



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010

To: The Media

From: Karen Lindsay, Nanaimo Fire Rescue

**Re: Nanaimo Fire Rescue and RCMP–GRC Nanaimo Detachment participate in a training exercise at Maffeo Sutton Park**

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Don't be alarmed when you see a large number of emergency response vehicles located in Maffeo Sutton Park on Sunday April 11<sup>th</sup> from approximately 9 am until noon. Nanaimo Fire Rescue, RCMP Nanaimo as well as a number of other local agencies will be participating in a joint training exercise with the Canadian Coast Guard and BC Ferries in "SAREX Nanaimo 2010." The exercise will involve a mock emergency evacuation of a BC Ferries, MV Quinsam which will be located in Nanaimo harbour. Individuals playing the role of victim passengers will be evacuated from the ferry onto life rafts and rescue vessels and transported to the Newcastle Island Ferry Dock where local emergency response agencies will assist in their care. In addition to tracking victim details they will be transported to a reception centre.

Planning for a maritime response event in City of Nanaimo boundaries has involved a collaborative approach with a number of local, provincial and federal response agencies. Throughout the planning phase of SAREX 2010 the provincially recognized Incident Command System was adopted to ensure an effective and efficient response to emergencies such as this. Although the Incident Command System is utilized by local emergency response agencies, this will be an excellent opportunity to practice it amongst provincial, federal and corporate agencies. Under this system, 'unified command' decisions will ensure that no agency's authority will be compromised or neglected. Command is provided through a single command post and one incident action plan is developed for the entire incident. While each participant speaks for their agency, participants must speak with a single voice under unified command.

In addition to the above mentioned participants, the follow local agencies will be involved in the exercise.

- Joint Rescue Coordination Centre
- Nanaimo Marine Rescue Society - Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Nanaimo Search & Rescue
- Nanaimo Port Authority
- Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)
- Red Cross
- Royal Canadian Cadets
- Salvation Army

- Vancouver Island Health Authority

The public needs to be aware that a large area of Maffeo Sutton Park will be cordoned off to the public during the exercise. Public will be allowed to pass through but will be directed by emergency personnel involved in the exercise. The turnout will also be closed to the public as this will be a transportation receiving area. The public is welcome to observe as there will be numerous viewing points outside of the area being cordoned off.

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For more information about SAREX2010 contact Karen Lindsay, Emergency Program Manager, Nanaimo Fire Rescue at 250-713-7708 or Sue Phillips, RCMP Nanaimo at 250 754-2345 extn 6204