



Built on Experience.  
Responding to what's next.

# NBGSARA 2025 Year in Review



# ON CALL 24/7/365

**North West GSAR**

**Acadie-Chaleur GSAR**

**Miramichi GSAR**

**Tri-County GSAR**

**Greater Fundy GSAR**

**River Valley GSAR**

**Charlotte County GSAR**

**York Sunbury SAR**

**Carleton GSAR**

**In New Brunswick, ground search and rescue (GSAR) services are carried out by dedicated and trained volunteers.**

Available round the clock, every day of the year, these skilled individuals generously offer their time, commitment, and skills, along with their personal equipment, without charge to both the residents of NB and the individuals they assist. NBGSARA takes pride in supporting the 310+ GSAR members in New Brunswick, making up 9 groups throughout the province.



**If you or someone you know is lost, call 911 immediately.**



**Making Every  
Hour Count**

**Incident Response  
12,501 Hours  
57 Police Files  
122 Callouts**



**19,664 Hours  
Training & Exercises**

**30,433 Hours  
Admin, Fundraising &  
Prevention**



**2439 jeunes et 153 adultes  
Formés à Adventure Smart**

**41 clients Project Lifesaver  
dans 2 régions**

# A Year That Tested the System

In 2025, New Brunswick faced an unprecedented wildfire season. In a very short period of time, our teams found themselves working closely with the RCMP and the Emergency Measures Organization to prepare for the possibility of large-scale evacuations. Plans were developed quickly, under pressure, to ensure that if residents needed help, trained search and rescue volunteers would be ready to respond.

Thankfully, those large-scale evacuations were not required. But the experience underscored something important: our teams are not just a supporting resource—we are a critical part of the province's emergency response system.



# Volunteer Capacity Is Being Stretched

Demand for our capabilities continued to rise sharply.

Every hour we respond, train, or prepare is carried entirely by volunteers. On average, each member contributed more than 210 hours this year, including 78 hours responding to incidents—often at night, in difficult terrain, and in all weather conditions.

In some regions, the pace was especially intense. The Tri-County team, for example, responded to 36 calls this year. On average that's three times per month. Each call required volunteers to drop work, family commitments, and personal responsibilities, often for extended periods. Some searches are resolved in hours. Others continue for days.

**210+**

volunteer hours  
average per member

**78**

hours the average  
volunteer spent on  
incidents

**36**

calls answered  
by Tri-County alone

**+35%**

incident hours

**+42%**

more incidents

**62,598**

volunteer hours

**\$3.2M**

operational value



# Demand Is Growing

The need for our services is also evolving. We continue to see an increase in searches involving vulnerable individuals, including those living with dementia, Alzheimer's, and autism.

These are among the most complex and resource-intensive searches we undertake, and they carry a high emotional and operational toll.



*"On average, each member contributed over 210 hours this year, much of it in the middle of the night, in difficult conditions, and entirely unpaid."*

On top of responding to these calls, GSAR volunteers are critical to delivering the national AdventureSmart prevention program, and expanding programs such as Project Lifesaver, to reduce the frequency and severity of lost person incidents.





## A Critical Link

Without search and rescue volunteers, there is no structured response in New Brunswick. Ground search depends on close coordination between police leadership and volunteer teams who deliver the boots-on-the-ground capacity. We are not a backup service. We are a vital part of the front line.

The reality is clear. If our volunteers were unavailable, responsibility would need to shift to policing or another government body requiring significant new investment in staffing, training, and equipment.

We are already providing this service.

Our relationship with operational partners, including the RCMP and local police, remains strong. We share a common mission and work well together in the field. We also value the ongoing support from the Government of New Brunswick. That said, current funding levels – approximately \$80,000 annually – cover a portion of basic necessities such as insurance, leaving teams to fundraise extensively to meet operational needs.

The province has taken a welcome step by commissioning a review of ground search and rescue. We look forward to supporting the implementation of its recommendations. This is a meaningful opportunity to strengthen the system together and ensure all New Brunswickers have access to trained, equipped, and sustainable search and rescue services.

# The Path Forward

**The current model relies heavily on volunteer capacity and fundraising to sustain a critical public safety service.**

We have the people and the expertise, what we need is a sustainable foundation.

## What's Working

- Strong partnership with Police
- Effective coordination
- Trained, dedicated volunteer teams

## Current Gap

- Core funding covers
- Heavy reliance on fundraising to sustain
- Increasing demand

## What's Needed

- Sustainable, long-term funding model
- Investment aligned with current demand and risk

Search and rescue in New Brunswick works because of committed volunteers and strong partnerships. Maintaining that system will require a shift toward more stable, predictable support.

We are ready to work with government to build that future.



## Presidents Message

This past year was unlike any we have seen, with GSAR volunteers playing a key role in wildfire evacuation preparedness on top of increasing call volumes for lost and missing persons.

This level of commitment is extraordinary. It is also not sustainable without stronger support.

Looking ahead, our focus is clear: building a system that matches the level of demand we are seeing today and what we expect tomorrow.

We have the people. We have the expertise. What we need is a more sustainable foundation to ensure this service remains available for years to come.

On behalf of the association, I want to thank every volunteer, every partner agency, and every community that supports this work. It is because of you that we are able to respond when it matters most.

Bradley Parker  
President, NBGSARA

# WHO ARE WE?



**NBGSARA teams deliver professional-level emergency response, training, and public education, with limited resources and no paid staff.**

In 2025 alone, our volunteers contributed more than 62,000 hours of service valued at over \$3.2 million if delivered by paid staff. That represents an extraordinary return on investment for New Brunswickers, made possible only through the commitment of our volunteers and the support of our communities.

By sustaining and strengthening this model, we can continue to deliver professional, cost-effective search and rescue services across the province

## THE HISTORY

The groundwork for NBGSARA was laid in 1983 at the request of the RCMP, when community members came together to form a trained search and rescue team in the Fredericton area. Over time, that original provincial team evolved into one of nine regional teams.

To ensure a united voice and provincial coordination, a new association was created to represent all teams, support training, and advocate for Ground Search and Rescue across New Brunswick. Today, NBGSARA remains a trusted partner to law enforcement and emergency services, dedicated to the safety and well-being of New Brunswickers.

# Learn more about us



**83% of New Brunswick is forested.  
We cover it all.**

## More than just hikers

Lost or injured hikers are commonly linked to search and rescue operations; however, GSAR groups play a vital role in various other circumstances as well. This includes conducting urban searches for individuals with dementia, performing wellness checks door-to-door during civil emergencies, and providing assistance with evacuations.

## How do we do it?

Our volunteers are essential, dedicating their time away from family and work at a moment's notice to travel to remote regions of the province and make a life-saving difference.

Members invest their evenings and weekends in training to meet provincial standards for GSAR and to obtain certifications from relevant authorities.

Currently, only police forces and NB EMO have the ability to activate GSAR teams in New Brunswick.



# Our Volunteers

Every GSAR volunteer in New Brunswick supplies their own personal clothing and equipment, such as backpacks, boots, and jackets suitable for all seasons. This showcases their commitment and preparedness for the challenges that come with search and rescue operations.

The personal gear provided by each volunteer represents a substantial investment, ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per individual. It's truly commendable that they use their own equipment, ensuring their readiness for any scenario. We are grateful for their dedication and generosity.



## Training

Members of NBGSARA undergo training according to the CSA Z1620-15 standard for Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) in Canada. This training encompasses a variety of topics, including:

- Navigation
- Hazards
- Search tactics
- Lost person behavior
- Field Team Leadership
- SAR Incident Management

Beyond these foundational requirements, a diverse array of additional training opportunities is available, focusing on specializations such as:

- Rope Rescue
- K9
- Marine
- Project Lifesaver

In addition to this standard training, each member is required to complete the Incident Command System (ICS) 100 course. This course provides a standardized framework for incident management, facilitating seamless integration with the numerous organizations we collaborate with during searches.

Furthermore, all members must possess standard first aid certification and successfully pass a criminal record check.

# How a Search Happens

GSAR operations are initiated upon requests from:

- Local Police
- RCMP
- NB Emergency Measures Organization
- Other agencies may request GSAR through any of the above entities



Once activated, a Search Manager gathers essential information to customize the response effectively. Key details, such as the individual's intended destination and personal profile, whether they are a hiker, a person with dementia, or feeling despondent, are vital. With over 30 different subject categories, each search requires a specific strategy.

While many incidents are resolved swiftly, others demand significant efforts, often involving multiple GSAR teams and extending over several days.



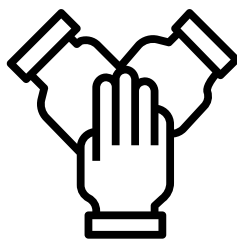
# Better Together

The collaborative spirit of New Brunswick's 9 GSAR teams extends beyond the teams and includes many different organizations. This includes:

Municipal police agencies, park staff, Provincial and local EMO, Fire Departments, Canadian Military, Coast Guard, First Nations, Conservation Officers, DNR, and Transportation and Infrastructure's RADCOM and highway maintenance teams to name just a few.



This collaborative approach, guided by the Incident Command System (ICS) and supported by tools like RADCOM's TMR network, allows for the seamless integration of various agencies, fostering efficient and effective responses that save lives.



# Prevention: Building Resilience in Communities

**Education and Outreach:** Our dedicated volunteers engage with communities through a variety of educational programs, workshops, and public events aimed at raising awareness about safety practices and emergency preparedness. From school presentations to community fairs, we work tirelessly to impart life-saving skills and knowledge to individuals of all ages.



An entire elementary school trained in Hug-A-Tree. That's over 350 students now trained in how NOT to become lost in the woods, and what to do should they become lost!

Every year, NBGSARA Outdoor Educators gave presentation to New Brunswickers of all ages, from schools, scouts, cadets, 4H, and ATV clubs

Request a presentation today  
[presenter.adventuresmart.ca/request](http://presenter.adventuresmart.ca/request)



# Prevention: Protecting those who wander

Project Lifesaver continues to be one of the most impactful community safety programs we support. Using proven radio-frequency technology, the program provides rapid location of individuals who are prone to wandering due to cognitive conditions such as dementia or autism.

This year, we are proud to highlight a significant milestone: a third Ground Search and Rescue team in New Brunswick has launched Project Lifesaver in their community. This expansion means more families now have access to peace of mind and critical support when time is of the essence in the Saint John area in addition to Fredericton and Miramichi.

NB GSARA remains committed to supporting and promoting the growth of Project Lifesaver throughout the province. With every new team that joins the program, we extend our reach and strengthen our ability to protect vulnerable community members.



# Supporting our Volunteer Professionals

## How is SAR funded?

NBGSARA on behalf of the 9 teams negotiated and maintains Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with each police agency in NB as well as NB EMO. Direct expenses such as fuel and batteries are paid for by the activating agency.

NBGSARA teams do not bill our subjects.

Each team is responsible for fundraising for their preparedness and training needs, including equipment or vehicle purchase and maintenance.

NBGSARA funds the mandatory liability insurance for teams, crucial software for mapping and team management, meetings, and cross team training events when funds are available.

## Sponsorship Opportunities

If your organization is looking for ways to support GSAR volunteers, consider offering pro-deal discount to GSAR members for merchandise or services.

We are also looking for grow our sponsor program with partners willing to offer long term financial or in-kind support. If you are interested in a unique recognition and promotion opportunity, please reach out

For over 40 years, we have proudly served New Brunswick as the New Brunswick Ground Search and Rescue Association (NBGSARA). Our name has been tied to decades of volunteer dedication, trusted partnerships, and life-saving work across the province.

As our role has grown and our reach has expanded, it became clear that how we present ourselves needed to evolve as well.

Starting in 2026 after 40 years of service:

## Introducing Our New Operating Name

### **SAR NB RES**

Search and Rescue New Brunswick  
Nouveau-Brunswick Recherche  
et Sauvetage

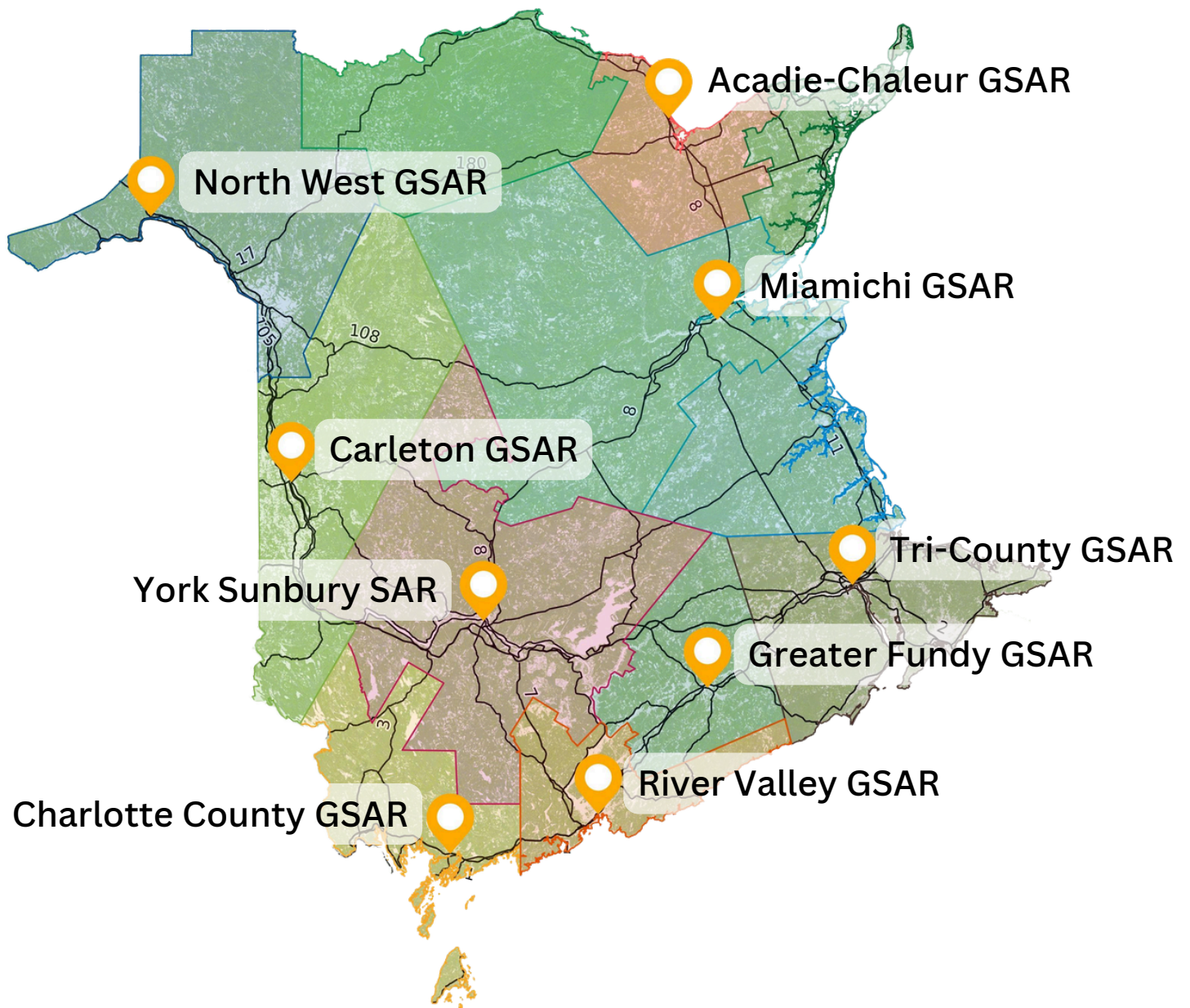


### **Why This Change**

- Bilingual clarity
  - Our new name works equally well in English and French, reflecting the communities we serve across the province.
- Clear identity
  - “Search and Rescue” is immediately understood by the public, partner agencies, and those who may need our help.
- Operational consistency
  - SAR NB RES is already in use on uniforms, equipment, and digital platforms—this formalizes what is already happening in practice.

### **What Has Not Changed**

- Our legal name remains New Brunswick Ground Search and Rescue Association
- Our mission, values, and volunteer commitment remain the same
- Our training and operational approach are unchanged



**Learn more at [sarnbres.ca](http://sarnbres.ca)  
email: [info@sarnbres.ca](mailto:info@sarnbres.ca)**

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