



FOR RELEASE

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Governments and agencies to participate in Operation NANOOK 2013

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon, the City of Whitehorse and Whitehorse General Hospital will participate in the Yukon portion of the Canadian Armed Forces' Operation NANOOK 2013 in August.

"The Yukon government welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Canadian Armed Forces for the first ever Yukon-based Operation NANOOK. This multi-government exercise is an ideal opportunity to continue building strong relationships with our partners both locally and nationally," Premier Darrell Pasloski said.

Operation NANOOK is the most well-known of all the training operations held annually by the Canadian Armed Forces in Canada's North. For the first time, portions of the exercise will take place in Yukon and be led by the Yukon government.

"Yukon's participation in Operation NANOOK 2013 provides territorial agencies the opportunity to work together and test the interagency emergency response systems we have in place," Community Services Minister Elaine Taylor said. "By working together with our local partners and the Canadian Armed Forces on these exercises, we will be able to enhance Yukon's ability to respond to emergencies."

During Operation NANOOK 2013, a series of emergency exercises will take place in the Whitehorse area from August 4 to 9, involving multiple agencies and governments responsible for emergency management and coordination.

"The recent flooding in southern Alberta serves as an illustration that major emergencies occur with very little warning," City of Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis said. "I look forward to welcoming members of the Canadian Armed Forces to Whitehorse as we work with our partners to strengthen our emergency response capacity."

The Canadian Armed Forces will provide disaster relief support to the various governments and other partners participating in the Yukon portion of the exercise, as they would in a real life emergency scenario of this magnitude.

"The Whitehorse scenario of Operation NANOOK 2013 will employ the Canadian Armed Forces in the air and on land, while providing support to territorial and municipal partners in the context of disaster relief operations," Joint Task Force (North) Deputy Chief of Staff Operations and Plans Lieutenant-Colonel John St. Dennis said. "The Whitehorse scenario provides opportunities to Canadian Armed Forces to practise with our northern partners in a realistic environment, and strengthen intergovernmental relations."

Yukon is a jurisdiction familiar with wildfires, floods and extreme weather conditions. The territory's emergency response organizations work year-round to prepare for such emergencies and Operation NANOOK 2013 provides an opportunity to work with the Canadian Armed Forces to test the arrangements in place.

For more information on the Yukon portion of Operation NANOOK 2013 visit www.gov.yk.ca/opnanook13.html. For information on the larger Canadian Armed Forces' Operation NANOOK 2013 visit <http://www.foin-jtfn.forces.gc.ca/ops/nanook-eng.asp>.

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See backgrounder below.

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Operation NANOOK 2013

During the Yukon portion of Operation NANOOK 2013, the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse will activate their emergency operations centres in response to a simulated large scale emergency.

The exercise is planned for the week of August 4 to 9 and includes the deployment of sprinklers in the greenbelt surrounding Whitehorse, a simulated evacuation of a Whitehorse subdivision, setting up and operating a reception centre for evacuees, and a mass casualty bus crash using Canadian Armed Forces personnel as "victims".

There will also be a simulated biohazard exercise and the coordination of a mini clinic designed to handle a surge in emergency medical capacity.

The various exercises will include personnel from the Yukon government, the City of Whitehorse fire department, Whitehorse General Hospital, the RCMP and the Canadian Armed Forces.

Yukoners and visitors are asked to keep the training exercises in mind if they see unusual activity and emergency personnel in the Whitehorse area. There is no planned disruption to travel or services during the event and emergency personnel will respond as normal should any real-life situations arise.

There will be more than 500 Canadian Armed Forces personnel stationed in the Whitehorse area for the operation. They will use Porter Creek and F.H. Collins Secondary School, Takhini Arena and the Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre as living quarters and operation centres.

As well, on August 10, the Canadian Armed Forces, in partnership with the City of Whitehorse, will hold a community day to thank residents for their support during the operation.

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