



NIRB File No.: 19DN049

Related to NIRB File No.: 16DN004, 16DN031, 16DN063

NPC File No.: 149253

Related to NPC File No.: 148197, 148282, 148373,

148577, 148656, 148867, 148932, 149149

February 26, 2020

Sarah Rahmer
Department of National Defence
Defence Construction Canada
Government of Canada
180 Kent St., 14th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1P 0B6

Sent via email: sarah.rahmer@forces.gc.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for Department of National Defence's "OP NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 2020" Project Proposal

Dear Sarah Rahmer:

On December 13, 2019 the NIRB received a referral to screen Department of National Defence's (DND) "OP NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 2020" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (the Commission), with an accompanying positive conformity determination with the Keewatin and North Baffin Regional Land Use Plans. The Commission noted that the previous conformity determinations issued on February 8, 2016, April 25, 2016, November 12, 2016, May 24, 2017, November 29, 2017, May 31, 2018, August 17, 2018 and June 18, 2019 for the activities associated with the current proposal continues to apply and has determined that the project proposal is a significant modification to the project because of the use of explosive to cut through sea ice.

Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 87 of the *NuPPAA*, the NIRB commenced screening this project proposal and assigned it file number 19DN049. The NIRB considers this project proposal to be sufficiently related to previously assessed activities under NIRB file numbers 16DN004, 16DN031, and 16DN063 but is assessing this proposal as a new project. A summary of the previously screened project activities can be found in [Appendix A](#).

INFORMATION REQUEST

On December 13, 2019 the NIRB requested that the Proponent complete the online application form through the NIRB's public registry system and ensure, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, that sufficient information is provided to determine the scope of the project activities being proposed and commence screening.

Following a preliminary completeness check of the proposal as submitted on February 3, 2020 by the Proponent, the NIRB determined that the proposal did not contain the necessary information for the NIRB to carry out its screening and on February 6, 2020 requested that the Proponent provide the Board with the additional information in order to carry out the screening of the project proposal. On February 25, 2020 the NIRB received the required information and commenced the screening pursuant to Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Scope:

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125498.

Project:	OP NANOOK-NUNALIVUT 2020
Region:	Kivalliq and Qikiqtani (North Baffin)
Location:	Land and sea ice activities on Ellesmere Island near Resolute Bay and within the Hudson Bay near Rankin Inlet
Closest Community:	Within the vicinity of the communities of Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord and Rankin Inlet
Summary of Project Description:	The Proponent intends to conduct military exercises and patrols on land, sea ice and air based out of Resolute Bay and Rankin Inlet. The dive team operations will focus on ice breaching capabilities and the exercise in Rankin Inlet will involve the use of explosives to understand the options for breaking through ice for a diver access to the sea.
Project Proposed Timeline:	February 2020 to March 2020.

According to the current project proposal, the scope of the amended project includes the following additional undertakings, works or activities:

- Conduct military exercises and patrols on land, sea ice and in the air at sites located in and around the communities of Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord and Rankin Inlet;
- Establishment of a Task Force Headquarters in Resolute Bay with 10 members, and an additional 40 support personnel with the following activities to occur;
 - Personnel to be supported by Canadian Ranger Patrol Group out of Resolute Bay for a total of approximately 200 personnel;
 - Establishment of two (2) live fire ranges in the vicinity of Resolute Bay;
 - Use of pyro technique distress flares in Resolute Bay;
 - Conduct arctic training survival skills training;

- Use of CC-177 (Globemaster), CC-138 (Twin Otter), and CC-130 (Hercules) aircraft, based in Resolute Bay to provide transportation, resupply and casualty evacuation services if required;
- Operations in Rankin Inlet to include:
 - A dive team consisting of approximately 60 personnel to conduct under-ice diving operations and on-ice breaching capabilities;
 - Use of C4 explosives including: C4 blocks, detonation cord, electric detonator, time fuse, igniter and non-electric detonator to breach ice for dive operations;
- Establishment and decommissioning of temporary camps to support operations, including dive operations, and patrol safety;
- Use of generators, compression chambers, tents, Colman stoves, lanterns and portable heaters to support military exercises;
- Use of land-based track vehicles and snowmobiles to support military exercises;
- Establishment and use of fuel caches of up to 12,000 litres (L) to support long range patrols from Resolute Bay to Polaris and from Rankin Inlet to Chesterfield;
- Consumption of water from existing municipal facilities in Resolute Bay and Rankin Inlet for domestic purposes and use of snow or ice during foot patrols;
- Generation and management of wastes:
 - Hazardous materials to be stored in approved storage containers and facilities;
 - Combustible and non-combustible wastes to be collected and disposed of at the nearest community for proper disposal;
 - Waste generated during foot patrols to be bagged and packed out for appropriate disposal or incineration of combustible waste; and
- Demobilization and removal of equipment and materials on completion of military exercises.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

At this time, the NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125498 and include:

- *Commission Conformity Determination and Screening Referral*
- *Commission Application*
- *NIRB's Online Application*
- *Non-technical Project Proposals summary in English and Inuktitut*
- *Map denoting training exercises areas*
- *Additional Information (Appendix A)*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by DND's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **March 18, 2020.**

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the project proposal is likely to arouse significant public concern; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse eco-systemic or socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (and providing any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125498.

If you have any questions or require clarification, feel free to contact the undersigned at johokannoak@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Jaida Ohokannoak
Technical Advisor II
Nunavut Impact Review Board

Attachments: Appendix A: Previously-Screened Project Proposals

Enclosures (4): Public Notice of Screening (English and Inuktitut)
Comment Forms (English and Inuktitut)

cc: Distribution List
Luis Manzo, Kivalliq Inuit Association

Maria Serra, Kivalliq Inuit Association
Stephen Williamson Bathory, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Jared Ottenhof, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Daniel Coombs, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Mayor, Municipality of Rankin Inlet
Aqiggiaq Hunters and Trappers Organization
Mayor of Resolute Bay
Resolute Bay Hunters and Trappers Association
Mayor of Grise Fiord
Iviq Hunters and Trappers Organization

APPENDIX A: PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSALS

NIRB 16DN004: Operation Nunalivut

The original project proposal for Operation NUNAVLIVUT (NIRB File No.: 16DN004), was received by the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission) on February 8, 2016 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and Section 3 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*). On March 31, 2016 the NIRB issued a screening decision pursuant to paragraph 92(2)(a) of the *NuPPAA* to the then Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

The Joint Task Force (North)'s (Proponent) original "Operation Nunalivut" project was located in the Qikiqtani (North Baffin) region, based out of Resolute Bay, and intended to conduct military exercises at several locations between Resolute Bay and Alert. The exercises were supported by the Canadian Rangers and occurred on land, sea ice, underwater, and in the air to further enhance the Canadian Armed Forces, Canadian Rangers, and partner agencies' knowledge and capacity to operate in the north and demonstrate the ability to effectively respond to safety and security issues in the Canadian North. The program was proposed to take place during April 2016; however, the Proponent requested the licences to be issued from March 27 to September 30, 2016.

According to the previously screened project proposal, the scope of the project included the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Exercises conducted at sites located in and around the community of Resolute Bay and adjacent to Bathurst Island, near the Polaris Mine on Little Cornwallis Island, near the community of Grise Fiord, and the Canadian Forces Base at Alert.
 - Military would keep at least one (1) kilometre away from the boundary of the Polar Bear Pass National Wildlife Area and Seymour Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary.
- Establish a Task Force Headquarters in Resolute Bay for approximately 80 persons and use of Canadian Armed Forces Arctic Training Centre facilities at Resolute Bay for up to 225 persons at the start and end of the exercises;
- Existing or temporary camps would be used to undertake the program and all waste generated from the camps would be transported offsite for proper disposal:
 - Use of Canadian Forces Station Alert for up to 40 persons;
 - Establishment of a temporary camp on Little Cornwallis Island for approximately 110 persons;
 - Establishment of a temporary camp west of Grise Fiord for 10 persons;
- Land and Ice Based Exercises:
 - Conduct overland and over ice travel by snowmobile and qamutiik, Snow Cat, and/or Argo for transport of personnel for various exercises;
 - Construction of snow and ice defenses at Little Cornwallis Island to be used in live fire exercises;
- Dive operations to evaluate the Royal Canadian Navy's Fleet Diving Unit's (Atlantic) cold weather diving ensembles and ice diving tactics, techniques and procedures;

- Air travel and Skiway Operations:
 - Use of existing airstrips where possible;
 - Transportation of personnel and supplies via Globemaster, twin otter, Hercules aircraft or helicopter(s);
 - Potential construction of a skiway and/or ice airstrip on the sea or lake ice near Resolute Bay to be used for training and to supply materials;
- Use and storage of 4,510 litres (L) of diesel and 20,901 L of gasoline at either the Resolute Airport or temporary facilities established for Little Cornwallis Island and Grise Fiord
- Management of wastes, fuel, and hazardous materials:
 - Hazardous materials and fuel to be stored in approved storage containers and facilities, including compliant secondary containment and would be stored in accordance with municipal, territorial, and federal regulations;
 - Hazardous waste would be appropriately packaged and transported to a suitable facility for disposal, in accordance with appropriate regulations – provided by a third-party waste disposal facility if required;
 - Generators placed within suitable containment throughout the operation, and emptied for transportation;
 - Local treatment systems and municipal landfill or incineration used for the disposal of human waste. Waste generated by foot patrols would be bagged and packed out for appropriate disposal;
 - Local landfill or incineration used for the disposal of combustible waste. Disposal to occur in accordance with Territorial and Municipal regulations (waste would be handled by contract); and
 - Local landfill, incineration or recycling centers, where available, to be used for the disposal of non-combustible wastes. Disposal to occur in accordance with Territorial and Municipal requirements (waste would be handled and disposed by contract).

Additional authorization requests associated with the “Operation NUNALVUIT” project have also been reviewed by the NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (File No. 16DN063).

NIRB 16DN063: Operation NUNALVIUT (2017 and 2018)

The project proposal for “Operation NUNALVIUT 2017” NIRB (File No. 16DN063), was received by the NIRB from the Commission on November 12, 2016 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and Section 3 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*). On February 1, 2017 the NIRB issued a screening decision pursuant to paragraph 92(2)(a) of the *NuPPAA* to the then Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB’s recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

The Department of National Defence’s (Proponent) “Operation NUNALIVUT 2017” project was located within the Qikiqtani, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions, based out of Resolute Bay and Hall

Beach with activities occurring near the communities of Hall Beach, Kugaaruk, Igloolik, and Resolute Bay. The Proponent indicated that it intended to conduct military exercises based out of Hall Beach and Resolute Bay to enhance the Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) knowledge and capacity to operate in challenging environments, while allowing the CAF to demonstrate their ability to effectively respond to safety and security issues in the North. The activities were proposed to take place from February to March 2017.

According to the previously screened project proposal, the scope of the project included the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Mobilization of approximately 290 CAF personnel to each site;
- Support to the operations by approximately 175 personnel of the Canadian Ranger Patrol Groups from Taloyoak, Kugaaruk, Nauyasat, and Igloolik via ground and air transport;
- Establishment of a Task Force Headquarters in Hall Beach, including multiple temporary tents around site to support operations and personnel accommodations;
- Conducting patrols on land and on sea ice near Hall Beach;
- Conducting live fire exercise on the sea ice;
- Conducting dive operations near Resolute Bay by a 60 person Dive Team;
- Use of aircrafts including Twin Otters, Hercules and Globemaster and a helicopter to support military exercises;
- Use of land-based track vehicles and snowmobiles to support military exercises;
- Establishment and decommissioning of temporary camps to support operations, including dive operations, and patrol safety.
- Use of two (2) 5 kilowatt generators, one (1) compression chamber, portable heaters, and two (2) unmanned aerial vehicles;
- Temporary storage, transportation and use of the following fuels and hazardous materials:
 - 3,895 and 820 litres of diesel at Hall Beach and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 3,895 and 410 litres of gasoline at Hall Beach and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 200 litres and 50 litres of engine oil at Hall Beach and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 20 litres of Naptha fuel for Coleman stoves in Hall Beach;
- Consumption of water from existing municipal facilities in Resolute Bay and Hall Beach for domestic purposes;
- Generation and management of wastes:
 - Grey water and sewage to be disposed of at existing municipal facilities;
 - Combustible and non-combustible wastes to be disposed of at approved waste disposal facilities in the nearest community; and
- Demobilization and removal of equipment and materials on completion of military exercises.

An additional amendment request associated with the “Operation NUNALVUIT” project has also been reviewed by the NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (File No. 16DN063). On November 29, 2017 the NIRB received a referral form the Commission to screen Department of National Defence’s (DND) “Operation NUNALIVUT 2018”. The Commission noted that the previous conformity determination issued on November 12, 2016 for the activities associated with the current proposal continues to apply and determined that the project proposal is a significant modification to the project because of a change in location of activities from Hall Beach to Cambridge Bay. On February 1, 2018 NIRB re-issued the original terms and conditions

recommended in the original February 1, 2017 Screening Decision Report and issued additional terms and conditions associated with the Project as per p. 92(2)(a) of the *NuPPAA*.

The proposed “Operation NUNALIVUT 2018” project was located within the Kitikmeot and Qikiqtani regions, near the communities of Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay. The Proponent intended to conduct military exercises to enhance the Canadian Armed Forces’ (CAF) knowledge and capacity to operate in challenging environments, while allowing the CAF to demonstrate their ability to effectively respond to safety and security issues in the North. The program took place from February to March 2018.

The scope of the activities and components associated with the February 1, 2018 amendment application included:

- Mobilization of approximately 300 CAF personnel in Cambridge Bay and in Resolute Bay for military exercises;
 - Conduct military drills on land, on sea ice, underwater and in the air;
 - Conduct live fire exercises on the sea ice as well as undertake patrols and diving operations near Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay;
 - Conduct training in arctic survival skills;
- Deployment of approximately 90 members of the 1st Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (1st CRPG) to support military activities of the Canadian Army Platoon and Royal Canadian Navy dive team near the communities of Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay;
- Establishment of a Task Force Headquarters and patrol base in Resolute Bay consisting of approximately 20 members with an additional 40 support personnel;
- Use of military aircrafts (Globemaster and Hercules), including Twin Otters and a helicopter to support airborne military exercises and transportation of personnel and equipment;
- Use of tracked vehicles, all-terrain military vehicles (BV206), light-over-snow-vehicles and snowmobiles to support military exercises;
- Use of generators, compression chamber, and portable heaters for power generation, dive safety and heating;
- Temporary storage, transportation and use of the following fuels and hazardous materials:
 - 5,000 litres (L) and 820 L of diesel at Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 5,000 L and 410 L of gasoline at Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 200 L and 50 L of engine oil at Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay, respectively;
 - 20 L of Naphtha fuel for Coleman stoves and lanterns in Cambridge Bay;
- Use of water from the communities for domestic purposes;
- Generation and management of wastes:
 - Greywater produced at Cambridge Bay and Canadian Armed Forces Arctic Training Centre in Resolute Bay to be disposed of via existing infrastructure;
 - Sewage to be collected and shipped south for proper disposal;
 - Combustible and non-combustible wastes to be collected and disposed of at the nearest community for proper disposal;
 - Collection and shipment of hazardous wastes to larger centres for proper disposal;
 - Potential incineration of human waste and combustible wastes; and

- Demobilization and removal of equipment and materials on completion of military exercises.

NIRB 16DN031: Operation Nanook

The Canadian Armed Forces' original project proposal for Operation Nanook 2016 (NIRB File No.: 16DN031), was received by the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) from the Nunavut Planning Commission (Commission) on May 31, 2016 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and Section 3 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*). On July 22, 2016 the NIRB issued a screening decision pursuant to paragraph 92(2)(a) of the *NuPPAA* to the then Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

The Nunavut portion of Operation Nanook 2016 was located within the Kivalliq region, with simulated combat exercises to cover an area of approximately 55 kilometres squared (km²) adjacent to the north, south, and west boundaries of the municipal boundary of Rankin Inlet and approximately 60 km² adjacent to the south boundary of the municipal boundary of the community of Chesterfield Inlet. The project was conducted between August 1 and September 25, 2016.

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Simulated ground combat exercise to be conducted in the vicinity of Rankin Inlet to include the following with potential of activities north of Chesterfield Inlet:
 - Use of twin otters and helicopters to transport personnel to and from the area as well as ATVs on site;
 - Establishment of a temporary camp for up to 250 people with tents and generators;
 - Water to be supplied from Rankin Inlet (packed in and out) and sourced on site;
 - Temporary storage of fuel at camp site:
 - Approximately 800 litres (L) of gasoline in jerry cans;
 - Approximately 400 L of diesel in jerry cans
 - Approximately 310 L of naptha in cans;
 - All waste to be contained and transported back to Rankin Inlet for proper disposal;
- Use of airport in Rankin Inlet;
 - Potential use of other airstrips including Chesterfield Inlet within the area of operations;
- Main base of all activities to be at Rankin Inlet, including the use of existing facilities and accommodations;
 - Use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) for transportation within Rankin Inlet and between Rankin Inlet and the exercise sites;
- Simulated water combat exercises to be conducted in the vicinity of the Chesterfield Inlet to include the following:
 - Use of twin otters and helicopters to transport personnel to and from the area;
 - Use of Royal Canadian Navy Vessels;

- Potential establishment of a temporary camp for up to 100 people north of Chesterfield Inlet; and
- Aircraft(s) and personnel to be based out of Rankin Inlet.