting point until more detailed information can be provided by the evacuating community. An exception to this is when a small isolated community (fly in only) is evacuated and shelter arrangements may be required for the majority of the population or a community is evacuated to a host community outside their region and a larger percentage should be planned for.

3.3.6 Evacuation Duration

Evacuations are designed to temporarily remove populations at risk while emergency management officials deal with the emergency and once the risk is reduced, return the population. Hosting arrangements for evacuees including shelter arrangements are temporary and not meant to provide long term accommodations. Past evacuations in the NWT indicate evacuations of 7-14 days associated with wildfire emergencies and up to 60 days or more when dealing with flood emergencies. Any evacuation lasting (or likely to last) more than 14 days will need to be re-assessed to determine longer term hosting arrangements.

3.3.7 Emergency Shelters/Shelter-in-Place

Emergency Shelters

Given the remote and isolated nature of many NWT communities, weather and wildfire smoke impacts on highways and airports and the nature of many emergencies, communities should plan for the possibility that an evacuation may be delayed or only partially possible depending on the circumstances. Residents may need to be sheltered in a safe area of the community and/or in a shelter that can

withstand the potential impacts of the emergency. For wildfires this may mean a building that can accommodate a large number of residents for at least a couple of days. The building should have a metal roof and siding and added protection including backup power, communications, survival supplies, sprinklers on the roof, air intake controls and purification. For flood risk the shelter should be located in a safe and accessible location away from possible flood areas.

Shelter-in-Place

Shelter in place is when residents remain inside and seal buildings, shutting down heating and air conditioning. Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. This action gives immediate protection and should only be considered for specific hazards and for short durations. Release of chemical, biological, or atmospheric material into the air, usually as smoke, is an emergency where shelter-in-place can immediately protect residents for a short period while the smoke dissipates. Before shelter-in-place can be used as a response activity, residents need to be provided information on the concept and plans for its use during emergencies. Communities with risk of environmental emergencies related to toxic smoke should consider shelter-in-place as part of their evacuation planning.

3.4 Evacuation Terminology

The use of common terminology when communicating evacuation information can promote understanding and reduce confusion and contribute to an effective evacuation. NWT EMO will use terminology and definitions considered best practice and used in many other jurisdictions in Canada. These definitions apply to both partial and full community evacuations. When communicating the need to prepare for evacuation, to evacuate and when directing residents to return to their community, the NWT EMO will make use of the following communications templates: (**Appendix 1 – Sample Evacuation Communications Templates**)

3.4.1 Evacuation Notice

An Evacuation Notice is for information only and is an advisory that an emergency event, such as a wildfire, is currently in an area and may present an increased risk to a community or a remote area endangering life and/or property. Evacuation Notices:

- Can be issued by the Local Authority or NWT EMO; and
- Describes the risk situation and encourages residents to prepare for the emergency and/or self-evacuate.

3.4.2 Evacuation Alert

An Evacuation Alert is issued to advise residents of the potential for loss of life or property from an emergency event and to be prepared to evacuate on short notice. Government officials need to make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible.

- Evacuation Alerts are normally issued by the Local Authority. The NWT EMO would only issue an Alert for an unincorporated residential area or a community if for some reason the Local Authority was unable;

- Residents and visitors shall be advised to prepare for worsening conditions and potential evacuation;
- Residents and visitors are advised they may be required to leave their homes on short notice;
- Residents shall be asked to monitor news sources and keep aware of the threatening situation; and
- Residents would also be advised to consider voluntarily evacuating the area when on Evacuation Alert.

3.4.3 Evacuation Order

An Evacuation Order is issued by authorities having jurisdiction in response to imminent danger to the involved area. It can be issued by the Local Authority or NWT EMO. An Evacuation Order can be issued with or without declaring a state of emergency, however can only be enforced if a "state of emergency" is declared.

- Evacuation Orders are normally issued by the Local Authority and NWT EMO would only issue an Evacuation Order for an unincorporated residential area or a community if for some reason the Local Authority was unable; and
- Residents will be told to evacuate and given directions.

3.4.4 Evacuation All Clear

When the emergency which necessitated the evacuation is under control and the hazard area is declared safe (habitable), a retraction of the Evacuation Order should be implemented. An Evacuation All Clear is issued by authorities having jurisdiction when it is safe for residents and visitors to return to a community.

- Residents and visitors are told it is safe to return to the area and provided information on transportation arrangements; and
- Residents and visitors are provided information on the impacts to the community, services available and precautions and instructions in dealing with impacts.

3.5 Evacuation Phases

Evacuation activities can be organized into four separate phases: Warning, Evacuation, Hosting and All Clear. While these phases are separate, it is important to note that some of the activities identified in one phase may run concurrent with activities in a different phase.

3.5.1 Warning

Communications

It is important when a hazard poses an increase risk to a community that residents are advised of the increased risk and provided information on how they can prepare themselves and their property to mitigate impacts. Issuing an Evacuation Notice will advise of the risk and provide information on how to prepare should the situation worsen. An Evacuation Alert will advise of worsening conditions and put residents on notice that they may need to evacuate on short notice. It will also provide information on

how they will be notified should evacuation be required and how they should prepare including what to do with their pets.

Population at Risk

A critical element of any evacuation is the population at risk. The size and demographics of the population are significant factors in determining how to conduct an evacuation. The need for evacuation and the ease with which evacuation can be accomplished will depend on a number of factors related to the population at risk. The day of the week and time of day, for example, will determine if families will be together at home, or scattered at work and at school. Some evacuees will need transportation, others will evacuate themselves and some may simply refuse to leave. Many evacuees will stay with family and friends while others will require shelter arrangements.

Priority Groups

During an evacuation it is unlikely the whole population at risk can be moved at the same time. Priorities must be set to allow for the effective staging and movement of evacuees from the community or area at risk. The designation of evacuees into the different priority groups is normally determined by local authorities with the assistance of health representatives and is normally included as part of the community emergency plan.

When considering creating priority groups for evacuation, the following factors should be considered:

- number of evacuees;
- languages spoken;
- location of evacuees (seasonal activities may affect the number of people in a community);
- modes of transportation available and/or preferred by evacuees;
- potential limitations on modes of transportation (e.g. type and size of the airport landing strip);
- persons considered vulnerable and who may require specialized or additional assistance; and
- populations in known areas of high risk, such as close to fuel storage sites.

The following priority groups will be used for the purposes of this plan:

Special Populations

Special Populations are distinct groups that share a common circumstance, needs and conditions that require special consideration and attention during evacuations. The two special populations in some NWT communities are individuals under medical care and prison populations.

Individuals under medical care relate to residents of Long Term Care (LTC) facilities and in-patients in medical facilities. Individuals under medical care require special support and transportation, and placement in similar facilities. Evacuation of these facilities are governed by the specific facility evacuation plans and use the Medevac/Medical transfer system however they may also require use of facilities and other resources required during a community evacuation.

Prison populations relate to residents of corrections facilities. Special security and transportation arrangements are required to move this population. Evacuation of corrections facilities are governed by

the facility evacuation plan however may require the use of facilities and resources required during a community evacuation.

Due to the special evacuation requirements and time required to move special populations, they are normally evacuated before or in conjunction with Priority 1 Evacuees.

Priority 1 Evacuees

Priority 1 evacuees are defined as vulnerable populations. This includes persons with disabilities, seniors, children, pregnant women, and those with medical conditions. Part of the vulnerable population may require medical or other supports (including medical attendants, caregivers or family) during an evacuation. Those providing supports including immediate family should be included on the Priority 1 evacuation list.

Due to the support requirements, potential health impacts and time required to move vulnerable populations, they are normally given priority and evacuated before the general population.

Priority 2 Evacuees

Priority 2 evacuees are all remaining residents and visitors in the community.

Movements Plan

Detailed planning for the movement of evacuees from the at risk community to a host community must be done in advance of the actual emergency. The evacuation action plan should consider assembly points for evacuees, evacuation routes, traffic control points, and vehicles or air transportation as a means of evacuation. Alternate assembly points, evacuation routes and transportation means (i.e. boat) may also be required in the event primary routes are blocked. Possible "choke points" on the evacuation routes should be identified, and some means of clearing blockages considered.

Evacuation Routes

NWT EMO in collaboration with the community emergency measures coordinator should select the best routes and/or method for evacuation from the hazard area. The best route and/or method may have to be selected near or at the time of the incident. The following key factors should be considered when selecting an evacuation route:

- most evacuees prefer to utilize their own personal transportation during an evacuation if possible;
- roads have limits on how many automobiles per lane, per hour can be accommodated;
- given the distance between communities, automobile fueling points may be required;
- the average vehicle occupancy is four persons;
- marine evacuation poses unique challenges in establishing reception locations and lodging facilities;
- weather and atmospheric conditions (e.g. smoke) can close highways and play a significant role in permitting aircraft to land and take off;
- airport runways are limited in the size of aircraft which may land;

- certain populations at risk require unique considerations in terms of an appropriate mode of transportation (e.g. disabled persons); and
- mass transportation options offer considerable advantages in terms of planning and logistics.

Traffic Control Points

Traffic controls may be established at key intersections and at access control points to major evacuation routes as needed. Control points allow an opportunity to provide up-to-date information on risks and travel conditions to evacuees using own transportation. It also can control and restrict traffic access into the evacuating area. In some cases, it may be necessary to control traffic on other routes to give priority to evacuation traffic.

Air Movements

While air transportation should be considered in all evacuation planning, it is important to recognize that many communities in the NWT have limited or no road access and air transportation may be the only option in some circumstances. Spring break-up in particular is a period where many communities have no road or water (boat) access. In addition airport and runway size restricts the size of aircraft that can land and the capacity to stage evacuees at the airport dictating how fast evacuees can be moved. Key factors to consider in planning the movement evacuees by air include the following:

- Accommodating vulnerable evacuees (wheelchairs, large seating, stretchers, etc.);
- Limitations on baggage;
- No pets allowed;
- Safety and security concerns (guns, drugs etc.) as screening is not normally done in small airports; and
- A need to share manifest information.

Community Requirements

Local Authorities include evacuation plans in their community emergency plans. The majority of the activity in regard to warning and preparing residents for evacuation falls under the community's responsibility. Given the resources available in many smaller communities, the NWT EMO may be required to support some or all the preparations for evacuation. In addition, the evacuation of remote area residents in unincorporated areas will require the NWT EMO to take the lead role in warning and preparing residents for evacuation.

Key areas and activities where a community may require assistance during the warning phase include the following:

- Communicating evacuation and risk information to residents and visitors;
- Setting up and operating reception and staging areas;
- Local transportation to move residents and visitors requiring assistance to reception and staging areas; and
- Directing evacuation preparation activity and controlling access to high risk areas.

3.5.2 Evacuation

Communications

Once a decision is made to evacuate, residents and visitors must be advised immediately of the increased risk and need to evacuate. Issuing an Evacuation Order will advise of the immediate risk and provide detail information on how to evacuate including the location of the host community, registration process and safety and other instructions. It is important to make sure all residents and visitors are contacted and understand evacuation instructions. Many communities use door-to-door, local radio, siren systems and other methods of notification to inform residents. Where possible confirmation of those evacuated and control of evacuated areas is important to ensure everyone is safe and no-one re-enters the area.

The approach to evacuation in the NWT is that residents and visitors will not be forcibly removed if they are unwilling to evacuate. All means of persuasion will be used to convince them of the necessity and urgency to evacuate and failing that they will be notified that should they get into difficulty, emergency responders may not be able to assist them. No responder will be put at risk to assist anyone unwilling to evacuate. An Evacuation Order is a communications instrument and cannot be used in itself as a basis to force someone who is unwilling to evacuate during an emergency. Only a State of Emergency can provide additional authority to effect an evacuation.

Evacuation Registration

When possible all evacuees should be registered before they leave the evacuating community. Contact information and location is required to keep evacuees informed and support disaster assistance claims. Addition information on number of evacuees needing shelter, family units, special needs and support requirements is required to facilitate transportation and hosting of those needing assistance. (**Appendix 2 – Sample Evacuation Registration Form**)

Movements Coordination

During the conduct of an evacuation a number of activities may overlap and/or take place concurrently. The majority of residents and visitors may begin self-evacuating as soon as they hear an order has been given. At the same time registration and staging areas will be operational and transportation of those requiring assistance will be taking place. Security will be required to ensure public safety and restrict access to evacuated and high risk areas.

To support evacuation coordination, effective communications systems are required for community emergency response officials, with NWT EMO and with the host community. Back-up communications should be planned and available.

Control of Evacuated Areas

As an area is being evacuated, access controls must be established to ensure access is restricted to emergency response personnel and to ensure evacuated residents and visitors do not return unknowingly to officials. Control may by establishing by staffed access control points and barricades at key locations.

The objectives of access control are:

- To provide a controlled area from which an emergency evacuation will take place and prevent entry by unauthorized persons;
- To protect lives by controlling entry into a hazard area; and
- To maintain law and order in the hazard area.

Criteria for allowing entry into restricted areas should be established for each hazard event.

- **No Access** – Prohibits the public from entering the restricted area. Authorized personnel (e.g. territorial or community officials) may be allowed for specific reasons. Media representatives may be allowed access on a controlled basis.
- **Limited Access** – Allows persons into restricted areas according to access criteria established by the Incident Commander or the community emergency response coordinator. Entry criteria should define the persons who will be allowed and whether motor vehicles are allowed. A check-in, check-out process is required to maintain awareness of who is in the limited access area.

3.5.3 Hosting

Most communities in the NWT have plans in place to receive and care for evacuees, should a portion of the community require evacuation or evacuees from another community require assistance. Regional centres and Yellowknife have increased capacity to host evacuees from communities in their respective regions. When possible the host community will be the applicable regional centre. Through a mutual aid agreement, hosting arrangements can also be made in Alberta or another province or territory. The NWT EMO will select and support a host community in providing evacuee support during an emergency requiring a community evacuation.

Hosting Requirements

While many evacuees will stay with family and friends, some will require support and services during the evacuation period. Planning to receive and host evacuees is an essential part of a community's emergency plan as an infux of evacuees to a host community can be considered an emergency like any other. The host community must be prepared to provide those services required to preserve the well-being of people affected by an emergency. Whenever possible the host community must be provided the following information:

- Approximate number of evacuees by age group;
- Number requiring accommodation compared with those having their own arrangements;
- Number requiring special care - for example, hospitalized or institutionalized populations;
- Amount of notice that can be expected before evacuees begin to arrive; and
- Primary evacuation routes, means of transportation and arrival times and locations.

Reception Centres

Reception Centres are service site locations where evacuees are received and where those services required to support them are provided, including: registration and inquiry, food, clothing, lodging and personal services. Reception centres are identified and planned for in community emergency plans.

Registration and Inquiry Services

Host communities are responsible for registering evacuees that are entering into their care. This allows the host community to better coordinate services and seek reimbursement for expenses incurred due to hosting. Each community will manage evacuee records in accordance with their municipal policies. Registration records should only be shared with organizations providing services to the evacuees and the protection of privacy should be a high priority.

Emergency Food Services

Emergency Food Services provides food or meals to those evacuees without food or food preparation facilities.

Emergency Clothing Services

Emergency Clothing Services supplies clothing or emergency covering to evacuees until regular sources of supply are available.

Emergency Lodging Services

Emergency Lodging Services arranges for safe temporary lodging for evacuees. Group lodging arrangements using school gymnasiums and recreation facilities are typical with commercial lodging only considered when absolutely necessary.

Personal Services

Personal Services provides for the immediate concerns of evacuees and identified needs. These services may include the following:

- Inform them of immediate emergency help available;
- Offer temporary care for unattended children and dependent elderly;
- Assist with the temporary care of residents from special care facilities;
- Provide or arrange for provision of financial and/or material assistance;
- Arrangements for communicating with family members and friends; and
- Offer immediate and long-term emotional support to people with personal problems and needs created or aggravated by a disaster.

Selecting a Host Community

Careful consideration must be given in selecting a host community for evacuees to make sure they are safe from the impacts of the emergency and being provided adequate care and support. The NWT EMO uses a protocol which identifies reception locations for each of the NWT's five regions and their

respective communities. **(Appendix 3 – Host Community Selection Protocol)** This protocol is established based on cultural and family association, economics, and operational efficiency. Should a regional centre be found unsuitable or its capacity exceeded, other regional centres will be considered to the extent necessary. The following factors need to be considered when selecting and supporting a host community:

- Preference is to host evacuees in a regional centre with family ties and culturally similar surroundings;
- Host communities have limited capacity;
- Emergencies often impact transportation routes, communities can be cut off due to highway or airport closures; and
- Communities at increased risk of an emergency should not be used to host evacuees as the emergency may lead to further evacuation.

3.5.4 Return to Community

Communications

The decision to return evacuees should be based on an assessment of risk and determination that the home community is ready to support the returning evacuees. When the emergency which necessitated the evacuation is under control, the community or hazard area is safe (habitable) and essential services are available, a public statement or retraction of the Evacuation Order should be implemented. This can be done using an Evacuation All Clear. All evacuees are told the evacuation order is lifted, it is safe to return to the community and provided with information on what to expect and any precautions they should take when travelling or when reoccupying their homes. Evacuees in shelter arrangements are also provided with information on transportation arrangements to move them back to the community. The evacuated community (Chief, Mayor or other appointed official) should take the lead for communicating re-entry procedures, with assistance from partners as required.

Community Safety and Essential Services

After a full community evacuation, the community must be considered safe and essential services available before residents are allowed to return. This means the level of risk to the community has normalized and any hazards in the community (i.e. debris, washouts, power poles down, etc.) are dealt with. In addition, essential services such as utilities, health, public works and government services must be available for residents to reestablish themselves.

This means that:

- The threat that prompted the evacuation has been resolved or has subsided;
- Access to the community is assured;
- Initial damage assessments and immediate repairs are done to ensure the infrastructure is safe to use (e.g. airport, roads, buildings etc.);
- Safety hazards connected to the emergency have been addressed; and

- Services have resumed and are sufficient to support returning evacuees (for example, power, water, sanitation, security, food and essential supplies, and medical services).

Movements Plan

If a community was completely evacuated, it may be advisable to begin the return of evacuees with essential workers to restart systems and assess the readiness of the community to receive other returning evacuees. This may involve the coordination of an advance team that is given sufficient time and resources to return the community to a safe condition. Since the degree of damage will likely vary within the affected area, it might be beneficial to initiate a phased re-entry process. As geographic areas are declared safe for re-entry, evacuees will be able to return.

Detailed planning for the movement of evacuees from a host community back to their home community must be done in advance of the Evacuation All Clear communication. Transportation arrangements will be made by the NWT EMO in cooperation with the host and home communities. The return plan should consider returning priority groups in reverse order from when they were evacuated. Air transportation may be considered for vulnerable groups and where it makes sense due to the remoteness of the home community. A reception point in the home community and local transportation may be required to coordinate the return of individuals to their homes.

Return Movements Coordination

During the return of evacuees to a community a number of activities may overlap and/or take place concurrently. The majority of residents and visitor who self-evacuated will return as soon as they hear an Evacuation All Clear has been announced. At the same time those who were hosted in shelters will be transported back to the community. In addition, the media, onlookers and other visitors may show up to see what damages occurred and the impact to residents. Enhanced security may be required to ensure public safety and restrict access to damaged and risky areas.

Demobilization

It is important to plan for demobilization early in any operation to ensure the proper withdrawal, care and return of resources. Otherwise, resources may self-demobilize, and control and accountability may be lost.

Once evacuees no longer require hosting arrangements, the host community will phase out services, and demobilize personnel and resources. The NWT EMO and partners will phase out response activity, demobilize personnel and resources and return to normal operations once residents are back in their home community. It is critical that when evacuation operations are completed, there is a full accounting of the operation. This requires an after-action review and financial reporting.

Below are activities that typically occur during demobilization and need to be considered in planning:

- Moving from response to recovery operations
- Scaling back EOC activities;
- Moving from real-time threat assessment capabilities to routine monitoring;
- Returning communications with communities to a routine level;

- Debriefings;
- Stand-down of host communities and staging areas;
- Return of facilities to a pre-hosting state;
- Recall of deployed resources;
- Recall of deployed staff;
- Initial financial reconciliation;
- Briefings to senior officials;
- Follow up communication to other stakeholders;
- Final communication to media;
- Termination of emergency declarations;
- Consolidation of after-action reports and sharing results with partners; and
- Revision of evacuation plan(s), if necessary.

3.6 Finance and Administration

Detailed tracking of all evacuation related expenses and decisions must be maintained by all partners and reconciled during or shortly after the demobilization process. This includes detailed activity logs and records of decisions of all activity related to an evacuation by the evacuating community, EMO and hosting community. This information is critical to support reimbursement of eligible claims under the Disaster Assistance Policy and to seek federal disaster assistance funding.

Community expenses related to evacuation activities are the responsibility of the community government. Should the Disaster Assistance Policy be applied to the incident, evacuation expenses are an eligible category as part of a community claim. Should a community government decide to utilize commercial accommodations and not take advantage of the support from NWT EMO for group lodging, the cost may be ineligible or limited to the GNWT standard rate.

Expenses related to evacuation support provided by NWT EMO are the responsibility of MACA. This includes costs associated with hosting evacuees in a host community when requested by NWT EMO. A host community must provide a full accounting and invoice to NWT EMO for reimbursement. Additional support for evacuations provided by other GNWT departments are the responsibility of the individual departments and are expected to be absorbed within operational budgets. Should collective GNWT costs in response to a civil emergency impact the ability of individual departments to meet mandates, the NWT EMO will work with departments to coordinate extraordinary emergency-related funding.

The financial authority for First Nations on Reserve evacuations rests with the Government of Canada through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (AANDC). Information on eligible expenditures is detailed in the ***NWT-Federal Agreement for Territorial Emergency Response and Preparedness Services for Bands On-Reserve***. The NWT EMO will coordinate with AANDC for reimbursement of costs associated with evacuations of First Nations on Reserve in the NWT.

Expenses related to territorial response to emergencies in unincorporated areas lies with the relevant GNWT Department in collaboration with NWT EMO. If there is no appropriate GNWT department, NWT EMO will assume responsibility.

4.0 Evacuation Action Planning

4.1 NWT EMO Planning

During a civil emergency that may result in an evacuation, the NWT EMO will act as the Incident Commander or appoint one. Evacuation action planning is initiated when the incident commander sets a goal to evacuate a community or unincorporated area. The planning process must include all Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with a role to play during evacuations (see section 2.4 – GNWT Departments and Agencies Roles and Responsibilities) to ensure they know the plan and their role. The planning process results in an Incident Action Plan (IAP) which could be written or verbal depending on the scale and/or complexity of the incident and evacuation or need for documented accountability.

4.1.1 Major Planning Steps

Under the Incident Command System there is an orderly and systematic planning process. It is a simple but thorough process for planning which could be utilized for both smaller, short-term incidents and events and for longer duration, more complex situations. This process includes the following major steps:

Understanding the Situation

Understanding the situation is critical before setting incident objectives to ensure the response is reasonable and effective. The Incident Commander and SMEs must be involved and collect as much information as practical given the circumstances. Consideration of the planning considerations identified in Section 3.3 and phases of evacuation in Section 3.5 can assist in determining the urgency, type and length of evacuation required, in identifying and supporting a host community, and in understanding a community's capacity to evacuate and what supports may be required.

Other essential information can be determined by knowing and understanding the following:

- What has happened?
- What progress has been made?
- How effective is the current plan and associated action?
- What is the growth potential of the situation?
- What is the current and future resource and organization capability?
- What are the political, environmental, social, and fiscal ramifications?

Establish Incident Objectives and Strategies

An Incident Commander is responsible to determine the incident objectives. Objectives are essentially the answer to the question what do we want to do. For most evacuations the objective will be to remove all or part of the population from a community or unincorporated area, provide required support for the duration of the evacuation and return them when it is safe to do so.

Strategies describe the general method that should be used to achieve the objectives. Strategies should meet the following criteria:

- Be within acceptable safety norms;

- Make good sense (feasible, practical and suitable);
- Be cost effective;
- Be consistent with sound environmental practices; and
- Meet political considerations.

Section 3 – Evacuation Planning provides information to be considered in developing strategies to effect an evacuation.

Develop Tactical Direction and Assignments

Tactical direction includes determining the tactics and operations necessary to implement the selected strategy, and determining and assigning the appropriate resources. Tactical direction is the responsibility of the Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief if one is assigned.

Tactical direction should be stated in terms of tasks that can be realistically achieved within the timeframe planned. It is very important to know and understand what tactical resources and other support is available before making resource assignments for specific tactical work tasks. Lack of available resources could result in a reassessment of tactics and jeopardize the overall strategy.

Prepare the Plan in Written Format

The Incident Action Plan (IAP) is the standard plan format used within ICS and should be used for all action planning. The IAP can be written or verbal. A verbal format is usual for small events of short duration while a written format should be used for more complex incidents. The decision to prepare a written plan is the responsibility of the Incident Commander. A written IAP should be considered when:

- Multiple jurisdictions are involved;
- The incident continues into another Operational Period;
- A number of organizational elements have been activated; and
- It is required by agency policy.

The written IAP is a series of standard ICS forms and supporting documents that convey the Incident Commander's and Operations Section's directions for the accomplishment of the plan for that operational period. The ICS forms and supporting documents normally included in the IAP are:

- IAP Cover Sheet;
- ICS 202 – Incident Objectives;
- ICS 203 – Organization Assignment List;
- ICS 204 – Division or Group Assignment List;
- ICS 205 – Incident Communications Plan;
- ICS 206 – Incident Medical Plan; and
- Support Documents – Safety messages, Maps, Forecasts, etc.

Implement the Plan

The implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the Operations Section. Resources required to implement the plan are requested through a formal, coordinated process and told where to report.

Before any deployment of tactical resources they need to be briefed on the plan for the entire operational period. This helps avoid confusion as multiple activities might occur simultaneously and it allows personnel to see where they fit into the other activities underway to accomplish the incident objectives.

Evaluate the Plan

The plan must be evaluated throughout the process with vetting by the Incident Commander and staff during its development and by operational staff during its implementation. All incident supervisors and managers must continually assess the effectiveness of the plan based upon the original objectives for the operational period. This evaluation keeps responders on track and ensures the next Operational Period plan is based on a reasonable expectation of success of the current plan. The Operations Chief is responsible to make appropriate adjustments during the Operational Period to ensure that the objectives are met effectively.

4.1.2 Planning Activity Checklist

ACTIVITY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Situation Update	Incident Commander or Operations Chief	All participants have a current understanding of the situation. Identifies the problem
State Assumptions	Planning Section	Identify planning assumptions
Conduct Risk Assessment	Incident Commander or Operations Chief	Determine whether: - Situation continues to be monitored - To elevate EOC Readiness - To continue routine incident planning
Factors Assessment	Planning Section consider the following factors: - Resources - Economic - Environment - Health - Security - Legal - Political	Determines the most critical factors for planning purposes
Identify/Confirm Objectives	Incident Commander and/or Operations Chief	Incident Objectives guided by the overall priorities of: - Life Safety - Incident Stabilization - Property/Environmental Preservation
State Strategies *(how we will do it)* to accomplish the objectives	All Section Chiefs. Adoption of final strategy(ies) rests with the Incident Commander	Develop overall strategy(ies) to accomplish objectives. The strategy(ies) will likely change as the operation progresses
State Tactics *(Who will do what)* to accomplish the strategy(ies)	All Section Chiefs and key staff. Final objectives adopted rests with EOC Director and Lead Agency	The objectives will likely change as the operation progresses

ACTIVITY	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Operational Direction & Resource Assignment	All Section Chiefs and key staff define and assign tasks	Taskings with resource allocations and timings to be achieved
Consider Resources and Support for Tasks	Plans / Logistics Section Chiefs in conjunction with other Section Chiefs and key staff	Taskings supported
Finalize, Approve and Implement the IAP	Plans Chief finalizes. EOC Director and/or Operations Chief and Lead Agency approve the plan.	EOC staff briefed by Operations Chief and implements the plan. The approved plan is posted in the EOC.

4.2 Community Planning

Communities have emergency plans in place which includes direction on evacuations and reception of evacuees. NWT EMO works with communities to ensure emergency plans are up-to-date and validated. This includes the use of a standard template for emergency plans which includes an evacuation and reception template.

When a community evacuation is deemed necessary, it is critical in action planning to understand the community plan for evacuation and reception in order to provide efficient support and coordination of evacuee movements and hosting. It is also important to understand the community's capacity to undertake the actions identified in their plan in order to effectively plan and execute support activities.

For the evacuation of unincorporated areas, NWT EMO will need to take the lead and ensure the activities normally performed by a community (indicated in the template) are completed in addition to the coordination of evacuee movement and hosting arrangements.

4.2.1 Community Evacuation and Reception Action Plan Template

The following template outlines community actions that may be taken to facilitate an evacuation.

EVACUATION

MAJOR CONCERNS: Movement, care and safety of displaced residents.

PREPAREDNESS	RATIONALE	ACTION BY
Personal Preparedness	• Distribute evacuation/ reception forms; and • Residents to prepare emergency kits and prepare in case of evacuations.	Community Officials and residents.
Issue Evacuation Notice	• Issue an Evacuation Notice to residents to advise of increased risk conditions and actions they can take to prepare themselves and their property in case of emergency and/or evacuation.	Emergency Coordinator
RESPONSE	**RATIONALE**	**ACTION BY**

Activate Emergency Plan	• Call response committee meeting if required; • Notify NWT EMO of necessity to evacuate; • Make a declaration of a state of local emergency if there is time; and • If a declaration is made forward the declaration to NWT EMO.	Emergency Coordinator
Assessment of Situation	• Define areas to be evacuated; • Determine evacuation method; • Determine evacuation timeline; • Coordinate all resources; • Decide if other support is required; • Determine priority evacuee groups; and • Determine the need to instruct residents regarding power/water shut offs, luggage restrictions, pet care and evacuee registration.	Community Officials and NWT EMO
Inform Public and Put Residents on Evacuation Alert	• Issue an Evacuation Alert to notify residents of evacuation timeline, evacuation method, priority evacuee groups, any luggage restrictions and the need to register at the muster point or the evacuation center; and • Registration forms should be made available and/or distributed. • Should the evacuees be hosted in the community, activate Reception Action Plan.	Communications Coordinator Emergency Coordinator
NWT EMO notification	• Confirm with NWT EMO the evacuation timeline, method and priority groups; and • NWT EMO to identify host community and arrange for evacuation transportation as requested by the community.	Emergency Coordinator NWT EMO
Communications	• Up to date information flow amongst parties involved in the evacuation.	Community Officials NWT EMO
Issue Evacuation Order	• Notify residents of Evacuation Order and provide evacuation instructions; • Assist with evacuation (by priority group) as required; and • Coordinate with NWT EMO on method and reception community.	Community Officials NWT EMO
Care for the ill/infirm	• Those residents requiring special consideration for evacuating must be considered; and • An escort may be required to accompany priority residents or priority groups to offer care and to bring prescription drugs, medical supplies or information for evacuees as appropriate.	Community Officials
Public & Media Information, Instructions to Residents	• Provision of consistent information; and • Maintain ongoing sessions with displaced residents to keep them informed.	Communications Coordinator Community Spokes Person

Security Control	• Coordinate the protection of property and relocation of resources where necessary; and • Make arrangements for security of community when fully evacuated.	Community Officials
Documentation/ Registration	• A record of all decisions, financial and evacuation details should be kept; and • All evacuees should be registered prior to evacuation and yet again with the reception community once they arrive in the host community. Provide list to NWT EMO.	Emergency Coordinator Community Officials
Ensure community is safe before returning residents	• Ensure it is safe for residents to return (remove debris, repair roads, utilities etc.); and • Ensure essential services are restored.	Community Officials
Issue Evacuation all Clear	• Issue an Evacuation All Clear to advise residents the Evacuation Order is lifted and it is safe to return to the community; and • Provide information to returning residents on what to expect and safety precautions.	Community Officials
Return residents	• NWT EMO to arrange transportation and coordinate return of evacuees from host community (by reverse priority group); and • Coordinate security to ensure safe return of residents.	NWT EMO Community Officials

The following template outlines actions that may be taken to facilitate the reception of evacuees within the community.

RECEPTION

MAJOR CONCERNS: Care and safety of displaced residents.

RESPONSE	RATIONALE	ACTION BY
Assessment of Situation	• Determine how many residents are being displaced; • Determine mode of transportation; • Determine expected time of arrival; and • Determine special needs of evacuees.	Emergency Coordinator NWT EMO
Activation of Emergency Plan	• Determine the need to activate the Emergency Plan.	Emergency Coordinator
Reassessment of Situation	• Determine need to open reception center; • Determine need for lodging; • Determine need for food, blankets and other supplies; and • Assign an individual to arrange for each of the above mentioned tasks.	Emergency Coordinator Community Officials

Call for Volunteers	• Notify residents of situation; • Request volunteers as needed to register evacuees, lodging, cook or bring supplies; and • Register volunteers when they are assigned to duties.	Emergency Coordinator Community Officials
Evacuee Registration	• Register evacuees upon their arrival at the reception center (all evacuees must check in at the reception center before going to their lodging location); • Data required includes names, ages, any special needs, lodging assignments, dates of arrival and departure, telephone number of lodging location; and • Once registration is complete the information must be sent to NWT EMO.	Community Officials and volunteers
Communications	• Up to date information flow amongst parties involved in reception efforts; and • Establish contact with community spokesperson (Chief/Mayor or SAO).	Emergency Coordinator Community Officials NWT EMO
Public & Media Information, Instructions to Residents	• Provision of consistent information.	Communications Coordinator
Security Control	• Coordinate the safety of people hosted and the protection of property in the reception center.	Hosting Staff

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Sample Evacuation Communications Templates

Evacuation Notice

Notice:

Please be advised there is a wildfire in the _____ area which may present at increased risk to _____. (community name)

How can you stay informed?

Residents are encouraged to monitor the following:

The Department of Natural Resources' website (**www.nwtfire.com**) for wildfire information;

The Department of Transportation's website (**www.dot.gov.nt.ca**) or follow them on Twitter (@GNWT_DOT) for highway information; and

Your local radio station for public notices and wildfire/highway information.

For more information please go to/visit/call _____(*website, community hall board, call in line*).

How can I protect my home?

Implementing FireSmart techniques around your property can reduce your home's risk to wildfire. Listed below are a few steps you can take to FireSmart your property, for more information visit **www.nwtfire.com**.

Clean your roof and gutters regularly;

Trim back trees from house;

Ensure combustible materials are properly stored; and

Prune up trees up and trim back grass and shrubs.

Evacuation Alert

This EVACUATION ALERT is a notification of the POTENTIAL danger which might arise due to a _____ in your area. The reason evacuation alerts are issued is to notify residents of the potential for loss of life from unstable _____ conditions and a potential need to evacuate on short notice.

This Alert may be followed by an Evacuation Order with specific information on the condition, when to evacuate and directions.

You will find attached to this EVACUATION ALERT:

- Evacuation preparedness information
- Evacuation registration information
- A number to call if you need evacuation assistance
- Information on group lodging arrangements
- Information on what to do with your pets

Information on the evacuation location (host community) and travel information will be provided if and when an EVACUATION ORDER is issued.

You are advised to keep ¾ tank of gas in your vehicle at all times to facilitate your own self-evacuation. (should a road move be an option)

Listen to _____ (radio station) and check community information boards for further instructions.

Signature_____

Name of Local Authority (MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY)

Evacuation Order

Date: _____

The _____ (Authority) has been advised of the imminent danger of _____ to the life and property of persons resident or present in _____(Specific detail of the community or area).

Based on this information, a State of (Local) Emergency has been declared *pursuant to* _____*(cite proper section of the Civil Emergency Measures Act)* to effect the evacuation of these areas in the interest of life safety at _____ (time) hours.

Other agencies may expedite this action in the identified areas on behalf of the Authority issuing this order.

YOU MUST LEAVE THIS AREA IMMEDIATELY

Follow the instructions attached:

- Travel route and checkpoint information
- Evacuation registration procedures
- Restrictions and safety precautions
- Evacuation support information
    - Local transportation
    - Staging areas
    - Priority groups
- Host community and location of evacuation reception area

_____Signature

(Name) LOCAL AUTHORITY (CITE AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATION)

Evacuation All Clear

Date_____

The _____ has been advised that the imminent risk of danger to life and property in _____ (community/area) has diminished at this time.

The State of (Local) Emergency and Evacuation Order, *pursuant to (*cite the Authority) is therefore terminated.

It is now safe to return to _____ (community/area). To ensure your safety and security, please follow the attached instructions:

- Travel information
- Availability and contact information for community services
- Information on damage to the community
- Information on cleaning your home and clearing debris
- Health and safety information
- Information on the NWT Disaster Assistance Policy

_____

Signature

_____

Name of the Local Authority (CITE AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATION)

Appendix 2 – Sample Evacuee Registration Form

Personal information collected on this form is protected in accordance with the Northwest Territories' Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

1. Name of Emergency Contact	2. Emergency Contact Telephone (_ _ _) _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

3. Arrival Date D D / M M / Y Y	4. Arrival Time H H : M M (24 Hr)	5. Method (include flight, boat registration or vehicle number) ☐ Aircraft ☐ Road ☐ Boat ☐ ATV or Snowmobile
6. Departure Date D D / M M / Y Y	7. Departure Time H H : M M (24 Hr)	8. Method (include flight, boat registration or vehicle number) ☐ Aircraft ☐ Road ☐ Boat ☐ ATV or Snowmobile

9. Family Name	10. First Name and Initials

11. Sex	12. Age	13. Also Known As / Nickname	14. Emergency Contact Telephone (_ _ _) _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

15. Mailing Address	16. Originating Community	17. Prov/Ter	18. Postal Code _ _ _ _ / _ _ _
		_ _	

19. E-Mail Address	20. Language(s) Spoken

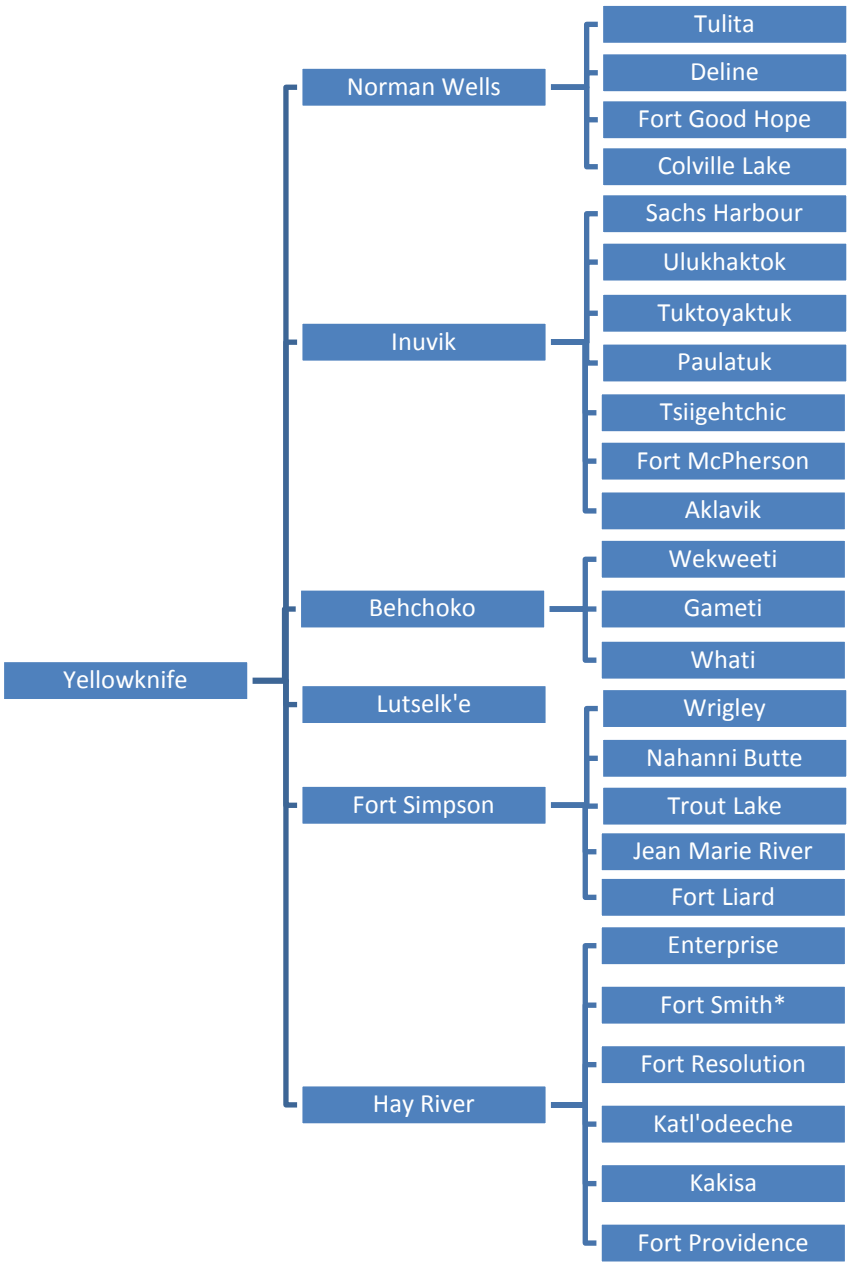
21. Special Needs

☐ Medical ☐ Dietary ☐ Clothing ☐ Lodging ☐ Translation ☐ Child Care ☐ Other _____

22. Comments

_ _ _ _

Appendix 3 – Host Community Selection Protocol



*Fort Smith could evacuate to Hay River and/or Yellowknife depending on the nature and size of the evacuation required.

(Intentionally Blank)

NWT EMERGENCY PLAN – ANNEX B

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

2018

Government of Northwest Territories
Gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

(Intentionally Blank)

Table of Contents

Introduction 2
Purpose 2
Authority 3
Emergency Communications Principles 3
Definitions 3
Structure, Roles and Responsibilities 4
Audiences 6
Implementation 7
Communications Priorities 7
Operations and Procedures 8
Communications Channels 8
Spokespersons 8
Tools and Templates 8
Partners 9

Introduction

Clear communications are critical before, during, and after an emergency. Well-conceived and effectively delivered messages can help residents take appropriate action, ensure public safety, protect property, facilitate response efforts, elicit cooperation, instill public confidence, and help families reunite.

The absence of good communication not only leads to public uncertainty and inaction in an emergency; in the absence of clear information, rumours and false information can spread quickly. This can result in increased anxiety and unneeded, inappropriate, or dangerous public action.

Emergency situations pose unique challenges to the communications function. Event-driven with little advance warning, emergencies require a high degree of responsiveness and interdepartmental collaboration. This document outlines how departments will work together during emergency situations. As much as possible, it relies on existing GNWT communications procedures to carry out emergency communications duties. It also ties closely into the emergency response processes and mechanisms outlined in the Territorial Emergency Plan, including the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.

Emergency communications should be founded on a base of strong planning and preparation. It remains the responsibility of departments to ensure that individuals with designated emergency communications responsibilities receive adequate media relations, communications, and ICS training.

Purpose

The NWT Emergency Communications Protocol is part of the Northwest Territories Emergency Plan and should be read in conjunction with Territorial Emergency Plan documentation.

This document is not a step-by-step guide to emergency communications. Standard Operating Procedures based on the ICS model and existing GNWT Communications Procedures will be developed to give further guidance to emergency communications practitioners. Rather, this document outlines the principles and process through which the GNWT will ensure effective communications by the GNWT in times of emergency. It describes how the GNWT will coordinate its communications efforts to ensure that clear, consistent, and timely messages are communicated to the general public in times of risk and emergency. It is designed to support the Incident Command System model adopted by the NWT Emergency Management Organization throughout the activation and operation of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC).

The objectives of this document are to:

- Clearly define GNWT roles and responsibilities surrounding emergency communications;
- Support the coordination and consistency of GNWT emergency communications policies and procedures, enabling the GNWT to effectively communicate with the public in times of risk and emergency;

- Enable the GNWT to act quickly to arm the public with the information required to act appropriately during an emergency situation;
- Maintain public confidence in the GNWT's ability to manage emergency situations;
- Provide steps to reduce public anxiety during emergency situations, ensuring the public feels reassured, empowered, and clear about what to do to remain safe; and
- Promote cooperation from stakeholders and the public.

Note: Communications related to the mitigation and preparedness phases of emergency management are outside the scope of this document. It is expected that departments or agencies with specific responsibility for mitigating emergencies will make provisions for associated communications planning and activities. The Emergency Management Organization is responsible for communications planning and activities related to emergency preparedness.

Authority

The Protocol is issued under the authority of the *Emergency Management Act* (the *Act*) and is pursuant to the principles, definitions and authorities described in the GNWT Communications Policy (2017).

Emergency Communications Principles

- Adequate, timely, and accurate information should be provided to the public so they are able to make informed choices and act appropriately during times of risk and emergency;
- To prevent the spread of misinformation and reassure the public, emergency communications activities may be required outside of activated emergency situations;
- Information channels should be used consistently to ensure the public knows how and where to find key information in an emergency, and all messages should indicate when the next update is expected;
- The status of languages as established by the Official Languages Act and related regulations or policies and in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms should be respected and upheld in all government communications. However, emergency communications should not be held back while translation is completed;
- All messaging should be concise, frank, clear, streamlined, audience-centred and transparent;
- Messaging will be non-political in nature and will pertain to the emergency operations of the department during risk assessments and emergencies;
- To the extent practical, government communications should take into account the special communications needs of key audiences. Typically, the primary vehicles for the delivery of messaging will be a combination of digital and direct, regional/community communication.

Definitions

In addition to the definitions set out in the NWT Emergency Plan, the following definitions provide further clarity for the interpretation of the NWT Emergency Communications Protocol:

- ***Emergency Communication***: The exchange of information, including protective measures and instructions, before, during, or after a crisis, emergency, or disaster.

- ***Incident Commander:*** The ICS role responsible for providing overall leadership for the incident response or management of an event, and is the overall lead upon activation of the NWT Emergency Management Organization (EMO).

- ***Information Officer:*** The ICS role responsible for serving as the conduit for information to and from internal and external audiences, and for advising the Incident Commander on information dissemination and media relations. This role is filled by a member of the GNWT communications community.

- ***Liaison Officer:*** The ICS role responsible for serving as the primary contact and coordinator for Agency Representatives assigned to the incident by assisting or cooperating agencies.

- ***Departmental Communications:*** The team of communications professionals who provide communications advice to, and support, the Deputy Head and senior management of their department to ensure alignment with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol.

Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

Ministers

Ministers responsible for departments with designated emergency responsibilities will:

- Ensure all emergency communications activities by their departments or agencies are consistent with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Serve as key spokespersons on issues that fall within their departmental mandates.

Director, Cabinet Communications

The Director, Cabinet Communications will:

- Work with the Director, Corporate Communications to ensure the implementation of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Recommend approval of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol to Executive Council;
- Review and approve all Standard Operating Procedures and templates associated with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Provide advice and support to the EOC Information Officer as it relates to media relations and public affairs;
- Manages Ministers' involvement in emergency communications by coordinating the development and approval of key messages and speaking points for Ministerial statements and interviews.

Director, Corporate Communications

The Director, Corporate Communications will:

- Work with the Director, Cabinet Communications to ensure the implementation of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Lead interdepartmental work to review and update the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol as required;
- Recommend approval of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol to Executive Council;
- Review and approve all Standard Operating Procedures and templates associated with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Designate a department to populate the Information Officer role during each instance in which the EOC is activated;
- Provide advice and guidance to departmental communicators with respect to emergency communications.

Deputy Heads

As per the NWT Emergency Plan, GNWT departments are responsible for emergencies that fall within their specific mandates and for supporting territorial level responses in accordance with the protocol.

Deputy Heads will:

- Ensure all emergency communications activities by their departments or agencies are consistent with the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- As per the GWNT Emergency Plan, provide communications staff in support of the GNWT Emergency Communications when activated;
- Ensure their departments or agencies are sufficiently resourced to carry out the provisions of the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol;
- Review and provide input into the GNWT Emergency Communications Protocol and subsequent updates, as required.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Incident Commander ("Incident Commander")

The Incident Commander will:

- Approve all communications materials when the EMO is activated;
- Activate the EOC Information Officer position as required;
- Serve as primary spokesperson for the incident and may appoint alternates;
- Approve Subject Matter Experts as spokespersons as required.

EOC Information Officer ("Information Officer")

A member of the GNWT communications community, the Information Officer will:

- When activated by the Incident Commander, lead GNWT communications in an emergency;
- Call in support staff from departments as required;
- Assess incident complexity and public interest;
- Ensure that emergency communications are coordinated, comprehensive and timely;
- Provide daily incident updates to departmental communications officers;
- Participate in regular check-ins and briefings;
- Engage in public environment monitoring;
- Designate, prepare, and provide support to spokespersons;
- Serve as the media point of contact, manage media requests, and coordinate interviews and press conferences;
- Assist in the EOC distribution of public alerts as needed;
- Update the GNWT Public Notices website;
- Coordinate with departments as required to prepare communications materials;
- Support the NWT EMO in its communications-related responsibilities;

Departmental Communicators

Departmental Communicators from the departments of: MACA, HSS, INF, ENR, Lands, ITI, and EIA will:

- Be trained in ICS and able to serve in the Information Officer role as called upon;
- Support the Information Officer;
- Provide advice and support to their department on the development of messages and the provision of information;
- Work with departmental response staff to prepare information on the department's emergency response;
- Recommend Subject Matter Experts to the Information Officer for media interviews;
- Monitor media reaction to information;
- Support the Information Officer by publishing approved content to social media and other digital channels;
- Advise the Information Officer of possible issues emerging in the public environment.

Audiences

Emergency communications may be targeted toward different key audiences, for differing purposes:

A. Affected public within the circle of emergency

People who are directly impacted by an emergency have direct and urgent information requirements. Accurate, reliable, and straightforward information should be provided to the public on a timely basis and through predictable channels. The public should be advised about what has occurred, what the risks are, and what is being done to remedy the situation.

Communications to affected public in circumstances requiring evacuation are outside the scope of this communications protocol. The Emergency Plan Evacuation Guidelines detail the approach to communications surrounding evacuation.

B. Public immediately outside the circle of risk or emergency

While not directly affected by the risk or emergency, this audience may be unsure how/if they are affected or whether they are at risk. They may also have family or loved ones within the circle of risk or emergency.

Accurate, reliable and straightforward information should be provided to the public on a timely basis and through predictable channels. The public should be advised about what has occurred, what the risks are, what is being done to remedy the situation, and how they can access information on the situation of their loved ones.

C. Communities

Local authorities are the first level of response in the event of an emergency. The GNWT has an interest in ensuring that communities are provided with the support they require to communicate effectively during an emergency, through the sharing of information and preparation of tools for local authority use.

The Liaison Officer, established as per the ICS model, will be the contact for local authority representatives assigned to an incident covered by this protocol. The Liaison Officer's operations are outside the scope of this document.

Local authorities and communities are also expected to maintain awareness of changing risk levels, advise residents of risk conditions and communicate risk and evacuation information, and conduct local evacuation activities to prepare the community.

D. Media

The media has a responsibility to gather information related to the emergency for publication or broadcast. Accurate and timely information to the media will help to reduce misinformation.

Implementation

This communications protocol will be activated along with the Territorial EOC, and will be implemented across all levels of EOC activation (Monitoring, Partial, and Full Activation) throughout the response and recovery phases of emergency management.

Communications Priorities

Priority in messaging will be given to those considered at greatest life safety risk.

Operations and Procedures

This communications protocol is supported by Standard Operating Procedures (Appendix, *to be developed*) outlining a chain of command alongside steps toward the implementation and coordination of the communications function in an emergency.

Communications Channels

Standard communications channels will be used to ensure consistent and predictable information sharing in an emergency. The following communications tools will be used for operational messaging during emergencies:

- Public Safety Notices webpage on the GNWT flagship website
    - Members of the public should be conditioned to refer to this page at all times as the source of timely and factual information during an emergency
- GNWT Social Media accounts as outlined on the Public Safety Notices page (detailed above)
- Departmental websites
- Media releases and interviews

Spokespersons

The Incident Commander will serve as the primary GNWT spokesperson in an emergency, and may designate alternates or approve Subject Matter Experts as additional spokespersons, as required.

When warranted, Ministers may also speak to issues that fall within their departmental mandates. The Premier will serve as a spokesperson on activities of the government as a whole or the activities of more than one department.

The Director of Cabinet Communications is responsible for coordinating the development and approval of key messages and speaking points for Ministerial statements and interviews, and will inform the Information Officer, Deputy Ministers, and departmental Communications Coordinators of any Ministerial messaging.

Tools and Templates

Standard Templates (*to be developed*) will be used to ensure clear and consistent messaging in an emergency. Templates include:

- Public Safety Notice
- Media Advisory
- Social Media Post
- Evacuation Order
- Evacuation All-clear

Partners

Stakeholders and partners can be valuable channels for distributing information. While the Liaison Officer is the contact point for Agency Representatives and is responsible for keeping agencies aware of incident status, sound communications messaging and materials will be used to ensure a consistent, coordinated approach to interagency communication.