



## News Release

### Skills of Search and Rescue Volunteers Expanded

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (December 8, 2005)** – Community volunteer search and rescue (SAR) leaders have emerged from a three-day conference with new skills that will strengthen search and rescue services in Nunavut.

“This event enabled us to acknowledge the experience and professionalism of our volunteers. It also provided an opportunity for the Government of Nunavut to talk to them about the many aspects of both current and future community search and rescue activities,” said Community and Government Services Minister Levinia Brown.

Lectures and training focused on improving the knowledge and planning capabilities of community search and rescue leaders.

Skills needed by local SAR services were identified, as were fundamental skills required by community SAR organization.

Participants also recommended strategies toward lowering the number of SAR incidents across Nunavut.

“A member of a community search and rescue organization is not simply a volunteer; they are unpaid emergency management professionals. These individuals require unique skills; sometimes putting their own lives at risk in order to save another’s life. Long-term effectiveness of any service, volunteer or professional, is dependant upon training to ensure skills are current. The leaders at this conference have provided valuable information toward a long-term strategy for search and rescue in Nunavut,” said Brown.

A snowmobile safety poster unveiled by the Minister at the conference will be distributed to communities for posting at gas outlets, hamlet offices, RCMP detachments and on community announcement boards.

“This poster is intended to remind Nunavummiut that it is up to them to always be adequately prepared and take responsibility for their own safety on the land,” said Brown. Additionally, the SAR leaders have recorded safety messages that will reinforce the poster’s message. The recordings will be broadcast on community radio.

“Those travelling on the land or water must realize that any failure to prepare for a trip can place both them and search and rescue teams at risk,” said Brown.

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