

From: [Samson, Mike](#)
To: [Gullage, Cheryl](#)
Subject: FW:
Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2012 1:46:47 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrew Boland [<mailto:Andrew.Boland@rcmp-grc.gc.ca>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 1:39 PM
To: Samson, Mike; Noble, Paul
Cc: Andrew Boland
Subject:

Sirs,

Script below as discussed.

Andrew

Sunday

Search and Rescue for Burton Winters
Makkovik, Labrador
February 8th, 2012

On Sunday, January 29th, 2012 at 7:30 PM the RCMP was advised that 14 year old Burton Winters of Makkovik, Labrador had not been seen for approximately 6 hours. It was reported that he had left his home on snowmobile to travel to his grandmother's house. A check was conducted by RCMP and family throughout the community to locate the youth without success.

Ground search and rescue teams were deployed to different areas around the community to locate Winters. During this search period a local hunter advised that earlier this day around 2:00 PM he had observed fresh snowmobile tracks headed towards the edge of the sea ice.

Searchers followed this track, however, due to poor ice conditions were forced to turn back. The search continued until 2:30 that night at which time it was halted until it could be resumed at day light.

The weather at this time was snowing with reduced visibility.
Temperatures were hovering around -10.

During the initial community search a request late Sunday evening was made to obtain air support for the following morning.

Monday

On the morning of Monday, January 30th the ground search efforts continued. Existing weather conditions early in the morning precluded the use of air support from Provincial Fire Emergency Services. Search planning did continue and air support was requested.

At 9:40 AM Provincial Fire Emergency Services advised the RCMP that the Joint Rescue Coordination Center had been contacted, however, their resources were not available at this time.

A change in the weather later that morning at approximately 10:30 allowed for air support to join the search effort providing air support by Universal Helicopter, precluding a further request to DND.

Also, as is normal practice in a ground search, local air traffic was advised of the search in the event any aircraft was flying in the area for any reason. A Woodward's helicopter working in the Postville area arrived in Makkovik and took part in the search.

The air support detected snowmobile tracks heading towards open water. This led to the area being examined by searchers using a boat, however, nothing was discovered.

The search continued until later that afternoon when the weather deteriorated further, and the search was stopped that night with an understanding it would resume the following morning.

Tuesday

On Tuesday, January 31st, the ground search resumed. Later that afternoon RCMP Air Services discovered a snowmobile on the ice approximately two and a half kilometres from open water. This area was too dangerous to reach by land. There was no sign of Winters.

This information allowed for another request for further air service support through Provincial Fire Emergency Services which received support from 444 Squadron from Goose Bay. This resulted in searching through the night by an Aurora aircraft using forward looking infrared equipment, commonly known as FLIR.

The search continued late into the night until the early morning hours when it was concluded with the understanding it would continue in the morning with further air support.

Wednesday

On the morning of Wednesday, February 1st, the search continued, supported by Provincial Fire Emergency Services air support.

Mid-day the body of Burton Winters was discovered on the ice by the Universal Helicopter crew, hired by Provincial Fire Emergency Services, approximately 12 kilometres from the snowmobile, and 22-23 kilometres from the community. His body was recovered and transported to the local medical clinic where he was pronounced dead later that afternoon.

The RCMP and its community search and rescue partners and volunteers made every effort to locate Burton Winters as soon as he was reported missing. Unfortunately, hazardous weather, rough terrain, the availability of appropriate aircraft and the remoteness of the search area combined to present significant challenges to the rescue efforts. This is a tragedy, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the Burton Winter's family.

At this time I would like to acknowledge and thank the many people and organizations who took part in this search. In particular our thanks to the community volunteers who made up the search teams, our provincial Fire Emergency Services, the Canadian Forces, and our detachment members. In my view everyone's efforts are commendable.

- END -