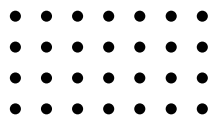




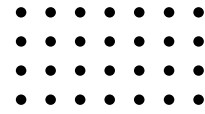
2024

Wildfire Report

A comprehensive look at our wildfire response
efforts throughout the 2024 fire season



Executive Summary



Wildfires fall under SAR Alberta's disaster response initiatives. During 2024, a total of 19 volunteer SAR teams responded to 71 wildfire resource requests, volunteering more than 13,000 hours.

SAR volunteers responded from all major cities and towns within Alberta, often travelling significant distances to reach Fort McMurray, Nordegg, Water Valley, Jasper and the High Level area.

In total, 303 SAR volunteers responded to 13 locations across the province.

REPORT TOPICS



TASKING
COORDINATION



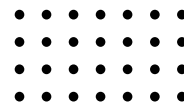
RESPONSE
STATISTICS



AFTER
ACTION

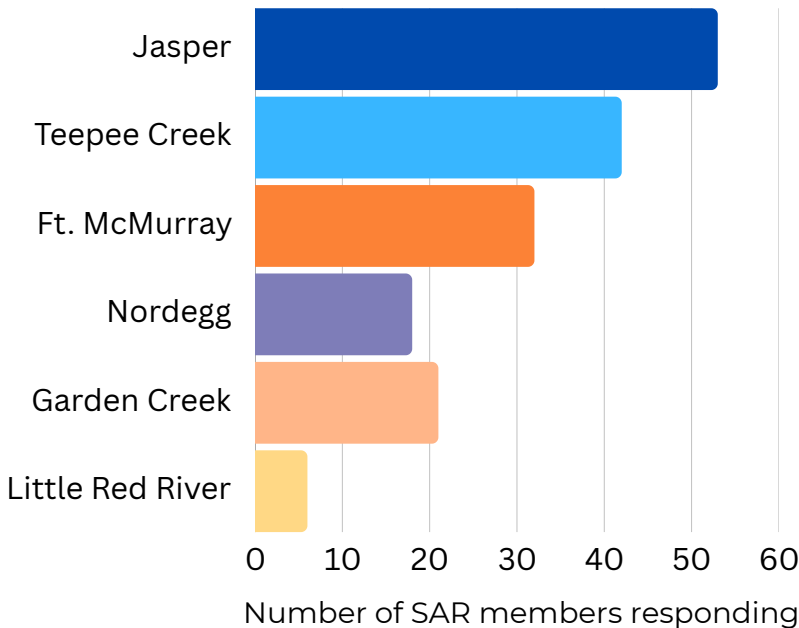


Wildfire Response



2024

SEARCH & RESCUE DEPLOYMENT

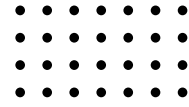


FIRES OF NOTE

For search and rescue, the 2024 wildfire season began on May 11 and ended on August 18.

The largest SAR response was the Jasper Wildfire which involved 53 SAR members for a total of 4,587 volunteer hours.

SAR Wildfire Roles



10 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Provincial Operations Group (POG) SAR volunteers responded to a variety of unique resource requests that included:

1. Planning for emergency evacuations
2. Overall command and operationalization of emergency evacuations
3. Leadership of SAR and RCMP task forces
4. Evacuation notices
5. Evacuation orders
6. Containment checkpoints
7. SAR liaison positions
8. RCMP logistical supports
9. Community logistical supports
10. RPAS (drone) operations



Garden River 2024 Wildfire

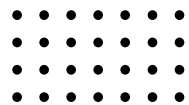
PROVINCIAL OPERATIONS GROUP

In early 2024, a group of volunteer SAR experts came together to make recommendations for the provincial coordination of SAR resources. One recommendation was the creation of the Provincial Operations Group (POG).

DATA FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

SAR members were imported into D4H Team Manager, a software program purchased by the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services and used by SAR Alberta specifically for the POG and disaster response.

Coordination Insights



FASTER DEPLOYMENT

The Provincial Operations Group (POG) was beta-tested through the 2024 wildfire season and was instrumental in the efficient deployment of SAR resources across the province. Due to the nature of the program and its proficient use, the SAR liaison was often able to report on available resources and deploy them more swiftly than other agencies.

MORE TEAM RESOURCES

All SAR Alberta teams were given the opportunity to support the response plan by opening up “membership” to the Provincial Operations Group (POG) for their team members. This resulted in 19 teams providing approximately 150 members in total for disaster response.

SUPPORT FOR NORTHERN ALBERTA

During the 2024 wildfire season, SAR volunteers responded to locations as remote as Meander River, located near the north edge of the province. Meander River is part of the Dene Tha' First Nation and the Mackenzie highway passes through it.



Ft. Vermillion 2024 Wildfire

↑ 81%

INCREASE IN SAR
HOURS COMPARED TO
2023 WILDFIRE SEASON

Coordination Challenges

INCREASED RCMP REQUESTS

Although the SAR Alberta 2024 disaster response plan was initially developed to respond to resource requests via municipal or provincial emergency communication centers, the 71 wildfire resource requests were exclusively received from the RCMP:

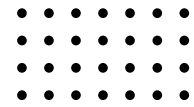
- Seven via RCMP detachments or districts
- 64 via RCMP K-Division Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC)

A challenge arose in relation to the lengthy distances that some members had to travel. In some cases, SAR volunteers arrived after the initial evacuation phase had passed.

Change in procedure

As an intended consequence of the SAR Alberta 2024 disaster plan, the staff SAR liaison embedded in the RCMP DEOC was able to work with the RCMP DEOC bronze commander to provide solutions that supported a more effective proactive deployment of SAR resources.

These solutions resulted in the divisional deployment of SAR resources *in anticipation* of evacuations which resulted in a much higher degree of success as evidenced during the Jasper wildfire.



Fires by Value of Donated Time

WILDFIRE	MEMBERS	HOURS	VALUE*
Jasper	53	4587	\$137,610
Garden Creek	21	1905	\$ 57,150
Ft. McMurray	32	1132	\$ 33,960
Teepee Creek	42	797	\$ 23,910
Little Red River	6	336	\$ 10,080
Nordegg	18	321.5	\$ 9,645
Provincial standby (30 minutes notice)	95	4031	\$ 120,930



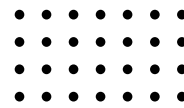
Jasper 2024 Wildfire

A SAR Alberta staff member was embedded within the RCMP DEOC as SAR liaison to provide provincial coordination.

This position was supported by other staff and SAR volunteers to ensure 24/7 on call coverage for the duration, totaling a further 2,676 hours provided to the 2024 wildfire response.

*Estimated

After Action 2024



MEMBER SURVEYS

In a series of surveys, SAR Alberta volunteers and supporting member teams identified a number of positive recommendations for enhancing the 2025 SAR Alberta disaster response strategy. The respondents also identified the following three key takeaways:

1. **Positive Impact of Provincial Operations Group (POG)**

- Members and member teams emphasized the positive impact of the SAR Alberta POG on disaster response for 2024.

2. **Leadership and Teamwork**

- The importance of effective leadership, clear communication and strong teamwork was identified as critical to key successes in the 2024 disaster response. This included appreciation for the leadership provided by SAR Alberta staff and the RCMP K-Div EOC team.
- The survey also identified an appreciation for the collaboration between local SAR teams, the POG membership and the RCMP.

3. **Technology and Tools**

- The D4H Team Manager software and operations center was identified as both essential to the 2024 wildfire response and critical for standby notifications, incident coordination, resource availability management as well as integrated phone, text and email communications with POG SAR members.
- The CalTopo accounts provided by SAR Alberta were applauded as essential for the successes arising from our 2024 wildfire mapping and resource tracking.

Disaster Response

PROGRAM UPDATE



SAR Alberta Disaster Response Challenge Coin

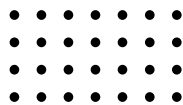
- **Provincial:** Strengthened relationships with the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services to enhance the SAR response to natural disasters or other emergencies anywhere in the province.
- **Member Training:** Created and launched the SAR Alberta disaster response training and certification program.
- **Team Exercise:** Conducted a large provincial mock disaster response exercise in March 2024.

“

"From a DEOC perspective, I can unequivocally state that the partnership and collaboration this season has been absolutely incredible. I really like where this is going and am excited for the continued engagement of our teams."

~ RCMP Inspector
Chris Romanchych

”





SEARCH & RESCUE
ALBERTA 30
YEARS

2024 WILDFIRE REPORT

SAR ALBERTA

Search and Rescue Alberta empowers and represents the search and rescue community in the province by providing an exemplary level of service so others may live.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**



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