



Department of Environment
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

October 24, 2024

Jason Pedlar, Ombudsman
Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure
Commissioner
3162 Third Ave, Main Floor
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1G3

**RE: Revised Preliminary Report on the Issue of 'Site Saving' in Yukon Campgrounds Our
File: OMB-INV-2023-07-158**

Thank you for the report specific to site saving in Yukon campgrounds. Yukon Parks branch acknowledges the extensive revisions and new set of recommendations in the revised report and is providing comments on the recommendations.

As per the request of the Yukon Ombudsman under section 24 of the Ombudsman Act the Department of Environment, Yukon Parks branch will take the following action in response to recommendations #1-6:

- 1) Accept with modification recommendation 1: prior to the 2025 camping season, develop and implement a procedure to ensure that a Site Saving complaint, however it is made or received, is entered into a central database for tracking and enforcement purposes.

The department is working on the Authorization, Inspections, Monitoring and Enforcement System (AIMES) that will become a central database, this project is scheduled for implementation in summer 2025. Until AIMES is fully implemented, Yukon Parks Officers will continue tracking compliance and enforcement data in our Patrol App as communicated by the department to the Yukon Ombudsman during the initial investigation.

- 2) Accept with modification recommendation 2: Prior to the 2025 camping season, implement the 'Administration, Information, Monitoring, Enforcement System' known as 'AIMES'.

The department continues working towards the implementation of what is correctly known as the Authorization, Inspections, Monitoring and Enforcement System (AIMES) for summer 2025. The software program will allow for improved tracking and management of complaints, along with other data, within Yukon Parks that can be used in future decision-making processes. Until AIMES is fully implemented, Yukon Parks Officers will continue tracking compliance and enforcement data in our Patrol App as communicated during the initial investigation.

- 3) Accept recommendation 3: Beginning with the 2025 camping season and going forward, consistently track and analyze suspected Site Saving 'instances' and 'verified occurrences', make operational adjustments accordingly, and regularly evaluate their effectiveness throughout the camping season.

As stated in response to recommendations 1 and 2, the department will continue to track compliance and enforcement data, including suspected site saving instances and verified occurrences. The Yukon Parks branch will continue to routinely review operational practices and make necessary adjustments to improve effectiveness, as communicated during the initial investigation.

- 4) Accept with modification recommendation 4: Continue to explore options to reduce the effect of annual permit holders on the issue of Site Saving (e.g., implementing a public awareness campaign, reviewing the scope of annual permits, creating a working group, etc.).

As stated in the Ombudsman's preliminary report, "the inability to track information about Site Saving means that the Authority cannot make informed and reliable decisions based on knowledge about its scope and frequency". The department saw a significant reduction in site saving overall with the implementation of the online reservation system and visitor operator's program in 2024. The department will continue to track compliance and enforcement, including on site saving, which will provide data to further understand the impacts annual permit holders have on the issue of site saving. Yukon Parks branch will continue to explore options to reduce the practice of site saving by all campers, including annual permit holders.

- 5) Accept recommendation 5: Prior to the 2025 camping season, train dedicated staff to assist any camper who needs help in setting up their 'MyYukon' account so that they can participate in the online reservation service pilot.

Our staff are happy to continue offering any camper assistance in setting up their 'MyYukon' account.

- 6) Accept recommendation 6: At the end of the two-year pilot projects, audit the impact of the online reservation service and visitor operators' program on the issue of Site Saving and make operational adjustments accordingly.

The department will review what impacts the pilot project, including the online reservation system and visitor operator's program, had on campsite availability and site saving. The review will inform decision-makers on any required operational adjustments.

Thank you for your recommendations on addressing site saving in Yukon Government campgrounds. As demonstrated in our actions, developing the Authorization, Inspections, Monitoring and Enforcement System (AIMES) is one of the tools that Yukon Parks branch has been actively developing to improve tracking and management of complaints, along with other data, in Yukon Parks.

Thank you.



Dennis Berry
Deputy Minister of Environment

cc: Nils Clarke, Minister of Environment
Shannon Trott, Director, Yukon Parks