



Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund Bulletin

No Call Letter for 2006-2007

September 19, 2005

To all NIF partners

In keeping with our commitment to communicate with funding partners at major milestones, it should be noted that a decision has been made not to issue a call letter for new proposals under the SAR New Initiatives Fund program for 2006/07. Procedural issues are still being resolved around the design of the renewed SAR NIF, since final decisions had to await Treasury Board Ministers' approval of the contribution portion of the program August 30.

The contribution portion of the merit list for 2005-2006 should be approved shortly by the Lead Minister for SAR. This year, 32 of the 51 projects on the list will receive funding from the SAR NIF.

After consultation with the provinces and territories representative and the federal managing departments and agencies, we decided not to issue a call letter for new proposals in 2006-2007. Instead, funds available for new project starts in 2006-2007 will be allocated to projects already approved but not funded on the 2005-06 list.

Applicants with projects ranked between 33 and 51 on the Merit List will be asked to reconsider their proposals and adjust their financial forecasts. Provinces and territories with multiple projects will be asked to create an omnibus proposal to include all individual proposals already approved.

The Merit Board will meet in the fall to refresh the 2005-2006 Merit List. No change in the project order of priority will come about as a result of the Merit Board re-assessment, but projects that have been re-confirmed will be funded starting April 1, 2006.

Some of the reasons for the decision not to issue a call letter at this time include the following:

1. The application, merit process and project start-up procedures would have to be completed in a very short time, putting extreme pressure on all SAR NIF partners.
2. Project starts for 2005-06 have been delayed and changes to financial and administrative procedures are being implemented this year. It would be very challenging for NIF partners to manage this transition in tandem with a new call letter process.
3. The NSS is working with partners on documents and explanatory material to implement the renewed program. Processes are being streamlined; clearer instructions and better tools are being prepared, including a new applicant's guide and a SAR NIF

manual explaining revised business practices. These should be completed and available to proponents before new applications are invited.

4. Prior to an NSS call letter being issued, provinces and territories may also need to develop their own strategies and procedures for issuing a provincial/territorial call letter to gather proposals in order to create a single omnibus proposal.

The decision not to proceed with a call letter for 2006-2007 was taken following consultation with provincial and territorial authorities, several of whom were reluctant to proceed with a full-scale project intake process until they have time to set up the infrastructure that will be required to handle the additional workload. Discussions with representatives of federal departments also revealed a desire for time to ensure the revised program is re-launched effectively.

Please visit our website www.nss.gc.ca for regular updates. Specific sessions at the SARSCENE Workshop in Charlottetown, P.E.I., October 5-8 have been designed to answer many of the questions that may arise as a result of the renewal process. In the meantime, if you have questions you can call Mary Thomas at the National Search and Rescue Secretariat at 613.996.2782.