

The Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Region: Transforming Arctic Search and Rescue

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Credit: Canadian Coast Guard

Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary members from Tasiujaq, Kuujjuaq, and Kangiqsualujjuaq, Canadian Coast Guard Arctic search and rescue officers, and Kativik Civil Security personnel take part in Nunavik Search and Rescue (SAR) Exercise 2025.

On Monday, 23 June 2025, five tourists and their guide returning by boat from a fishing trip in Ungava Bay went ashore on an island at the mouth of the Koksoak River, north of the community of Kuujjuaq. They were settling down to brew tea on a camping stove when it exploded, killing one of the tourists and severely injuring the others. The guide had set up his Starlink before the accident and managed to send out an emergency alert. As it happened on land, the incident was a humanitarian or ground search-and-rescue (SAR) case falling under the jurisdiction of the Nunavik Police Service. With no marine capability, the police requested assistance from Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Halifax. Within minutes, the JRCC had tasked the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) units from Tasiujaq, Kuujjuaq and Kangiqsualujjuaq, which raced to the scene in their fast rescue boats.





The Nunavimmiut responders spotted the accident site, landed and made their way up the slopes of the rocky island. They were confronted by the screams of the injured and immediately started treating shrapnel wounds, severe burns, compound fractures and shock. George Kauki, Kuujjuaq's unit leader, ably served as the on-scene coordinator, organizing the evacuation of the injured onto the waiting rescue boats. The responders made it back to Kuujjuaq in under an hour, where medical assistance awaited.

"That was great. It felt so real," exclaimed one of the responders at the debrief conducted at the community's marina. The scenario was one of several prepared by Erin

Pigott, the Deputy Superintendent for maritime search and rescue with the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Arctic Region, and her team. For weeks, they had worked with their partners in the Kativik Regional Government's Department of Civil Security to put together the multi-unit SAR exercise, designed to practise skills and strengthen the ability of the different units to work together and collaborate with JRCC Halifax. After the exercise, one veteran Nunavimmiut responder explained, "You know, for us, the Coast Guard used to be just an icebreaker a few days away. That's it. We didn't know them. We didn't work with them. We didn't ask them for help." Gesturing to the CCG Auxiliary crews and the CCG SAR officers chatting alongside the Kuujjuaq marina, the responder said "Now, look at us." Pigott understands this very well – the advanced training is important, but the relationships "are everything."¹

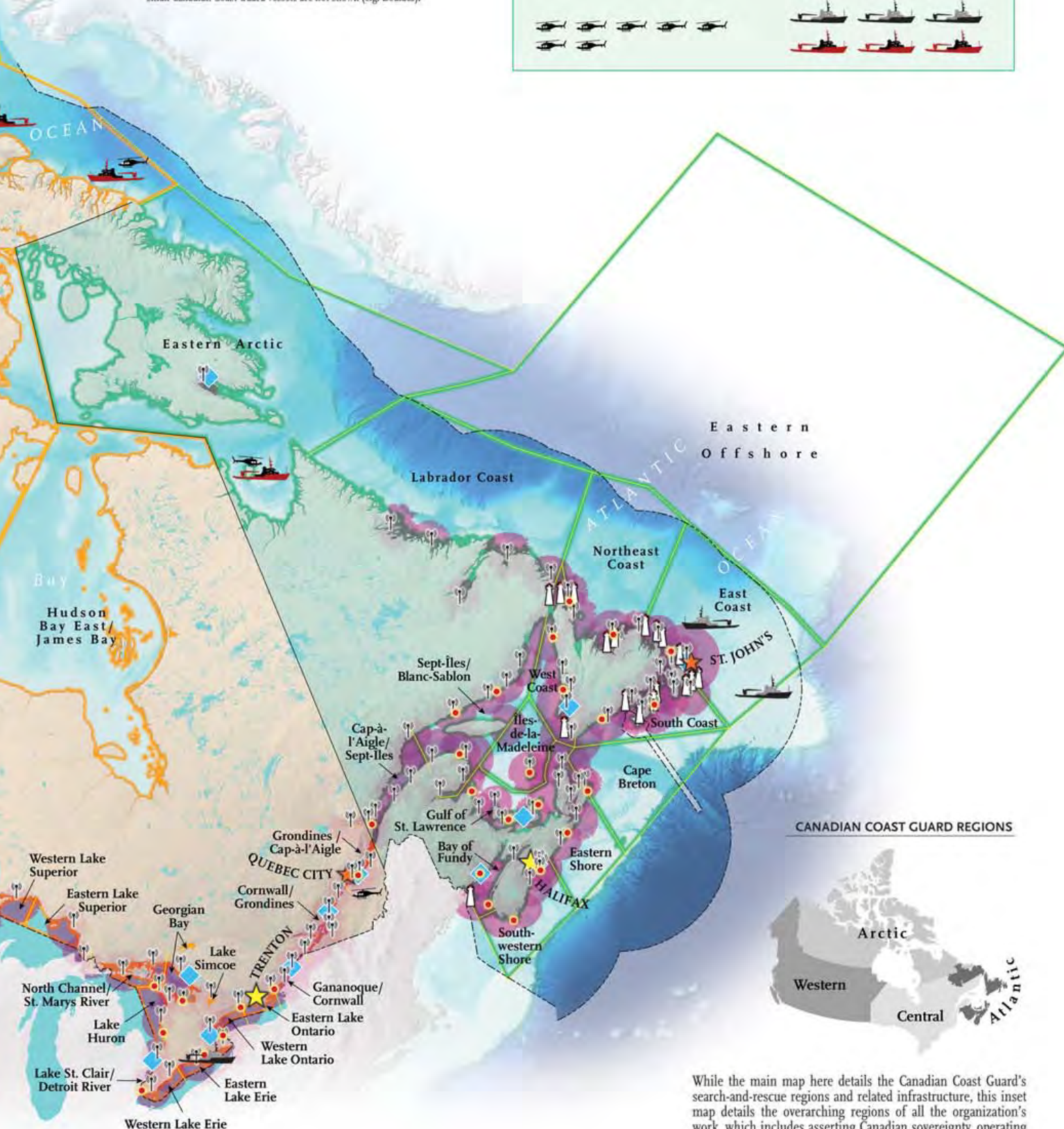
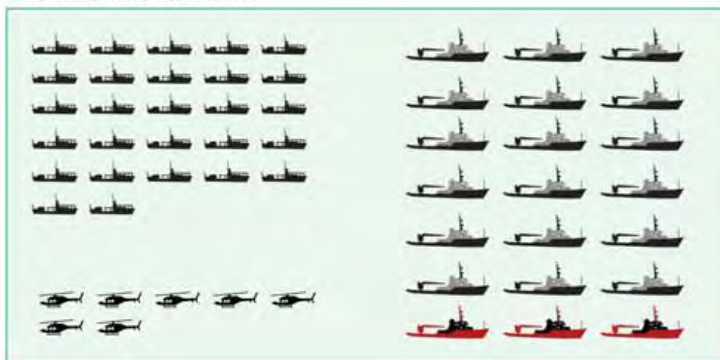
This exercise is a good example of how the CCG has transformed its approach to Arctic SAR over the last decade. The civilian agency has developed a better understanding of the marine risks facing the region and its SAR requirements, which has guided new investments in equipment, capabilities and people. It has worked to stitch Arctic responders, with their particular knowledge and skills, into the broader SAR system. Developing the kind of relationships that allow partners in this system to operate at the speed of trust – a critical requirement in marine SAR, particularly in the austere environmental conditions of the Arctic – lies at the heart of these efforts.

CANADIAN COAST GUARD VESSELS*

-  Small vessel (no sleeping quarters)
-  Large vessel (with sleeping quarters)
-  Icebreaker (with sleeping quarters)
-  Helicopter

*Vessels shown on the map were at sea on Oct. 4, 2021, while those in the fleet diagrams were docked, dry docked or parked. Some small Canadian Coast Guard vessels are not shown (e.g. Zodiacs).

Fleet coordinated out of Halifax



CANADIAN COAST GUARD REGIONS



While the main map here details the Canadian Coast Guard's search-and-rescue regions and related infrastructure, this inset map details the overarching regions of all the organization's work, which includes asserting Canadian sovereignty, operating fisheries patrols, mounting scientific expeditions, responding to oil spills, overseeing marine traffic, clearing ice and managing 17,000 lighthouses, daymarks, foghorns and buoys.

Several of the Nunavimmiut participating in the June 2025 Kuujuaq exercise had been involved in the extensive search for Martha Kauki, a well-known interpreter and political leader, as well as her husband, Joanassie Epoo, and their two teenage children, who went missing on Ungava Bay in their freighter canoe in August 2003. The operation highlighted many of the issues that continue to challenge SAR operations in the Arctic: CCG icebreakers and primary SAR aircraft being located hours and days away; the presence of fewer vessels of opportunity; the severe weather and sea state; and the limited availability of hydrographic information for the region. All of these factors slowed down the response. Despite repeated calls in the 1990s for more marine SAR training and equipment for Nunavik's responders, they still found themselves without the boats, equipment and training required to take part in the operation effectively and safely. Worst of all was the breakdown in communications between military and CCG officials and the Nunavimmiut responders. The Inuit felt that the federal practitioners did not respect or use their knowledge of the family and of the currents, winds and weather of Ungava Bay, particularly in the modeling that guided the search area determination. In short, the search – and others that preceded and followed it – made Nunavimmiut feel like “third-class citizens.”

The Ungava Bay tragedy forced Nunavimmiut to “go their own way and look after themselves.” The Kativik Regional Government and Makivvik Corporation partnered up and spent over \$3 million on fast rescue boats for each of Nunavik's 14 communities, and they have spent millions on their upkeep and training the crews since that time. It is a remarkable example of regional resiliency and self-sufficiency, but one that left these entities bearing more than their fair share of the burden for search and rescue. The fast rescue fleet effectively fulfilled the marine SAR mandate of the CCG in Nunavik, but it rarely worked with federal actors.²

A series of tragic multi-fatality marine SAR cases across Inuit Nunangat in the 1990s and early 2000s highlighted many of these recurring issues, particularly the lack of local capacity and the poor collaboration and weak relationships among local, regional and federal authorities, leading to delayed responses and limiting cooperation.³ Despite these challenges, SAR volunteers continued to provide their communities and outsiders visiting the region with the safety net that they required to travel, harvest and work on Arctic waters, albeit with limited to no support. One internal CCG report from 2000 noted that, while the Arctic SAR system depended exclusively on volunteers – more heavily than any other part of the country – “they have not received a comparable level of support to the remainder of Canada, especially when one considers the absence of other SAR resources.”⁴

In the early 2000s, a series of government reports called on the CCG to strengthen marine SAR capabilities in the Arctic and expand the CCGA in the region. The auxiliary first expanded into the Canadian North in the 1990s, with official units established in Yellowknife (1992) and Hay River (1997). A concerted effort to expand the CCGA started in 2001, but a lack of funding, community engagement and training opportunities, coupled with crew and vessel standards that were unachievable in and inappropriate for the realities of northern communities, hampered these efforts.⁵

By 2015, only nine CCG Auxiliary units had been established north of 55, and several of these struggled to remain operational on a consistent basis. The CCG had stationed no primary SAR resources in the region, and the team dedicated to SAR programming for the entire Arctic amounted to three overworked individuals. Northern outreach activities by the coast guard and JRCCs still tended to be rooted in a crisis-response approach following problematic cases. These efforts proved fleeting and



Nunavimmiut responders evacuate injured ‘tourists’ during a SAR exercise in Nunavik in June 2025.



Exercise participants conduct a debrief at Kuujuaq's marina.

did little to strengthen the relationships required to improve SAR in the Arctic.

Although these years saw little external investment in community-level efforts, CCG personnel continued to work closely with their international partners on Arctic SAR. This cooperation was codified in the 2011 Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement and advanced through the 2015 launch of the independent, informal, operationally driven Arctic Coast Guard Forum, both of which were spurred on by increased maritime traffic in the region.

The effects of climate change have increased the risk of maritime incidents across the Canadian North, particularly in the waters of Inuit Nunangat. Sea ice reduction has led to longer boating seasons, with boaters travelling earlier in the spring and later in the fall, risking exposure to more severe environmental conditions. The longer boating season also means that Inuit are operating in dangerous waters before CCG icebreakers deploy to the Arctic in June and after they leave in November. Across the North, more powerful boats also mean that people are travelling further, with increased risks of running out of fuel or experiencing mechanical failure. The pressures of food insecurity often force harvesters to travel greater distances and in poor conditions, increasing their risk. These drivers, combined with a range of other factors (severe weather, unsafe vessels, limited safety equipment, drug and alcohol abuse), have increased the number of accidents involving community vessels. Outside marine traffic, including from cruise ships, bulk carriers, fishing vessels, pleasure craft and adventurers, has also grown significantly, leading to new SAR requirements across the region.⁶

In the face of increasing risks, the CCG launched the Arctic Search and Rescue Project in 2015 to address the “unique challenges of SAR in the Arctic.” The project team focused on studying the marine risks and SAR requirements in the Canadian Arctic, while laying the

groundwork required to strengthen and expand the CCGA in the region.⁷ Visiting 45 northern communities over the next two years, the team developed a better understanding of local challenges and needs. It found that many communities dealt with marine cases on their own, never reporting them to the CCG or JRCCs. Consequently, the SAR data for the region, which guides planning and is used to justify the allocation of resources at the federal level, was incomplete and inaccurate.

The project team also determined that, while many communities would welcome and support a CCG Auxiliary unit, most would struggle to find a suitable SAR vessel that met all applicable regulatory requirements. As a result, the CCG used funding from the Oceans Protection Plan to launch the Indigenous Community Boat Volunteer Program in 2017. Through this budget, communities can purchase a new SAR vessel, required equipment and/or storage facilities. The CCG also launched its Arctic Community Engagement and Exercise Teams (ACEETs) to provide support to and training for communities as they sustained existing auxiliary units and developed new ones.

The Arctic SAR Project provided the structure, knowledge, energy and funding required to jump-start improvements to the region's SAR system and laid a firm foundation for a range of ambitious initiatives – efforts bolstered by the creation of the CCG Arctic Region in 2018.⁸ Under the direction of Steve Thompson, the Arctic Region's Superintendent for maritime SAR, the last six years have brought transformative change to the Arctic SAR system, with a range of initiatives enhancing local and regional capacity.⁹

The most important success has been the sustained effort to improve community-based marine SAR capabilities through the rapid expansion and strengthening of the CCGA. Across the Arctic Region, there are now 41 CCGA units, with over 500 members and 60 vessels, including



Cambridge Bay Coast Guard Auxiliary Unit after participation in a coast guard SAR exercise in August 2022.

Nunavik's fast rescue fleet. Through these units, Arctic responders enjoy more support from federal partners, while the infusion of their skill, knowledge and energy has strengthened the entire SAR system.

These investments have paid dividends, with units delivering fast and effective marine SAR responses and regularly providing life-saving assistance to their fellow community members and to visitors to the region. They have been busy: the number of official maritime SAR cases in the Arctic Region has increased from 64 in 2020 to 121 in 2024, the complex result of increased risks, the greater availability of units that can respond, effective reporting procedures, and more requests for assistance from northerners who know there are skilled responders nearby. In general, enhanced local capacity means there is less reliance on CCG icebreakers and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) aircraft, providing for more immediate responses, ensuring that these resources can be used for other SAR cases, and saving considerable money compared to JRCC operations using fixed- or rotary-wing aircraft based in southern Canada.

CCGA personnel also play a critical role as SAR detectives, feeding knowledge of local conditions, marine spaces and the marine activities of their fellow community members to the JRCCs to assist with search planning and modelling. Such detective work can also identify false alarms and prevent the JRCCs from unnecessarily deploying additional resources. Other crucial activities that benefit the broader marine safety system in the Arctic include educating their communities about boating safety, assisting with aids to navigation and very high frequency (VHF) systems, and reporting unfamiliar vessels and other suspicious activities.

Through their community engagement, CCG personnel quickly realized that an auxiliary unit is not the answer in every community that requires an improved marine SAR capability. The Guardians programs across the North provide another answer. Through the Marine Protected Area Training (MPAT) Project, CCG personnel have worked with the Foxe Basin Kivalliq North Sapuiyit Society (Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour and Naujaat, Nunavut) and the Aviqtuuq Inuit stewardship program (Taloyoak, Nunavut) to identify community training needs and deliver training in small vessel operations, marine first aid and collaborative SAR response. By the time the program ended in early 2024, dozens of Guardians had engaged in training opportunities that expanded their operational competencies and brought greater safety to their communities.¹⁰

In 2018, the CCG established another community-based SAR asset when it launched the first primary SAR resource ever stationed in the Canadian North: the Inshore Rescue Boat Station in Rankin Inlet. At the start of the 2023 season, the CCG upgraded the station into an Arctic Marine Response Station, which included the hiring and training of additional crew from local communities, the extension of the station's operational season by one month, the procurement of an additional SAR vessel, and other infrastructure improvements. The CCG regularly employs northern Indigenous people to work at the station, where they learn SAR skills that they can take back to their home communities or to careers in the CCG.

CCG Arctic SAR officers have also been instrumental in better preparing for mass rescue operations in the region. These low-probability, high-consequence scenarios would

seriously test the SAR system, while the sudden influx of hundreds of evacuees would challenge the infrastructure and essential services of most communities in the Arctic. CCG personnel have worked with their counterparts in the military and in civilian emergency management to plan and prepare for such incidents. They regularly practise these plans with domestic and international partners in the Canadian Arctic, including through large-scale multinational exercises such as the one conducted around Herschel Island in 2023.

In support of these efforts, the CCG Arctic Region launched an innovative Training and Exercising Program in 2019, providing expert guidance to industry partners (particularly cruise operators) on marine risks, how the SAR system functions, and how a mass rescue would work in the region. This program has helped smooth out some of the complexity involved in mass rescues and ensures that participating cruise ships are ready to assist during SAR incidents in the region as vessels of opportunity. The connections made through the program have heightened the CCG's awareness of the industry players involved in the marine spaces of the Canadian Arctic, bolstering its understanding of their risk profiles.

Behind the scenes, CCG Arctic SAR personnel have been working to address longstanding jurisdictional issues in

the broader SAR system. For example, they have worked closely with the JRCCs, regional and provincial authorities, and Nunavimmiut responders to clarify the boundaries between inland and federal waters on several key rivers in Nunavik, thus helping to establish when SAR cases are a provincial responsibility and when they are federal. They are also working with the National SAR Secretariat and other partners to work through the complex issues around the land-ice interface. If a hunter goes out to the floe edge on a skidoo, and it breaks away as an ice floe, this is considered a ground search-and-rescue (GSAR) case. This is a situation in which capabilities do not align with mandate, given that such a case would best be handled as a marine SAR case by the JRCCs and coast guard.

Finally, new CCG vessel construction will eventually provide a welcome boost to marine SAR capabilities in the region. Currently, the CCG generally deploys eight icebreakers to the Arctic each summer. The vessels are aging but capable. When not undertaking icebreaking operations, they are deployed to areas of increased risk – such as where cruise ships are operating. The planned construction of two polar icebreakers, six program icebreakers and two Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels for the CCG will provide new capabilities and greater reach for SAR operations.



Canadian Coast Guard Arctic members Stuart Thibert and Jeffrey Gordon participating in small group discussions at Nunavik SAR Roundtable 2022.



Responders from Nunatsiavut and Nunavik participating in advanced training in Parry Sound, Ontario, in 2024.

By necessity, the CCG began its efforts to improve marine SAR in the Arctic in Nunavut, which had the fewest resources available. This meant that other regions had to wait longer for improvements. At the Nunavik Search and Rescue Roundtable in December 2022, veteran responders raised a litany of concerns and criticisms with Superintendent Thompson. Why had they received so little support from the coast guard over the years? Where was the outreach? Why had their local expertise been ignored in past SAR cases? Rather than responding with excuses and explanations to each question, Thompson said, “Thanks for sharing. I hear you, I agree, and I’m sorry. We want to work with you on this.” This exemplifies why the CCG Arctic Region’s initiatives have been successful in recent years: its personnel have listened, learned, built and sustained relationships. Through these relationships, they have co-developed and delivered flexible programming that reflects the unique contexts of Arctic communities, fully embracing and operationalizing the Coast Guard Arctic Strategy’s “bedrock principle” of “in the North, by the North, and for the North.”

Strong Relationships: Since the CCG launched its Arctic SAR Project, the agency has prioritized community engagement, relationship building and maintaining long-lasting partnerships with responders, communities, and territorial and regional governments. CCG Arctic SAR personnel have also helped to strengthen relationships between northern responders and other federal partners, particularly the JRCCs. Having the same personnel carrying out these activities throughout the year (not only during the summer months), and for extended periods of time, has bolstered CCG relationship-building efforts.¹¹

Deeper Understanding: CCG personnel have spent a lot of time listening to and learning from northerners and the other mariners that operate in Arctic waters. They have developed a much deeper understanding of community and industry marine activity, risks and requirements. This learning process has been formalized in the Risk-Based Analysis of Maritime Search and Rescue Delivery (RAMSARD) Program, through which CCG personnel visit every community in the Arctic Region over a five-year cycle to update risk assessments and review SAR services.

Sustained Access to Training and Equipment: Through the Indigenous Community Boat Volunteer Program, 27 Arctic Indigenous communities have been awarded the community boats and equipment required to operate CCG Auxiliary units. While the new vessels bolster community marine SAR capabilities, they would have limited value without the training required to use them effectively. To support these units, the Coast Guard Arctic Region and its CCG Auxiliary partners engage in a robust training and exercise cycle, often in-community and on the water, with materials and approaches co-developed by Arctic responders. Auxiliary members and Guardians have also been brought to the CCG base in Parry Sound, Ontario, for advanced operational training.

Support to Responders: Finding a group of 15-20 CCG Auxiliary members in small communities can be challenging, and volunteer burnout remains a major challenge. In some units, the same people are always on call and respond to every search. This tempo of activity can inhibit their ability to go out on the land and hunt and fish for their families, contributing to food insecurity issues.

Many of these responders also wear multiple responder hats – GSAR, fire department, ambulance and Canadian Rangers (with approximately 24% of all CCGA members in the territorial North also serving as Rangers). Recognizing these difficulties, the CCG Arctic personnel have continued to work with their CCGA partners to support in-community recruitment efforts.

CCG Arctic SAR personnel also understand a defining feature of SAR in the Arctic: the responders almost always know for whom they are searching. SAR in the Arctic is searches for family, best friends, neighbours and Elders. Almost every responder has found someone close to them deceased from the cold, from accidents, or from self-harm. The toll of this trauma and tragedy on the mental health of community responders is extreme. In response, the CCG has embedded mental and psychological health training for emergency responders into its Indigenous SAR training program to assist with Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), with the Arctic Region thus becoming the first region of the CCG to offer this service to responders. The support that CCG Arctic SAR personnel provide to the volunteers goes beyond the training and includes regular, informal check-ins and CISM support following difficult cases.

Staffing: The CCG Arctic Region has increased the number of full-time equivalent positions (from the three CCG personnel focused on Arctic SAR in 2015 to 17 in 2025). In particular, it has made a deliberate effort to hire northern Indigenous SAR officers, such as Brenda Panipakoocho (Iqaluit), Angulalik Pedersen (Cambridge Bay) and Jeffrey Gordon (Kuujuaq) – all of whom are also CCG Auxiliary members in their communities. Together, these personnel keep in frequent communication with auxiliary members, conduct training and exercise activities, and assist with equipment and vessel maintenance.

Sustaining Progress

The initiatives developed by CCG Arctic personnel, particularly the expansion of the CCGA, have proven highly successful. These efforts have yielded several best practices that could shape resilience-building measures in other northern and Indigenous communities, as well as guiding the work of other federal departments involved in safety and security. The most fundamental is the importance of sustained, face-to-face relationship building.

Success is fragile and must be sustained. Northern responders regularly express concern that the latest wave of CCG support will prove fleeting, with the initiatives waylaid by shifting priorities, shrinking budgets and personnel cuts. If CCG personnel become less engaged, with fewer training and relationship-building opportunities, responders worry that auxiliary units will fail and the

newfound partnerships with the JRCCs and other partners will be lost.

The recent cancellation of the successful MPAT Program has fueled such concerns. So has the recent decline in the number of CCG Arctic SAR positions in recent years, from a high of 35 to the 28 current full-time equivalent roles. The unit's travel budget has also shrunk. In 2025, its overall operating budget is \$2.2 million, with a hard travel cap set at \$757,000, down from \$1,193,715 in 2022-2023 and \$992,430 in 2023-2024. This is to cover all the communities between Nunatsiavut and the Labrador Sea to the Yukon North Slope and the Beaufort Sea, including James Bay and Hudson Bay, and to operate the Arctic Marine Response Station in Rankin Inlet.



Credit: Peter Kikkert

Nunavimmiut responders practice cold water immersion skills during Nunavik SAR Exercise 2025.



Craig Lingard, Director of Kativik Civil Security, and Erin Pigott, Deputy Superintendent for maritime SAR with CCG Arctic Region, recognized the service of long-time responder Willie Annanack of Kangiqsualujjuaq during Nunavik SAR Exercise 2025.

To sustain the transformation it has started, CCG Arctic SAR requires secure funding and the personnel required to operate in and with the North. Here, perhaps, the CCG shift to the military could help. It may also help with recruitment into the Arctic Auxiliary units if new avenues can be opened to incentivize members (such as pay, akin to that provided to Canadian Rangers for training and operations).

With better funding and support for CCG Arctic SAR, its members could continue to facilitate exercises like the multi-community one held in Nunavik in June. During one of the scenarios drawn up by Deputy Superintendent Pigott's team, a young unit member from Tasiujaq was taught how to place a call to JRCC Halifax, what information to provide, and how to act on any search patterns provided by the coordinators. Initially nervous to call this unfamiliar authority in the South, the young responder grew more confident and soon relayed essential information with ease. Just a few weeks later, that same responder placed a call to the JRCC during a real mission, securing air support for the search efforts.

On the last night of the exercise, Craig Lingard, the Director of the Kativik Regional Government's Civil Security

Section, hosted a gathering to celebrate the bridges between the CCG and his region. Sharing caribou jerky and stories, Pigott and her team already knew the Nunavimmiut responders from previous training and regional SAR roundtables. They talked about family, life in the North and past SAR cases. "This is why we like working with the Coast Guard more than most," Lingard explained. "A few years ago, it was different. But they've really listened. They get it in now." The laughter in the room sent a clear message: this comfort, mutual respect and confidence are what allow partners to operate at the speed of trust. Together, these responders are creating a SAR system that will operate at the speed of empathy.¹² That is Arctic SAR transformed. ⚓

Notes

1. Peter Kikkert participated in the exercise as an observer. He recorded all observations and comments regarding the exercise that are shared in this article. Other information was gathered through Kikkert and Lackenbauer's participation in the Nunavut and Nunavik SAR Roundtables and the Arctic SAR Exchange.
2. Comments shared by a Nunavimmiut responder at the Nunavik Roundtable on SAR, 11-13 December 2022. For more information on the case and on Nunavik's fast rescue fleet, see Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *The State of Search and Rescue in Nunavik: A Report for the Kativik Civil Security Department* (Kuujuuaq and Peterborough: Kativik Regional Government and North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network, June 2023).
3. These incidents include seven lost in a boating accident near Sanirajak in 1991, eight when *Qasaaq* sank in Frobisher Bay in 1994, eight when two freighter canoes were swamped in James Bay in 1999, four when *Avataq* sank near Arviat in 2000, four lost in Ungava Bay in 2003, and four lost out of Tuktoyaktuk in 2004.
4. CCG Central and Arctic Region, *Arctic Auxiliary Study*, 31 January 2000, prepared by Canadian Marine Safety Services Inc., p. 9.
5. The CCGA is the all-volunteer organization that provides SAR services and promotes boating safety. CCGA members receive specialized training, insurance coverage and reimbursement for certain operational costs. Until 1997, the CCGA was called the Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary.
6. For a more detailed review of SAR risks in the Canadian Arctic, see Peter Kikkert, Calvin Pedersen, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Ian Belton, John Quigley and Ronald Pelot, *The State of Search and Rescue in Nunavut* (Peterborough: North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network, June 2024), pp. 37-44.
7. Canadian Coast Guard, "Draft Report: Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Search and Rescue Project," no date, Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Request A-2019-00023-DQ-Final.
8. For an assessment of the Arctic SAR Project, see Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Search and Rescue, Climate Change, and the Expansion of the Coast Guard Auxiliary in Inuit Nunangat/the Canadian Arctic," *Canadian Journal of Emergency Management*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (July 2021), pp. 26-62.
9. CCG personnel and northern responders shared details about these initiatives through several Nunavut and Nunavik SAR Roundtables between 2020 and 2025, and at Arctic SAR Exchange 2023 and 2025, events organized and facilitated by the authors.
10. For more on the Guardians, see Peter Kikkert and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Bolstering Community-Based Marine Capabilities in the Canadian Arctic," *Canadian Naval Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (2019), pp. 11-16.
11. Nunavummiut community responders, interviewed by Peter Kikkert, Belleville, Ontario, 3-5 November 2023.
12. Inuit leader Sheila Watt-Cloutier has consistently emphasized that change takes place at the speed of empathy. So, too, should SAR operations.

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