



Survey Report

Canada's Alert Ready Test

Conducted November 25, 2020

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Summary

On November 25, 2020, provincial and territorial emergency officials across Canada, with the exception of Nunavut and Alberta, conducted tests of the National Public Alert System (NPAS) known as Alert Ready. These public test alerts were sent via radio, television, LTE compatible wireless devices, and other third-party emergency alert distribution channels such as Alertable.

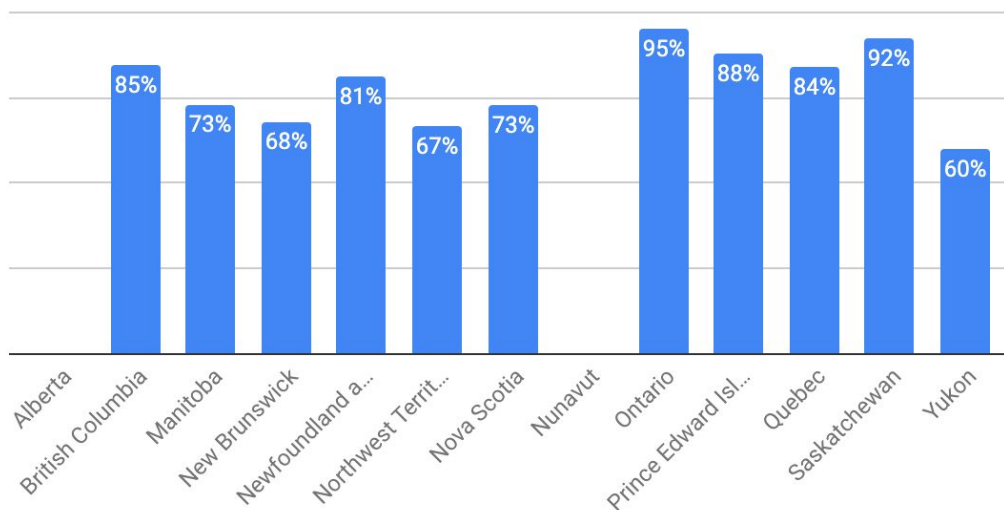
This was the fifth time that Alert Ready public tests incorporated wireless devices, after two tests in 2018, and two in 2019. The majority of provinces and territories issued their alerts at 1:55 PM local time, with Nunavut and Alberta forgoing participation in the tests.

The one-way broadcast nature of most Alert Ready distribution channels such as radio, television, and LTE compatible wireless devices does not provide a direct way for the public to provide feedback on alerts received, including test alerts. Therefore, Public Emergency Alerting Services Inc (PEASI) took the initiative to solicit feedback for the November 25, 2020 test, with a specific interest in the effectiveness of the wireless alerting channel.

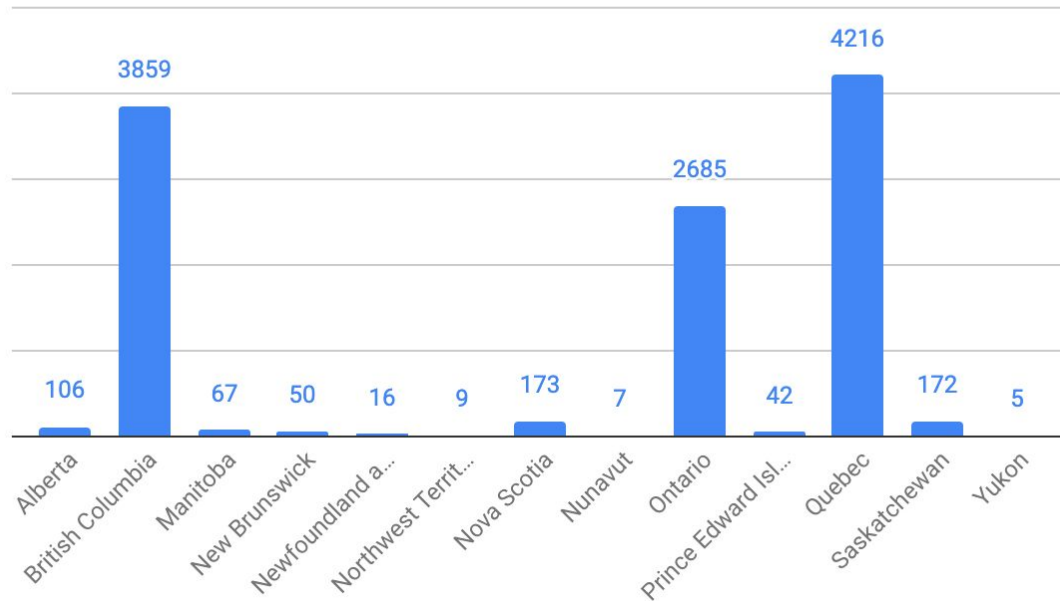
PEASI created an online survey and asked the Canadian public to complete it. The survey was widely shared via municipal officials, social media, news organizations, and on the Alert Ready website before and during the tests. The survey is provided in the appendix.

Results

Wireless Alert Success Rate



Total Survey Responses



- **A total of 11,451 survey responses were received**, an increase of 39.6% from the last survey. While responses from ON and AB were down (partially because AB did not participate in the test alert), responses from BC increased 413% and responses from Quebec increased 152%. Also, a total of 44 responses did not state their province when completing the survey.
- 36.9% of the survey responses came from Quebec, with 33.7% from British Columbia, 23.4% from Ontario, and the remainder from the other provinces and territories. Although Nunavut and Alberta opted out of the test, we did receive survey responses from the public in those areas and included their data in this report.
- **85.9% of respondents reported receiving the wireless test message**, 14.1% reported they did not. The previous test in November 2019 reported a 77.5% success rate, indicating an 8.4% increase in delivery success, this time.
- Ontario had the highest wireless success rate with 95%, followed closely by Saskatchewan with 92%. BC saw an increase of 30% to reach a success rate of 85%. Of the provinces that sent a test alert, the Yukon had the lowest wireless success rate reported with 60% received.
- The top 5 suggestions from respondents to the question “If you could improve one thing about emergency alerts, what would it be?” were:
 - Be able to override silent mode on phones
 - Have different sounds for different types of Alerts

- The Alert information should be more clear and consistent and improve the content and display (e.g. include pictures, video, language translation, etc)
- Send the Test Alert as a text message. Some respondents reported that they didn't know how to get back to the message once it had disappeared from the lock screen on their phones.
- Make an app available to download for devices that are not compatible with the Alert Ready system.
- **95.3% of respondents** reported that the test message was clear and understandable, which is a 3% increase from the last test. Links to the test alert messages sent by each province are available in the appendix.
- Next to wireless, the most popular alert distribution channels were television and third-party mobile apps, same as the last test in November 2019. 12.3% of respondents reported receiving the alert through television, third-party mobile app followed with 12.3%, radio with 7.5%, and social media at 5.1%.
- 57.7% of problems with receiving the wireless alert were reported from users with an Android device and 41.8% using an iPhone device.
- For devices that successfully received the wireless alert, 55.4% reported using an iPhone while 44% reported using an Android device.
- Of the respondents who reported problems receiving the test, 42% reported that they had successfully received a previous test or a real alert for a past emergency, indicating that something prevented them from receiving the test this time.
- 23% of the respondents reported having received a real alert for a past emergency in addition to receiving the most recent test alert.
- For respondents who successfully received the test alert, 23% reported that this was their first time receiving it.

Other

- There were a few reports received about wireless alerts from one province appearing in another, specifically the Ontario/Quebec border.
- 41% of respondents who reported not receiving the test alert were using Telus as their service provider, 21% were using Bell, and 14% were using Rogers.
- Respondents reported they did not have enough time to read the WPA message, and they would like the ability to filter what alerts they receive while others would like improvements to the sound that the alert plays.

More Information

If you would like more information regarding the November 25, 2020 Alert Ready test, please submit your inquiry here: <https://www.alertready.ca/#contact>.

If you would like more information on the public emergency alerting platform, Alertable, that is connected to Alert Ready and used by emergency management officials in over 1,000 Canadian municipalities, please see here: <https://peasi.com/>

Appendix

Survey Questions

1. Did you receive the emergency alert test message on your wireless mobile device?
(Yes, No)

If No:

1. What type of mobile device do you have? (iPhone, Android, Other)
2. Have you recently updated your device to the latest software version? (Yes, No, Don't Know)
3. Who is your wireless provider? (Rogers, Bell, Telus, Shaw, Videotron, Sasktel, Eastlink, Other)
4. Have you received a previous wireless emergency alert before, either from a past test (in November 2018 or in May 2019) or from a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test November 2018 or May 2019; Yes, from a real emergency; No)

If Yes:

1. What type of mobile device do you have? (iPhone, Android, Other)
 2. Who's your cellphone provider? (Rogers, Bell, Telus, Shaw, Videotron, Sasktel, Eastlink, Other)
 3. Did you click on the website link in the wireless alert message for more details? (Yes, there was a link and I clicked it; No, there was a link but I didn't click it; No link was available)
 4. Have you received a previous wireless emergency alert before, either from a past test (in November 2018 or in May 2019) or from a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test November 2018 or May 2019; Yes, from a real emergency; No)
2. Did you receive the emergency alert test message any other way? Check all that apply. (Radio, Television, Social Media, Public alert mobile app (ie. Alertable, The Weather Network, Alberta Emergency Alert, SaskAlert, etc.), None of the above)
 3. Did you understand the instructions in the emergency alert test message? (Yes, No, Partially, they were a little confusing)
 4. What Province/Territory were you in when the test message was sent?
 5. If you could improve one thing with emergency alerts, what would it be?

Alert Ready Test Alert Messages

Province/Territory	Test Message
British Columbia	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165863
Manitoba	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165846
New Brunswick	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165817
Newfoundland and Labrador	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165814
Northwest Territories	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165826
Nova Scotia	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165831
Ontario	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165830
Prince Edward Island	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165827
Quebec	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165839
Saskatchewan	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165847
Yukon	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2020/165855

Sample Wireless Public Alert Messages

Sample test alerts that were seen by the public on LTE compatible wireless devices:

