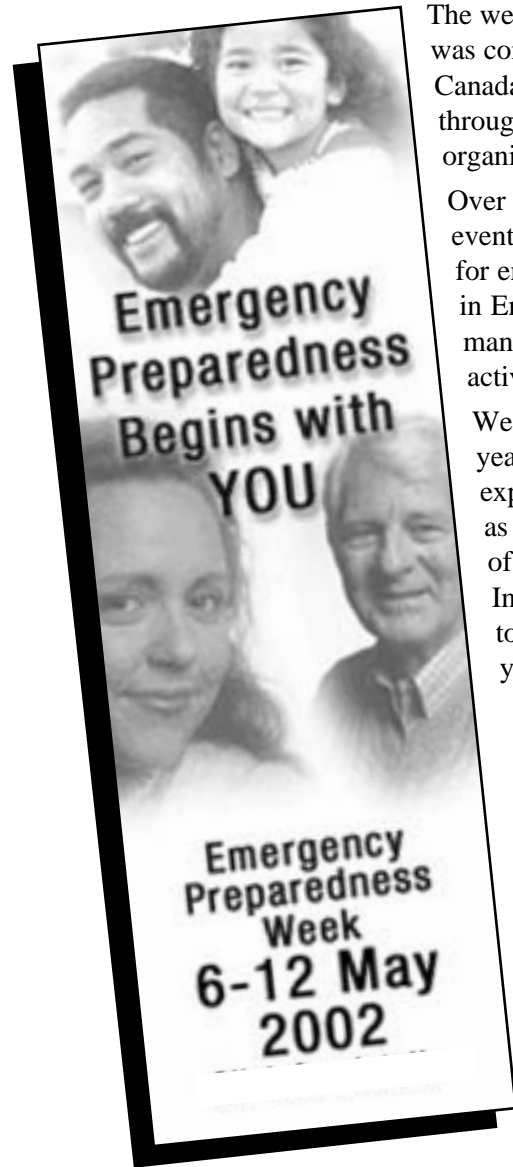


## EP Week Coming in May



The week of May 6 – 12 is *Emergency Preparedness Week* in Canada. EP Week was conceived in 1995 as an annual program to build public awareness of Canada's emergency preparedness principles and system. This is accomplished through the common and collaborative efforts of governments and other organizations in the emergency preparedness community.

Over the years, EP Week has garnered widespread support as the première event related to individual, community, territorial and national preparedness for emergencies or disasters. Today, every province and territory participates in Emergency Preparedness Week. Governments, responders, emergency managers, private industry and non-governmental organizations all develop activities in conjunction with EP Week.

We encourage your organization to become involved with EP Week this year. A wide variety of activities can be conducted in your community to explain how Yukon emergency response is delivered. Static displays as well as demonstrations and presentations are effective ways to create awareness of emergency preparedness and response capabilities in your community. Information materials such as posters and a wide range of emergency how-to literature designed for family use is available to distribute to residents in your community.

### **Suggested activities designed to involve people in your community's EP Week include:**

- giving safety presentations in local schools
- open house tours of your local fire department and ambulance stations
- volunteer recruitment drives
- static and active equipment demonstrations
- safety award presentations
- safety inspections for the home and work-site

So gather your local community response agencies together and plan for an educational and activity-filled EP Week in your community. Contact Yukon EMO for more information on Emergency Preparedness Week.



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# Personal Disaster Preparedness Workshop

In our day-to-day lives, disasters may seem a distant possibility. But the reality is that they do affect the lives of many people across the North every year. Today's younger northern resident is more dependent on the community and modern conveniences and is therefore more vulnerable.

In the event of a disaster, you must be able to survive 72 hours or more without assistance, especially in the more remote communities. Disasters do not discriminate—they can occur anytime, anywhere and can be caused by natural or man-made situations.

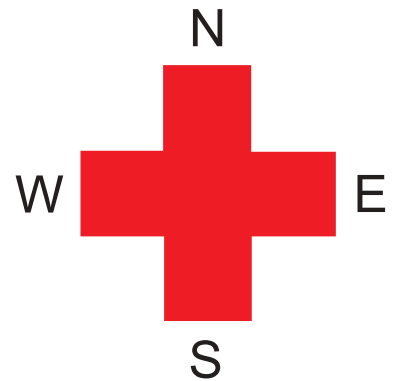
Disaster planning reduces recovery time and costs, and therefore reduces the social and economic stress put on communities. Above all, disaster preparation saves lives. Everyone should be aware of the realities of disaster and prepare ahead. The Personal Disaster Preparedness Workshop is designed for everyone—individuals, employers, sports groups, parents, children, teachers—anyone interested in disaster planning.

### The workshop covers a wide range of topics, including:

- + A review of disasters
- + Who is responsible for disaster management in Canada
- + Who responds to disasters
- + How disasters affect our communities and people
- + Hazards in our communities

### Participants also review a Family Disaster Preparedness Plan to learn about:

- + Family reunification system
- + Insurance and important papers
- + Minimizing injury and damage
- + Evacuation methods
- + Life after the disaster
- + Survival kits



Anywhere. Anytime. | **Red Cross**

The workshop is presented by a Red Cross representative with experience in disaster preparation. Attendees will actively participate in the workshop and leave with an action plan. Cost is \$20.00/person (includes course materials and applicable taxes). Please call for dates in April and during Emergency Preparedness Week, May 6-12, 2002 for your community or group. Red Cross: 867-633-2805



# Spotlight on CASARA

In 1986 members of the Whitehorse Flying Club formed CASARA, the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association of the Yukon, to assist the Canadian Armed Forces in the search for missing aircraft. Today, CASARA volunteers are trained as spotters in civilian and military aircraft, and aircrews are trained to search using small aircraft. Each year, members participate in about ten searches and a similar number of training exercises. The CASARA Yukon search area includes Yukon and northern B.C. south to Dease Lake.

The Alaska Highway is a great flying adventure for many North American pilots and a major route for small aircraft travelling between Alaska and the southern 48 states. In a few cases these pilots experience difficulties on this long wilderness trip, sometimes causing a search to begin. Tasked by the Rescue Coordination Centre in Victoria, CASARA volunteers can often respond quickly to such emergencies, saving the military SAR aircraft and crews for major search and rescues. Yukoners who see a low-level aircraft flying methodically back and forth across the landscape may be looking at a CASARA search for someone who needs help.

As the SAR environment changes, cooperation between EMO and CASARA is growing. The CASARA office is located at the Whitehorse International Airport at #2 – 25 Pilgrim Place (phone/fax: 867-668-6431). For further information contact CASARA's Training Officer Gerry Whitley at 668-2903.



**ABOVE:** CASARA volunteers are trained as spotters.  
**RIGHT:** Canadian armed forces plane ready for emergency response.



*Photos by G. Whitley*

## Reader Survey

MEMO Quarterly is one of the ways the Yukon's emergency response community stays informed and updated.



We want to ensure that your newsletter meets your needs. So tell us what you think about MEMO. See Page 8 for questions and contact information.



# Renewal and Emergency Measures Branch

The Yukon government's Renewal initiative will involve some minor changes to the Emergency Measures Branch, but for the most part not much will change for response agencies and other client groups.

The Department of Community Services is a new department formed under the government's Renewal initiative. It separates the transportation and community-based services from the previous Community and Transportation Services department structure. Yukoners expect more flexible and convenient access to government, and the new structure will better meet their needs. Through the development of Service Yukon, residents will enjoy easier access to grouped and integrated front-line services.

Community Services has a role in the lives of most Yukon people, whether it's through registering a vehicle, getting a building permit, obtaining funds for recreational facilities, buying a lot, registering a business, using a library, registering the birth of a baby or through protective services such as emergency management.

Community Services will also concentrate on providing better service to Yukoners through some key strategies and initiatives. It will expand both physical and electronic access

to services and information and lead the development of the e-government strategy. Community Services will also prepare to integrate the forest fire suppression program into the department upon devolution of the federal Northern Affairs program on April 1, 2003.

The day-to-day work of the Emergency Measures Branch will carry on as before in our mandate of co-operative planning preparedness and response with our other partners in public safety.

One change that you will notice is a new deputy minister for Community Services, Marc Tremblay. Marc was the Director of the Aviation and Marine Branch prior to his appointment to replace long-time deputy minister, John Cormie.

A strong supporter of EMO, over the years John helped to increase the further development of emergency preparedness and response capability throughout the territory. Prior to his retirement, John's work with C&TS and specifically EMO helped to establish a greater ability to deal with emergency situations that may impact on Yukoners.

Thank you, John—for all you have done for Yukon emergency measures and our collective safety. All the best in your retirement.



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## The Strategic Transition Initiative Project (STIP)

Canada's SAR system faces many challenges including an immense and varied landscape, budget cuts, equipment problems and the increasing popularity of 'extreme' wilderness activities. To help anticipate and address these challenges, the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) completed a 1999 review under the direction of the Interdepartmental Committee on SAR (ICSAR). The review examined SAR response services provided by the Canadian Coast Guard, the Canadian Forces, Parks Canada and the RCMP.

The objective was to ensure the continued delivery of a seamless federal SAR system in Canada. As a result of the review, work is underway through the Strategic Transition Initiative Project (STIP) to design a strategic framework for federal SAR services. This framework will include a policy and planning framework, performance measurement system and enhanced collaboration of all SAR partners.

To formulate the federal policy framework, it was agreed that vision and objective statements for Canadian SAR should be established to provide all SAR partners with a common focus to carry out their individual responsibilities. Consequently, ICSAR directed the STIP team to broaden its consultations to include provincial/territorial SAR authorities.

In January and early February 2002, the STIP team leaders and other NSS staff travelled to each province and territory to meet SAR authorities. Response was excellent, and many stakeholders were keen to formalize their own strategies, roles and responsibilities within a common framework. The NSS is preparing a summary report to capitalize on the positive momentum of the consultations.



# Lucier Bids Farewell to the Yukon

One of the Yukon's best-known RCMP officers is heading south after more than a decade in the territory. Cpl. Al Lucier, his wife Jan Downing and their four-year-old son Hudson will spend the next six months travelling across the continent before Lucier starts his newest posting with the Vernon, B.C. RCMP. The move will mean being closer to family for Lucier and Downing, both from B.C.'s Okanagan region.

He's not sure what his new job will be, though it will involve being an "operational" police officer again — i.e. he'll be chasing bad guys. Lucier, 37, was one of only several new RCMP recruits to go straight from training to the North in 1991 — and his group was the first to do so in about a decade. That, and living in a place with such an intriguing history, will be the biggest story he'll take back Outside.

Lucier had heard stories about summer in Dawson City being akin to the Wild West, but once he arrived in May 1991 fresh out of Depot, he discovered his hometown of Kelowna, B.C., had rowdier summers. Dealing with the long, cold winters was a different story.

Single at the time, he lived in a tiny house — a converted double garage — and was saved from certain starvation by the wife of the officer he spent his first six months riding with.

Hockey and a good bunch of folks he worked with at the detachment helped the young Southerner get through the two winters he spent in Dawson, a place that'll always hold a special place in his heart, Lucier said.

After a one and a half year stint as a general duty officer in Whitehorse starting in spring 1993, he hung

up the patrol car keys in favour of being the detachment's second community policing constable, starting in 1995. For the next four years, Lucier was involved in either starting new programs or nursing along fledgling ones such as Crime Stoppers, the auxiliary RCMP and Neighbourhood Watch.

It's working with those volunteers he considers one of his greatest accomplishments. "Those people come to our organization and some of them dedicate an enormous amount of time, with very little or no gain at all. They're the people in the community making a difference."

"There were long days and it wasn't always rosy because you're dealing with lots of different

personalities, and they're not employees — you can't tell them what to do. The good times and the eye-opening experience that that gave me — they picked the RCMP to volunteer for, out of all the volunteer groups."

As well, Lucier's face, voice and words became familiar ones to Yukoners when he became the detachment's first official media spokesman. Once he took his most recent posting as the division's community planning and policing officer, he took over the media duties for M Division as well. A month as a watch commander was followed by a promotion to corporal and a term on the new, but short-lived, proceeds of crime unit. He finished up his 11-year Yukon stint doing strategic, long-term planning for the division over the last two and a half years.

- Sarah Brown



Photo courtesy of the Whitehorse Star

# Towards a National Disaster Mitigation Strategy

## Disaster Mitigation

Comprehensive emergency management encompasses mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Disaster mitigation is defined as sustained actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term impacts and risks associated with natural and human-induced disasters. Mitigative measures are generally taken well in advance of a potential disaster situation to reduce the event's risk of occurrence, or to avert or diminish the event's impacts.

A variety of measures can be undertaken to reduce risk and impact of disasters. Examples:

- Hazard mapping
- Adoption and enforcement of land use zoning practices
- Implementing earthquake resistant building codes
- Enforcing fire resistant building codes
- Hail storm suppression
- Reinforced tornado safe rooms
- Burying of electrical cables to prevent ice build-up
- Dyking and raising of homes in flood-prone areas
- Disaster mitigation public awareness programs
- Insurance programs

Among the best known examples of disaster mitigation in Canada is the Red River Floodway constructed to protect the City of Winnipeg and reduce the impact of flooding in the Red River Basin. The Red River Floodway was built at a cost of just over \$60 million in the 1960's. Since then, the floodway has been used over 20 times and its use during the 1997 Red River Flood saved an estimated \$6 billion. There are other examples of successful mitigation programs in Canada such as Alberta's hail damage suppression program implemented in 1996 and which prevents damage by reducing the size of hail. These examples show that disaster mitigation is an investment in our future, not a cost.



Photo courtesy of the Yukon Government

## Why a National Mitigation Policy?

In the last six years, Canadians have experienced three major disasters - the floods in Quebec, the Red River flooding in 1997 in Manitoba and the Ice Storm of 1998. In addition to enormous human hardship and suffering, these three events cost the Government of Canada an estimated \$5.5 billion - more than triple those for all disasters of the preceding 26 years. Lesser scale disasters that do not receive federal financial assistance, but cause hardship to individuals and communities, occur regularly.

There is evidence to suggest that as climate change takes hold, so too will the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. One third of Canadians live in areas that are subject to natural disasters such as flooding, earthquakes, tornadoes, landslides or hail. Our changing social, economic and political environment and reliance on computer based technologies will affect the way we experience disasters of all types - whether natural or human-caused. Practically every aspect of our lives is connected to an intricate web of networks - physical and cyber - that is essential to our health, security and economic wellbeing. Major transportation and environmental accidents and failure of our critical infrastructure systems have the potential to cause havoc in our society.

Effective management of disasters requires that the mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery components be addressed in a comprehensive and co-ordinated fashion. Co-ordination of federal Y2K readiness activities also showed how co-ordination of mitigation measures can contribute to reducing risk and potential impacts of disaster. Successful disaster mitigation is the responsibility of all Canadians - individuals, communities, the private sector, non-government organizations, and all levels of governments. We all have a role to play in protecting our quality of life and ensuring that Canada has a better system for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Canadians and to protect our critical infrastructure from emerging threats.

Visit the OCIPEP website:  
[www.ocipep\\_bpiepc.gc.ca/home/index\\_e.html](http://www.ocipep_bpiepc.gc.ca/home/index_e.html)

*Reprinted with permission from the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OCIPEP), Feb. 2002*



# Emergency Public Information Committee (EPIC)

Since Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, a number of new developments have been initiated to enhance the level of preparedness and response to emergency situations that may threaten the Yukon. One of these enhancements is the creation of the Emergency Public Information Committee (EPIC).

This committee is made up of public information representatives from Yukon response agencies, government departments, the City of Whitehorse, Council of Yukon First Nations and local media services. The purpose of EPIC is to work collectively to provide Yukoners with the important information they need during emergency situations.

“Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> demonstrated that we can do a better job of providing emergency information,” explained Doug Caldwell, communications officer with Yukon EMO. “One of the most important things we concluded was that we have to involve our local media at the planning stage – not just when it’s time to broadcast an emergency



*Photo courtesy of the Yukon Government alert.”*

To this end, local media and response agencies were invited to form the committee in an effort to find ways to improve how information is shared among agencies and, ultimately, how it can be more effectively provided to the public.

From a government perspective, Becky Striegler of the Department of Education commented, “The safety of students is our number one concern in an emergency, and number two is communication with parents so that they feel secure and informed about their children’s safety. Other agencies, governments and the media all play vital roles in emergency response and communication, so this committee helps us to better understand each other’s needs and work together to ensure a high level of safety.”

Frank Fry, CBC’s Whitehorse news manager said, “CBC Yukon hopes to achieve a better understanding and rapport with EMO procedures, practices and personnel. At the same time, we hope EMO will also gain a better understanding of

media needs during an emergency situation. The goal of this consultative process is to ensure Yukoners get the very best, up to date, relevant survival information in a crisis situation.”

CHON FM’s general manager Shirley Adamson said, “The electronic media can have a role to play during public emergencies which may be different from that of an observer or reporter. That role and its responsibilities will emerge as a result of participation in this new committee.”

RCMP Communications Officer, Al Lucier expressed his objectives of the EPIC committee by stating, “We as a committee will come together over the sense of providing timely and effective communications to the Yukon public during times of emergency.”

EPIC has had two meetings to date where the members goals for the

discussed committee and what they would like to achieve collectively. One of the first activities for the committee is developing an internal awareness training program of how the Yukon’s emergency response community operates, how lead agencies are determined based on the situation, and how media and responders can work more effectively together in this structure.

Apart from establishing better working relationships among the media and response agencies, EPIC will also explore new technologies that may be used to deliver emergency announcements simultaneously among all local radio media as well as determining other information options related to advisories for emergency situations. Further, the various agencies and media will work together to promote Emergency Preparedness Week and the other annual safety awareness campaigns designed to educate members of the public on water safety, safe boating, forest fire prevention, and other potential hazards.



## Training Calendar

### “Train the Trainer”

**Emergency Telecommunications Course,**  
Module 1 – April 10

**Global Positioning System (GPS) Course**  
April 20-21

**Emergency Public Information Officer Course**  
May 6-10

**Spring SAR Training Weekend**  
May 10-12

**Personal Disaster Preparedness Workshops**  
call Red Cross, 867-633-2805

## GPS Course Profile

This course will be held in Whitehorse April 20 – 21 at the JEOCC beginning on Saturday at 9 am. The morning will be an introduction to GPS, and the afternoon will involve some fieldwork. Sunday will be spent on a preplanned route using your GPS, compass and map to travel to various checkpoints. Basic knowledge of map and compass is a must.

For more information contact EMO, or Al Ekholm  
[aekholm@yknet.yk.ca].

## Reader Survey

MEMO Quarterly is a newsletter for the Yukon’s emergency response community. We want to ensure that MEMO is meeting your needs, and the best way to do that is to ask!

Let us know what you think about MEMO. Please take a moment and consider these questions:

- Who reads MEMO in your office or organization?
- Does MEMO provide information that is current and relevant to *your* needs?
- Are there features that you would like to see?
- What do you like about MEMO? What do you think needs to change?

- What do you think about MEMO’s format? Is it reader-friendly?
- Would you like more photos and faces? More articles?
- What are your ideas how MEMO can better serve the emergency response community?

**Call us: 867-667-5220**

**Send us an email: [emo.yukon@gov.yk.ca](mailto:emo.yukon@gov.yk.ca)**

**Post us a letter:**

**Emergency Measures Branch  
Yukon Government  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 2C6**



**Remember to visit our website:**

**<http://www.cts.gov.yk.ca/emo>**

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Additional Copies can be obtained by writing to:

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