

FOR RELEASE
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Government of Yukon unveils new 911 call centre

WHITEHORSE—Today the Government of Yukon unveiled the territory's new 911 call centre. The call centre relocated from the Whitehorse RCMP detachment building to the larger Emergency Response Centre.

"This centre is equipped with the necessary communications and support equipment to accommodate the expansion of Basic 911 service Yukon-wide," Minister of Justice Brad Cathers said. "We are also providing funding to support hiring and training of additional RCMP operators to meet the increased volume of 911 calls when service is expanded to all communities."

The Government of Yukon invested \$334,000 to move the call centre and the Government of Canada contributed an additional \$142,000 through the Territorial Police Services Agreement. The RCMP operates the call centre, called a public-safety answering point, on behalf of the Yukon government.

"The RCMP is proud to have provided Yukon's 911 public-safety answering point since 1995. This integrated function has proven to be an efficient way to respond to emergencies by coordinating medical, fire and police responders," Yukon RCMP commanding officer Chief Superintendent Peter Clark said. "This new facility allows us to increase the number of highly trained and valued call operators to serve the whole territory."

Expanding 911 service to rural Yukon communities is a priority for the Government of Yukon and its partners: the RCMP, the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs and the Association of Yukon Communities.

"The ability to call 911 eliminates any doubt or delay in using the correct emergency number. The Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs has advocated for the expansion of 911 service in Yukon," Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs president Jim Regimbal said. "When people are in need of help from first responders we need to be able to find you to help you, so ensure that you know your civic address and that it is visible to first responders."

"Simplifying access to emergency services with one number across the territory benefits local residents and visitors to our communities," Association of Yukon Communities president Wayne Potoroka said. "A number of communities have also prepared for 911 service by improving civic addressing."

Basic 911 is a telephone-based dispatch service for emergency service providers. When a caller dials 911 the call is routed to the public-safety answering point, where an operator asks what the emergency is and where the caller is located. The operator then contacts the emergency service provider to dispatch police, fire or ambulance.

Emergency response services in rural communities will continue to be delivered by municipal and volunteer fire departments, volunteer emergency medical services, community nursing stations and the RCMP.

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