

**Additional Information for Written Question 11-20(1):
Ground Search and Rescue**

GNWT Search and Rescue System Review Final Report -
Recommendations and Agency Responses

Department of Justice
January 2024

**GNWT Search and Rescue System Review Final Report –
Recommendations and Agency Responses**

Recommendations	Agency	Agency Response	Resolution
<p>Recommendation #1: Provide EMO with Mandate for SAR The GNWT should provide MACA and EMO with a clear mandate for Search and Rescue (SAR) including the primary responsibility to equip, train, and build capacity in volunteer SAR teams, and to support prevention activities in the NWT. Also recommended EMO take on role as umbrella organization representing SAR at the territorial level including representation for the territory at the national level at SAR-related forums including SAR Volunteer Association of Canada (SARVAC).</p>	<p>MACA</p>	<p>The EMO provides support to community governments with emergency management activities, including disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. In general, EMO does not provide support to individuals unless the GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy has been applied to a widespread disaster event. SAR is outside the EMO mandate and the EMO does not have capacity (human resource, expertise or funding) to assume this mandate from internal resources, which are focused on emergency management related to widespread disaster events.</p> <p>The Territorial Police Services Agreement cannot absorb a net reduction at this time to fund a mandate change. There are also other policing/service gaps that may take priority over SAR.</p> <p>Assigning the mandate to a GNWT Department would require net new financial and human resources.</p>	<p>Remain status quo given SAR is not within EMO’s mandate and there are no financial or human resources to assign a new mandate area at this time.</p>

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<p>Recommendation #2: Assess Current RCMP Mandate The RCMP and EMO should collaboratively assess the current core RCMP mandate to develop a shared understanding of the future RCMP mandate in response to SAR incidents.</p>	<p>MACA RCMP</p>	<p>The RCMP has the capacity through its Criminal Operations Branch to assess and ensure adherence to its mandate. Should there be interest in the GNWT reassigning responsibility for SAR, the RCMP would participate in any future discussions.</p>	<p>This recommendation and any subsequent work is contingent on the GNWT making a change per recommendation #1.</p>
<p>Recommendation #3: Clarify SAR Roles and Responsibilities Through a Memorandum of Understanding The EMO should initiate and establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the EMO and RCMP to clarify their respective roles and responsibilities in connection to SAR.</p>	<p>MACA RCMP</p>	<p>The RCMP does not support this recommendation unless the GNWT assigns responsibility for the SAR program to the EMO or another GNWT department/agency.</p> <p>SAR is not within the mandate of the EMO and it does not have the capacity to take on this responsibility in absence of additional resources being allocated for this function.</p>	<p>This recommendation and any subsequent work is contingent on the GNWT making a change per recommendation #1.</p>
<p>Recommendation #4: Provide Funding to Volunteer SAR Teams To ease the burden on the volunteer SAR teams and allow them to focus on training and providing service, it is recommended the territory, through the EMO, provide funding to volunteer SAR teams in three</p>	<p>MACA</p>	<p>The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation. MACA notes that the</p>	<p>Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.</p>

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<p>key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating funding - approximately \$10,000 per year would be adequate for each volunteer SAR team. • Training funding - funds available to local SAR teams to coordinate training independently. • Equipment funding - Training and equipment costs were estimated to cost a combined \$14,000 annually per team. 		<p>amount of funding identified in the MNP recommendation for implementation is low and additional funds would be necessary to implement this recommendation.</p>	<p>Continue to assess whether other departments/agencies would be able to support SAR NIF funding applications for enhancing community level capacity.</p>
<p>Recommendation #5: Work with Volunteer SAR Teams to Meet Recognized Training Standards The EMO should enable and support quality training that meets the SARVAC CSA standard in all communities. The funding and supports provided by the EMO for training should reflect these goals.</p>	MACA	<p>The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation.</p>	<p>Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.</p>
<p>Recommendation #6: Establish Regular Meetings Between SAR Partners The EMO should lead the establishment of regular meetings between SAR delivery partners in the NWT, and across adjacent jurisdictions. The NWT territorial SAR</p>	MACA	<p>The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation. MACA also notes that</p>	<p>Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.</p>

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partners should meet at least annually.		the recommended amount of funding needed for implementation of this recommendation is low, with 7 trips annually at \$3,000 per trip.	<p>NTHSSA supports this recommendation and would attend meetings between all the partners.</p> <p>RCMP would be willing to participate in meetings.</p>
<p>Recommendation #7: Utilize SAR NIF Program to Fund SAR Improvements</p> <p>The territory should use the SAR NIF to fund improvements to the NWT SAR system wherever possible. Additionally, the EMO should proactively identify opportunities to utilize SAR NIF funding, and support NWT organizations in applying for SAR NIF grants.</p>	MACA	While the EMO has coordinated SAR-NIF projects in the past, Project development, application support and reporting requirements required significant EMO staff time and capacity, and the EMO does not have the capacity to implement this recommendation.	Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time. Continue to assess whether other departments/agencies would be able to support SAR NIF applications for enhancing community level capacity.
<p>Recommendation #8: Investigate Available Options to Expand Med-Response Capabilities</p> <p>The NTHSSA should investigate and implement options to expand the Med-Response program to include broader medical extraction capabilities, including</p>	HSS and NTHSSA	<p>The NTHSSA, who delivers Med-Response services across the NT, does not accept this recommendation.</p> <p>Prior to any consideration of creating a SAR program the GNWT (HSS/MACA) should evaluate if the SAR mandate for</p>	HSS and NTHSSA does not have the mandate to expand Med-Response to include medical extraction in any capacity other than rare incidences of rescue of known-location if

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<p>the capacity to perform rescues of known-location patients. The current Med-Response model also relies on the RCMP for a level of incident management and coordination, even in instances where known-location medical incidents fall outside the core policing mandate of the policing contract.</p>		<p>medical extraction is appropriately outsourced to NTHSSA, as it is beyond the NTHSSA core mandate and, per the report, has significant risk.</p> <p>Additionally, the scope of costs associated with this action seem significantly low considering the scope of policy and standard operating procedure development, legal review, contract development and training that would be required to effectively deliver a new SAR program.</p>	<p>capacity is available/ status quo.</p>
<p>Recommendation #9: Provide Access to Central Counselling Resources The EMO should take the lead in establishing centralized access to counselling resources for local volunteer SAR teams.</p>	MACA	<p>The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation.</p>	<p>Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.</p>
<p>Recommendation #10: Develop a SAR Reference Guide for the Northwest Territories The EMO should develop a SAR reference guide for the NWT SAR system outlining the jurisdictions over SAR, tasking protocols for volunteer SAR teams, roles and</p>	MACA	<p>The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation.</p>	<p>Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.</p>

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responsibilities of the key organizations involved in SAR, and other related processes such as expense reimbursement.			
<p>Recommendation #11: Facilitate the Purchase of GPS Units as a SAR Prevention Strategy</p> <p>The EMO should establish and oversee a program to fund the purchase of GPS units for use by local community members.</p>	MACA	The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation.	Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time. Continue to assess whether other departments/agencies would be able to support SAR NIF funding applications for enhancing community level capacity.
<p>Recommendation #12: Promote Safe Outdoor Practices through School Programming</p> <p>Implement public education programming throughout NWT schools to promote safe outdoor practices (collaboration between the EMO, schools, and volunteer SAR</p>	MACA	The mandate of the EMO is focused on providing support to community governments in emergency management related to widespread disaster events. The EMO does not have the financial or human resources to support this recommendation.	Remain status quo. MACA does not have the mandate or financial or human resources to implement this recommendation at this time.

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groups).			