



October 16, 2020

MS. LESA SEMMLER
MLA, INUVIK TWIN LAKES

OQ 274-19(2) Support for Residents Impacted by Flooding

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on June 2, 2020, regarding support for residents impacted by flooding in the Beaufort Delta. I committed to providing an update on the resources available for residents of the Northwest Territories (NWT) in dealing with floods.

In the NWT, flood risk is considered to be one of the most destructive natural hazards, second to wildfires. There are nine communities considered flood risk areas; including Hay River, Fort Simpson, Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte, Tulita, Fort Good Hope, Fort McPherson, Aklavik, and Tuktoyaktuk. As part of its mandate, Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), through the Emergency Management Organization (EMO), works with communities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies including flooding events.

Starting in April each year, the EMO monitors seasonal breakup and high-water conditions across the territory and advises communities of high-risk conditions. MACA Regional staff work with flood risk communities to ensure community awareness and the updating of emergency plans to support community preparedness activities. When flood situations occur, the local emergency plan is enacted, and the EMO activates the community's NWT Emergency Plan, at the level required to provide the support and resources required. Should the event cause wide spread damage to a community, the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Disaster Assistance Policy may apply to assist the recovery of residents, businesses and the community. MACA also facilitates access to federal mitigation programs to assist in reducing community risk.

Specific resources available to communities in dealing with flood emergencies include the following:

- Emergency preparedness and planning support: MACA conducts an annual public awareness campaign related to flood risk, provides emergency planning tools and templates, organizes community planning workshops, conducts training exercises and distributes emergency preparedness information brochures;
- Emergency response support: in line with the NWT Emergency Plan, the EMO coordinates GNWT assistance to communities, including risk monitoring, assistance with preparedness activities, evacuation assistance and response resources during emergency events;

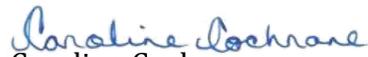
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- Recovery support: MACA manages the GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy which, when applied, sets out a process for reimbursement of eligible costs for community governments, small businesses, and individual residents in a community which has suffered a disaster where widespread damage has occurred;
- Mitigation support: there are multiple Federal funding programs that community governments can apply to for support to reduce the risk of natural disasters. These include the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP), Climate Change and Adaptation Program and the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF). MACA supports community governments with the completion of project applications and supports the implementation of projects once approved.

In addition, I understand that the Harvester Disaster Compensation Program delivered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) provides support to NWT harvesters in the event they suffer loss or damage to equipment or assets because of a natural disaster.

MACA will continue working through its regional offices to ensure that information on flood risk and potential assistance available is communicated to regions impacted by flood events. In addition, MACA's Regional Superintendents are available to assist communities and residents in determining if they are eligible for the Disaster Assistance Program, and to navigate the application process should they experience losses due to a flood event. A directory of regional offices is available online at: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/regional-offices>.

As I am no longer retaining responsibility for the portfolio of Municipal and Community Affairs, Minister Chinna has been briefed on this issue and is prepared to take future questions on the response to this issue.


Caroline Cochrane
Premier

c. Honourable Paulie Chinna, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Honorable Shane Thompson, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings, Legislative Coordinator
Executive and Indigenous Affairs