



Government of Yukon

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NEWSrelease

FOR RELEASE #10-140
 July 30, 2010

Yukon Emergency Medical Services launches new ambulance deployment initiative

WHITEHORSE – Beginning next week, Emergency Medical Service (EMS) will deploy an ambulance crew to the top of Two-Mile Hill to be stationed at the Government of Yukon Protective Services building in the effort of reducing emergency response times for Whitehorse and area residents.

"EMS helps keep Yukoners safe by providing excellent pre-hospital care to those that are sick and injured," Community Services Minister Archie Lang said. "By establishing an alternate base at our Protective Services facility, EMS crews can respond faster to emergency calls in the expanding neighbourhoods along the Alaska Highway including Copper Ridge, Granger and Porter Creek."

The Community Services Protective Services division and EMS are launching a three phase plan to improve emergency medical care in Whitehorse. As of August 2, a mobile EMS ambulance crew will start operating from the Government of Yukon Protective Services building between Monday to Friday and the hours of 9 a.m to 4 p.m. Work is also underway to set up a temporary EMS station on site which should be operational by early fall.

"The Yukon government is proceeding with plans to construct a permanent, centrally-located and integrated emergency response facility at the Protective Services division headquarters," said Lang. "An additional EMS facility in the geographic centre of Whitehorse will reduce response times, will better serve our growing population and help address the expected growth in call volumes in the future."

Protective Services intends to proceed with construction of a new integrated emergency response building this fall with completion planned for 2012.

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See backgrounder below.

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Backgrounder

- EMS originally proposed establishing a second and temporary EMS station on Range Road. The facility selected for use was ideal for EMS proposes use as it was centrally

located, owned by the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, met EMS operational needs, and could be refitted at a reasonable cost. However, EMS heard the residents' messages that they did not want a temporary ambulance station on Range Road.

- Whitehorse EMS is experiencing an annual average 10% increase in call volumes from the demands of population growth.
- EMS calls in the Whitehorse can be grouped by area: with 10% of calls in from Riverdale, 40% in the downtown area, and 50% in the rest of Whitehorse, including Takhini, Porter Creek, and Hamilton Boulevard and Alaska Highway neighbourhoods.
- A \$420,000 contract was awarded to Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd. to design the new facility in March 2010. Geotechnical engineering and assessment is currently underway at the site northwest of the Hamilton Blvd-Alaska Highway.

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