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# Canada Command Commandement Canada

## NEWS RELEASE

## COMMUNIQUÉ

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### **Canadian Forces continue to assist flood victims in northern Ontario**

TORONTO – In response to a request for assistance from provincial authorities, Canadian Forces (CF) aircrews evacuated approximately 1 000 residents from the First Nations communities of Kashechewan, Fort Albany, and Attiwapiskat after the region recently experienced heavy flooding. Codenamed Operation *CRATOS*, the airlift has concluded and focus has now shifted to the provision of ground support by the Canadian Rangers.

Seven Canadian Rangers and two Canadian Ranger instructors are now providing assistance to residents of Attawapiskat including monitoring water levels, conducting fire patrols, and general humanitarian services, with more Rangers on standby should they be needed. The Canadian Rangers are part-time reservists who provide a military presence in remote, isolated and coastal communities of Canada.

"I'm extremely proud of the contribution the men and women of the Canadian Forces have made to the evacuation of these communities, said the Honourable Peter Gordon MacKay, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. "Their continuing efforts to ensure a safe and secure environment will no doubt ease the return for residents of these towns."

"The Canadian Forces always stand ready to serve Canadians in need," said Lieutenant-General Marc Dumais, Commander of Canada Command. "This week, a number of communities across Canada have been challenged by severe weather and I am proud that the CF were able to alleviate the distress of residents of Kashechewan, Fort Albany, and Attiwapiskat. With the ongoing support of the Canadian Rangers, I hope that people can regain their lives with as little disruption as possible."

Under Operation *CRATOS*, the CF airlifted 1 000 people to Moosenee, Kapuskasing, Hearst, Stratford, Sault Ste. Marie, and Thunder Bay, Ont. between 27 and 29 April, using a combination of fixed and rotary wing aircraft:

- Two CC-130 *Hercules* aircraft from Trenton, Ont. and Greenwood, N.S.;
- Seven CH-146 *Griffon* helicopters from Kingston and Petawawa, Ont, and Valcartier and Bagotville, Que.
- One CH-149 *Cormorant* helicopter from Gander, Nfld; and

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- One CH-124 *Sea King* helicopter from Shearwater, N.S.

Canadian Rangers are dedicated, knowledgeable members of the Canadian Forces who play an important role in advancing public recognition of Canada's First Nations and Inuit groups. There are currently 4,200 Canadian Rangers in 165 communities across Canada but this number is expected to increase to 4,800 by March 2008, as part of the Government of Canada's expansion plan.

Operation *CRATOS* is still in effect until the end of flooding season in Northern Ontario.

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Note to Editors:

For more information on Canadian Ranger assistance in Attawapiskat, please call Sergeant Peter Moon at 705-997-2111 (hotel) or 011-881-641-469-085 (satellite phone).

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