

THE SALVATION ARMY



EMERGENCY DISASTER SERVICES
CANADA AND BERMUDA TERRITORY



IMPACT REPORT
2025

THERE FOR THE JOURNEY

From floods and wildfires to tornadoes and ice storms, when disaster strikes in Canada, local authorities reach out to The Salvation Army for help.

Our emergency disaster services (EDS) teams provide critical support during and after emergencies, from food, hydration and clothing, to shelter referrals, crisis counselling and spiritual care. We're there long after the cameras leave, supporting families, rebuilding community connections and helping people recover from trauma and loss.

The past year has been a busy one for our teams. To enhance operational efficiency and strengthen the consistency of our work, we centralized as one team under The Salvation Army's territorial headquarters in Toronto. In 2025, we engaged in 723 deployments, responding to 26 structure fires, 11 search-and-rescue incidents, 34 inclement weather responses, 17 recovery events and 240 wildfires,

along with participating in 338 community and street ministry events and running 57 training sessions. In 2025 we served more than 180,000 people.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers: thank you for your hard work and for the depth of your care. We're also deeply grateful for our partners with local emergency management offices, Indigenous governments and first responders, along with the formal agreements we hold with all levels of government, including Public Safety Canada. These longstanding relationships position us as a trusted partner in Canada's emergency preparedness and resilience strategy.

Together, we're able to be there for people during some of their hardest days, helping them know they're not alone, sharing the hope that things will be OK and assuring them that we're there for the journey.

We offer our sincerest thanks to each of you.



Major Rick Zelinsky
Territorial Emergency Disaster Services
and Public Affairs Director



Dan Millar
Assistant Territorial Emergency
Disaster Services Director

EDS STAFF ACROSS THE TERRITORY

Territorial Headquarters

Major Rick Zelinsky, Territorial Director of Emergency Disaster Services and Public Affairs
Dan Millar, Assistant Territorial Director of Emergency Disaster Services
Carolynn Barkhouse, Curriculum Development Specialist
Tracy Desjarlais, Indigenous Liaison Specialist
Dean Gregory, Emotional and Spiritual Care Specialist and Logistics Specialist
Navita Shokeen, Administrative Co-ordinator, Emergency Disaster Services and Public Affairs
Taylor Simmons, Territorial Public Information Officer
Amy Timperley, Territorial Manager of Mitigation, Preparedness and Planning

Atlantic Division

John Bignell, EDS Director
Rick Ash, EDS Specialist
Reanna Graham, EDS Administrative Assistant
Anaise Lemoine, EDS Specialist
Martina Stephens, EDS Specialist

British Columbia Division

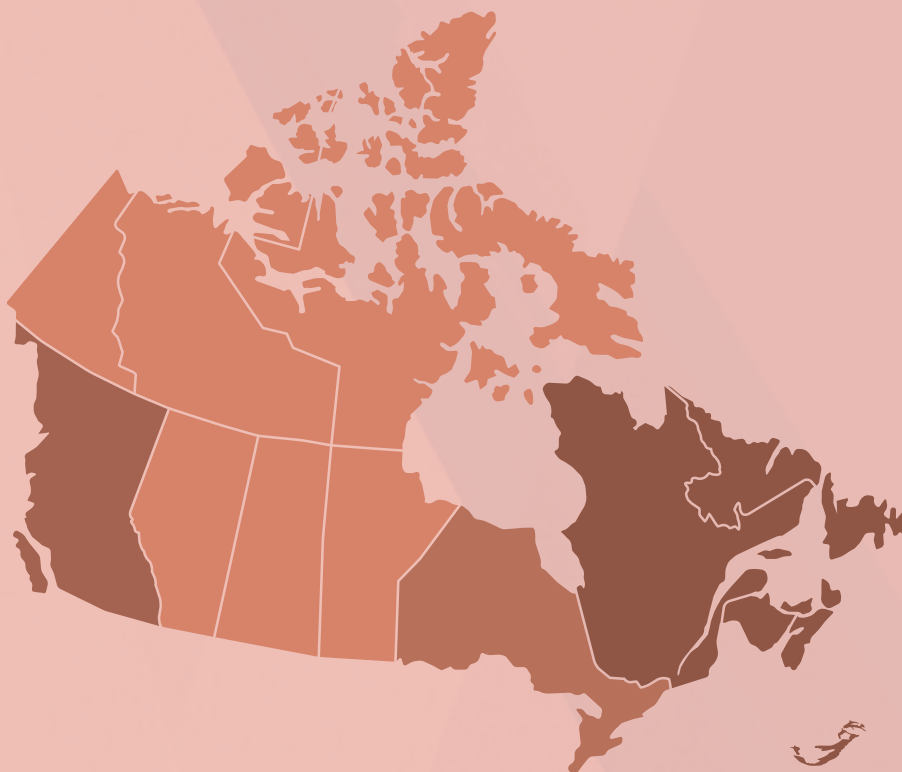
Ian Pollard, EDS Director
Major Ed Chiu, EDS Specialist
Russ Holland, EDS Specialist
Ginny Kristensen, EDS Trainer
John McEwan, EDS Specialist
Major Sandra Rowsell, EDS Specialist

Ontario Division

Adam Marshall, EDS Director
Brody Fisher, EDS Specialist
Trevor McLellan, EDS Specialist

Prairies and Northern Territories Division

Major Ben Lippers, EDS Director (Retired July 1, 2026)
Captain Ian Scott, EDS Director
Craig Broadhurst, EDS Assistant Director
Jason Banbury, EDS Specialist
Debbie Clarke, EDS Specialist
Major Ed Dean, EDS Specialist
Alex Lau, EDS Specialist



KEY AREA #1: OPERATIONAL IMPACT

FOOD AND HYDRATION DURING A DISASTER

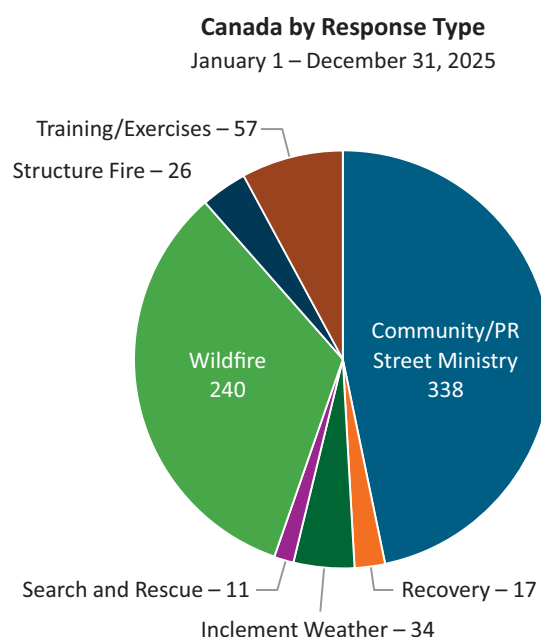
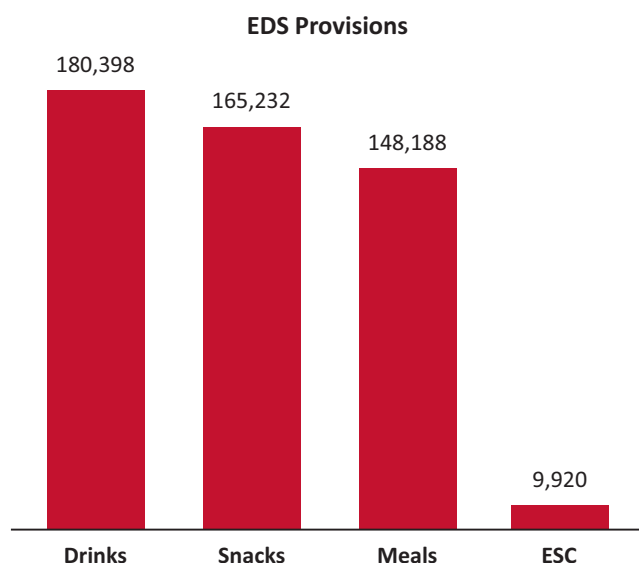
When the unimaginable happens, The Salvation Army's EDS supports survivors and individuals directly impacted by crisis or disaster while also being there for local emergency support services (ESS), first responders and responders from other non-governmental organizations.

EDS volunteers and staff respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, with many calls for local community assistance coming in the middle of the night.

In 2025, EDS teams responded to 328 community emergencies, providing:

- 180,398 drinks
- 165,232 snacks
- 148,188 meals

These responses included structure fires, inclement weather, search-and-rescue operations, wildfire evacuations, and recovery from wildfire and mass-casualty events. In addition to feeding first responders and evacuees, EDS teams provided 9,920 emotional and spiritual care (ESC) items: clothing, hygiene kits and gift cards.





THE IMPACT OF A SINGLE CONVERSATION

While filling in at a clothing reception centre in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, I made a connection with a local government official that resulted in an increase to the food services provided by EDS teams during the next wildfire evacuation later that summer.

The impact of that event connected us to a group of local firefighters, bringing a further expansion to our services for both evacuees and firefighters.

When the entire city evacuated in the summer of 2023 for wildfires, our local EDS team fed city workers and firefighters while also providing shelter to returning workers until the city could re-establish its own services. This domino effect of service has resulted in a memorandum of agreement with Yellowknife to run their local reception centre anytime there is a disaster evacuation, offering food, clothing, shelter and emotional and spiritual care.

The Salvation Army now has EDS kitchen trucks and trailers in Yellowknife and Whitehorse, Yukon, as a direct result of these connections. We're there, ready for service and ready to help when we're needed next.

— Ben Lippers, EDS Director
Prairies and Northern Territories Division





EMOTIONAL CARE WHILE FIRE RAGES

During the Newfoundland wildfires in August 2025, I met a man whose family had a century of history in the area. They had lost everything to the fires, including their family home. But instead of retreating, this individual chose to give back. He spent each day at the reception centre, helping unload freezer trucks and uplift others while silently carrying his own grief.

We shared conversations daily and he maintained a steady, positive spirit—until the day he experienced another tragedy and needed to step away. When the EDS response ended, I left Newfoundland without being able to say goodbye.

I started thinking about him a few months later and left him a voicemail. He returned my call the next day; it was so nice to hear his voice. Although his family didn't have insurance, he told me the government was rebuilding his family home.

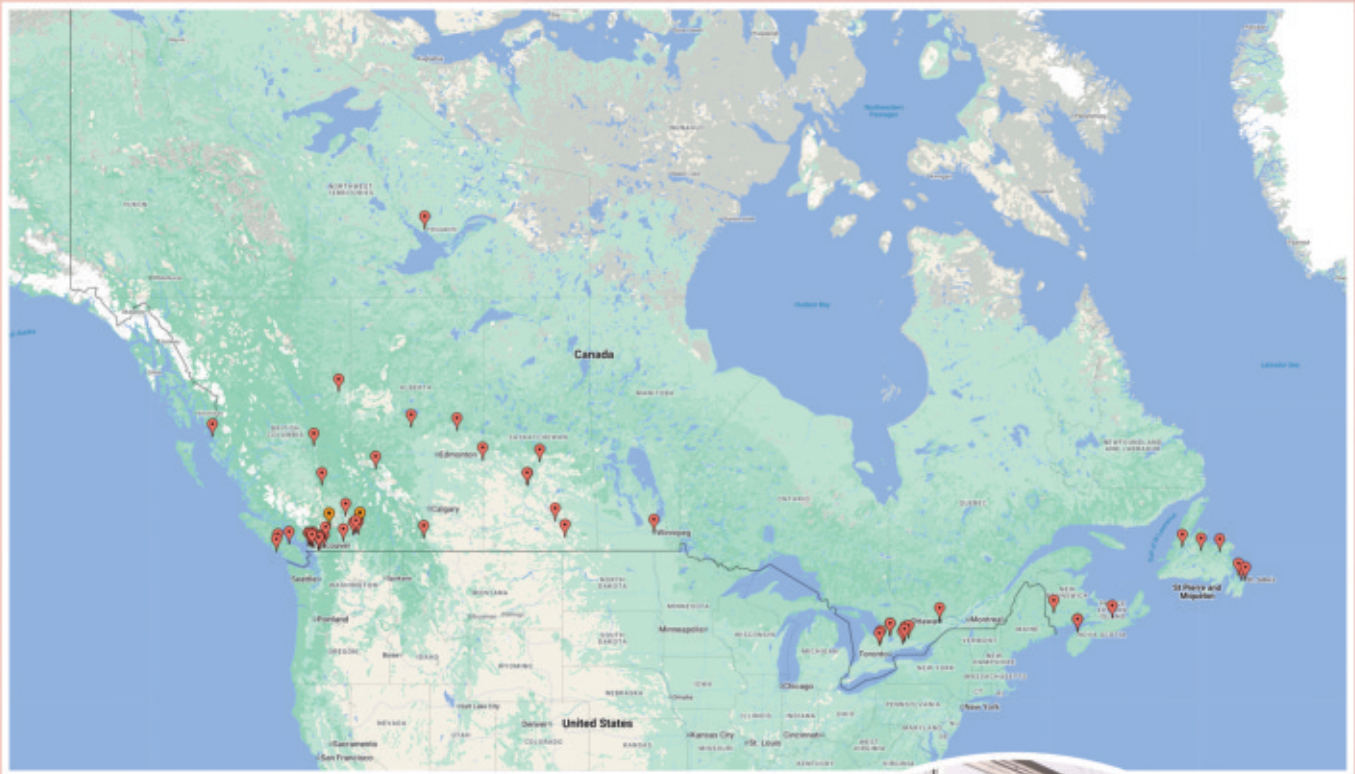
He was happy. He thanked me for all the time we had spent together and told me there would always be a room in the new house for me—a physical representation of hope, safety, connection and the opportunity to simply be with another. This is exactly what our EDS teams provide to so many of the people we meet and serve.

— Dean Gregory, EDS Logistics and Emotional and Spiritual Care Specialist





EDS DEPLOYMENTS IN 2025



Source: pinmaps.net/map/259825/logisticsproblem#tsa-eds-deployments-2025

“Emotional care is a big part of what we do—a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on. At the same time, we let people know that our motivation behind it all is through the grace of God.”

— Adam Marshall, EDS Director, Ontario Division



KEY AREA #2: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF A DEVASTATING FIRE

Major Ed Dean is an emergency disaster specialist in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, who has the dual role of also being a local Salvation Army corps officer. Major Dean has joined numerous deployments and even developed a kitchen for his local drop-in ministry based on those experiences, built to mirror the mobile kitchens found in our community response units.

Little did Major Dean anticipate that the next disaster for which he'd be called into service would be much closer to home. On Christmas Day in December of 2025, a fire completely destroyed The Salvation Army Prince Albert Community Services building—the building where Major Dean served his community each day with such faithfulness. Undeterred, Major Dean quickly got to work. He reached out to other community partners, working to set up temporary locations where clients could continue to find shelter and food.

“The community response has been remarkable,” said Major Dean. “We created relationships with the community so that we can walk together, and those relationships turned out to be the key to this remarkable response.”



NURTURING FUTURE EDS SPECIALISTS

Engaging youth is an important component of The Salvation Army's EDS work.

We create opportunities for young people to participate in training exercises and community initiatives, while also partnering with youth-focused organizations such as the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets. These partnerships help introduce youth to emergency preparedness, teamwork and community service while encouraging future volunteerism.

— John Bignell, EDS Director, Atlantic Division





B.C. FIRE SKIDS

Each summer, many regions across Canada face the increasingly destructive impact of wildfires. While towns and cities may be well equipped to respond, rural communities often face delays in accessing firefighting equipment and emergency services.

To address this need, The Salvation Army's B.C. EDS team partnered with the First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) and GlobalMedic to help protect remote First Nation communities. FNESS identified the First Nation communities most at risk of wildfire in British Columbia, many without necessary fire response services, should an emergency arise.

GlobalMedic designed compact and easily transported fire skids, providing them to The Salvation Army at wholesale pricing. The fire skids are self-contained water delivery systems that transform a four-wheel drive pick-up truck or utility trailer into a small fire truck. Each skid includes a 1,000-litre water tank, a high-pressure pump and a hose, enabling crews to respond on off-road terrains, making them ideal for remote locations.

To date, we've delivered five fire skids to wildfire prone First Nations communities with more deliveries planned in the future.

— Ian Pollard, EDS Director, British Columbia Division





VITAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Our partnerships with the Canadian government through the Humanitarian Workforce Program and the Ontario government through Ontario Corps have significantly strengthened The Salvation Army's ability to respond to emergencies across Canada.

These collaborations have provided critical funding, enhanced training, expanded volunteer capacity, improved equipment and stronger co-ordination with government and community partners. Investments in assets such as canteen trucks, generators, communications tools and mobile hygiene units have enabled faster, more effective deployments, while joint training and responses have strengthened readiness and inter-agency collaboration.

The Salvation Army is well positioned to provide this support due to its long-standing reputation as a trusted emergency response organization with deep community roots. With a strong network of trained personnel and volunteers, established infrastructure, rapid deployment capabilities and a proven record of supporting vulnerable populations, we consistently demonstrates effective resource management and compassionate care. Our focus on collaboration, volunteer development and resilience aligns closely with the goals of both Ontario Corps and the Humanitarian Workforce Program.

— Adam Marshall, EDS Director, Ontario Division





THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD

The Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award is a prestigious recognition for exceptional service and achievement. This award, a partnership between federal, provincial and territorial governments, recognizes recipients who have achieved excellence in their respective fields.

Across Canada, there are many deserving individuals and groups working in emergency management, from community-based volunteers to government officials to Indigenous communities.

Recipients of the award receive a medallion as a symbol of recognition. In 2025, various members of The Salvation Army's EDS team were awarded this honour. All of the award recipients are pictured here, including The Salvation Army's John Bignell, Tony Brushett, Steven Hynes, Ben Lippers, Dan Millar and Tim Sharpe.

— Amy Timplerley, Territorial Manager of Mitigation, Preparedness and Planning





COMMUNITY EVENTS ONTARIO

The Salvation Army's EDS teams are actively involved in community events, planning initiatives and emergency preparedness activities throughout the year.

Staff and volunteers regularly participate in community fairs and preparedness events, hosting information booths that provide public education on disaster preparedness, safety and the role of The Salvation Army during emergencies. These events allow volunteers to connect directly with residents, share practical preparedness information and highlight opportunities for community involvement.

EDS also works closely with local municipalities to support and host emergency management exercises. These exercises create valuable partnership opportunities for municipal emergency management teams, first responders and community organizations to train together through realistic scenarios. The logistical support, feeding services and operational collaboration help strengthen co-ordination and response capabilities across communities.

Participation in preparedness events, municipal partnerships and youth engagements build stronger, more resilient communities while fostering collaboration and awareness around emergency preparedness.



KEY AREA #3: CAPACITY BUILDING

TERRITORIAL EDS ASSETS

Division	Community Response Units	Support Vehicles	Trailers	Generators	Current Totals
Atlantic	13	5	1	1	20
British Columbia	19	1	5	6	31
Ontario	17	5	2	3	27
Prairies and Northern Territories	20	8	14	0	42
TOTAL	69	19	22	10	120





EDS/INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES PROJECT

A partnership between EDS and The Salvation Army's Indigenous Ministries resulted in a rich new training course for EDS volunteers which explores the meaning of truth and reconciliation and its significance for The Salvation Army's disaster response work.

Learners examine how The Salvation Army has responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and what EDS teams are doing to build respectful partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Participants will consider how reconciliation shapes service delivery during times of crisis. By the end of the course, learners will be equipped with concrete strategies to integrate truth and reconciliation principles into their own local disaster response ministry, fostering relationships of trust, dignity and shared resilience.





SUMMIT 2025

EDS staff from across the territory came together for the EDS Summit 2025—a crucial opportunity to connect, collaborate and strengthen The Salvation Army’s work in the year ahead.

Our goals were to enhance operational readiness, expand EDS capabilities and build a resilient team equipped to respond to disasters across Canada. Through dynamic workshops, expert-led discussions and hands-on training, we dove into critical areas such as media engagement, funding strategies, volunteer development and local disaster partnerships.

This summit was not just another meeting: it was a chance to forge deeper relationships, share valuable experiences and align our efforts to better serve communities in crisis. Together, we reaffirmed our commitment to preparedness, collaboration and compassionate service, ensuring The Salvation Army remains a trusted leader in disaster response. The week was a journey of learning, growth and teamwork, as we geared up to tackle the challenges in the year ahead with confidence and unity.

— Amy Timplerley, Territorial Manager of Mitigation, Preparedness and Planning



LOOKING FORWARD: 2026 AND BEYOND

NEW ONLINE TRAINING ROLLED OUT IN 2026

The Army's EDS has long maintained a formal training program to prepare personnel for disaster response. While this program successfully met the needs of EDS workers for many years, the changing nature of disaster response and the emergence of new trends in adult learning have highlighted the need for our training program to evolve.

Early in 2026, we launched a new training program called **EDS University (EDS U)**. Designed to meet these changing needs, EDS U modernizes training delivery, incorporates current learning and development practices, and creates opportunities for learners to pursue training paths that align with their interests, roles and goals.

As the disaster response landscape changes, new courses, learning streams, topics, technologies and delivery methods will continue to be added to expand opportunities for EDS personnel at every level.

Grounded in our values of hope, service, dignity and stewardship, **EDS U** is more than a training program—it is an investment in the future of disaster response, helping ensure our teams are equipped to respond with compassion, professionalism, innovation and purpose in an ever-changing world.

— Carolyn Barkhouse
EDS Curriculum Development Specialist





ENGAGING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

In 2026, EDS will continue to support and engage Indigenous communities wherever possible.

To support northern communities in the event of a crisis or disaster, we're placing an emergency response vehicle in Kenora, Ontario.

We'll also attend pow wows in Alberta and Ontario, along with the Assembly of First Nations Trade Show in Ottawa. As First Nations communities across Canada are impacted by disasters, we are ready and willing to assist in any way we can.





READINESS ASSESSMENT

We’re pleased to report that a territorial readiness assessment puts the number of active, basic-trained EDS volunteers at 1,137. We have assessed their immediate availability and determined how many teams of four or eight people we could assemble on short notice.

We have identified 100 possible EDS deployment teams across the territory: 31 in the Atlantic Division, 11 in the British Columbia Division, 14 in the Ontario Division, 10 in the Prairies and Northern Territories Division.

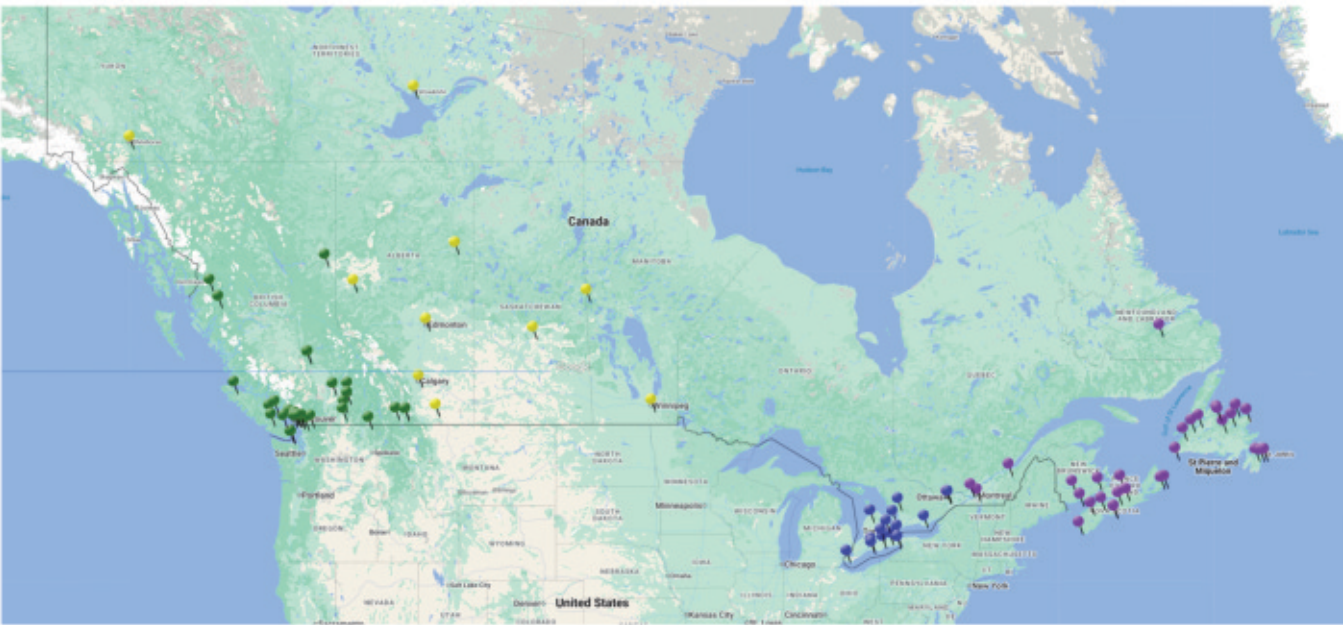
On top of this, an incident management team (IMT) can be set up in each division to assist with operations and ensure a smooth response and recovery. Depending on the alert level, the IMT can be virtual or in person and may be composed of THQ or divisional staff and/or volunteers.

We have 40 memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with various municipalities and other agencies reported as signed and functioning nationwide, with 15 more MOUs pending approval.

Municipal and provincial government agencies seeking emergency disaster services support can simply call our new answering service: **1-866-EDS-2801**.

— Amy Timplerley, Territorial Manager of Mitigation, Preparedness and Planning

RESPONSE TEAM LOCATIONS ACROSS THE TERRITORY



Source: pinmaps.net/maps/logisticsproblem#deployment-teams



THE HUMANITARIAN WORKFORCE PROGRAM

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Search Canada.ca

Canada.ca > Public Safety Canada

Government of Canada marks Emergency Preparedness Week and strengthens federal emergency management

From: [Public Safety Canada](#)

News release

May 4, 2026 - Ottawa, Ontario

Today, on behalf the Government of Canada, the Honourable Eleanor Oliszewski, Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience and Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada marked the beginning of [Emergency Preparedness Week 2026](#), a national awareness initiative that encourages Canadians to learn about the risks they face in their communities and take action to better prepare themselves, and their families before, during and after emergencies. This year's theme is simple and timeless: "Be prepared. Know your risks."

As emergencies, including natural disasters, become more severe and costly, the Government of Canada is investing in preparedness and response to protect Canadians and strengthen nationwide community resilience.

That is why Minister Oliszewski and Anthony Housefather, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience, announced federal investments to strengthen Canada's emergency management response and capacity. They include:

- \$108 million over three years to renew the [Humanitarian Workforce Program](#) to enable the continued support of eligible non-governmental organizations in maintaining a highly trained, scalable civilian workforce that can be rapidly deployed at the request of provinces and territories during large-scale emergencies; and
- \$1.93M through the [Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund](#) (SAR NIF) to support two projects led by the Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada (SARVAC), focused on developing a culturally-informed search and rescue prevention framework with Indigenous and remote communities, and establishing a national standard for volunteer canine teams.

Emergency management in Canada is a shared responsibility across provinces, territories, Indigenous Peoples, and all sectors of society. Through these investments, the Canadian Red Cross, The Salvation Army, SARVAC, St. John Ambulance, and Team Rubicon Canada are providing critical on-the-ground support during emergencies. This support includes enhancing emergency response, assisting with evacuations, and strengthening search and rescue operations across the country.

By strengthening partnerships and building response capabilities, the Government of Canada is enhancing national readiness and helping ensure communities receive timely support when it matters most.

"\$108 million over three years to renew the Humanitarian Workforce Program to enable the continued support of eligible non-governmental organizations in maintaining a highly trained, scalable civilian workforce that can be rapidly deployed at the request of provinces and territories during large scale emergencies."

— Public Safety Canada

"Emergency management in Canada is a shared responsibility across provinces, territories, Indigenous Peoples and all sectors of society. Through these investments, the Canadian Red Cross, The Salvation Army, the Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada, St. John Ambulance and Team Rubicon Canada are providing critical on-the-ground support during emergencies. This support includes enhancing emergency response, assisting with evacuations, and strengthening search and rescue operations across the country."

— Public Safety Canada

"The Salvation Army is deeply grateful for the investment from Public Safety Canada through the Humanitarian Workforce Program. This support reflects what we see every day in communities across the country, that we are stronger when we work together. It ensures Canadians will be met with compassionate care and practical assistance and is building a more resilient nation, one where no one stands alone in the face of disaster."

— Major Rick Zelinsky, Territorial Director of EDS and Public Affairs, The Salvation Army

EDS PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We pause to praise you for being our protector, guide and comforter as we engage in various responses and activities.

We acknowledge that your love and your presence is always with us. Help us to continually depend on you for strength and grace in times of need so that we will be better equipped to serve others.

Your Word declares that you will shelter us with your wings and your faithful promises are our armour and protection.

You are our light for our journey of the unknown and we will place our trust in you!

Amen

"He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them."

— Hebrews 6:10



Salvationist.ca/EDS
1-866-EDS-2801

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