



Survey Report

Canada's Alert Ready Test

Conducted May 5, 2021

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Summary

On May 5, 2021, provincial and territorial emergency officials across Canada, with the exception of Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, the North West Territories 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.

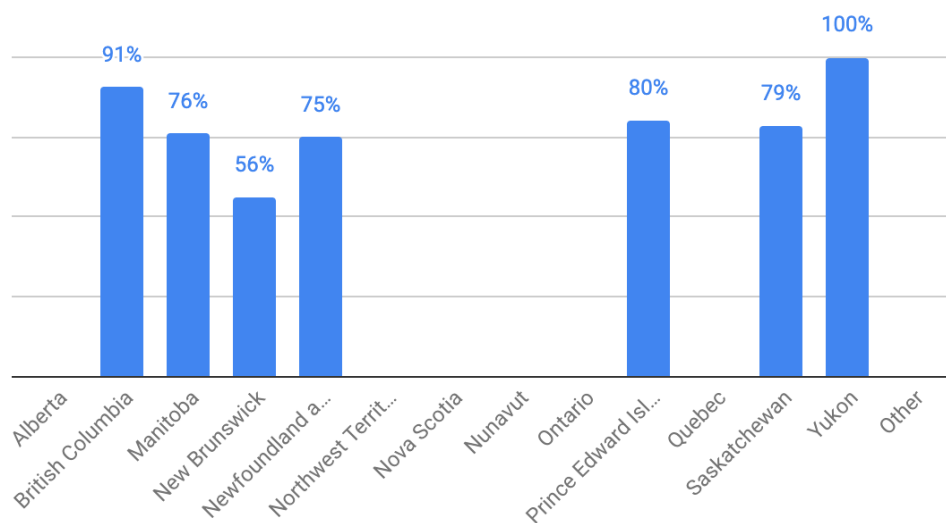
This was the sixth time that Alert Ready public tests incorporated wireless devices, after two tests in 2018, two in 2019 and one in 2020. The majority of provinces and territories issued their alerts at 1:55 PM local time.

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) takes the initiative to solicit feedback each time and did so again for the May 5, 2021 test, with a specific interest in the effectiveness of the wireless alerting channel.

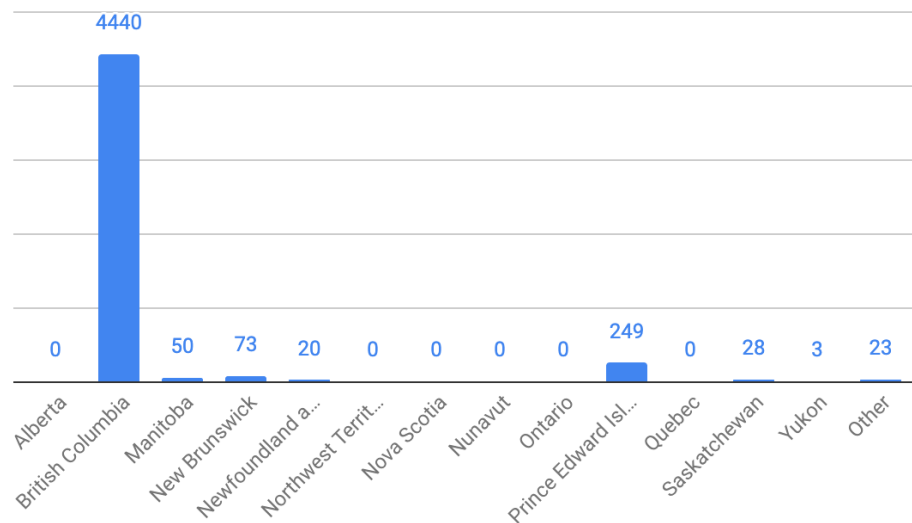
PEASI created an online survey and asked the Canadian public to fill it out. The survey was widely shared via government officials, social media, news organizations, and on the Alert Ready website before and during the tests. The survey is provided in the appendix.

Results

Wireless Alert Success Rate



Total Survey Responses



- **A total of 4,946 survey responses were received**, a decrease of 57% from the last survey. This can be attributed to the decreased number of provinces choosing to participate in the test alert largely because of COVID-19 priorities. While responses were down overall, responses from BC increased 15% and responses from New Brunswick increased 46%. Also, a total of 15 responses did not state their province when completing the survey.
- 89.7% of the survey responses came from British Columbia, with 5.4% from Prince Edward Island, and the remainder from the other provinces and territories. Although several provinces opted out of the test, we did receive survey responses from the public in some of these areas and included their data in this report.
- **88.1% of respondents reported receiving the wireless test message**, 11.9% reported they did not. The previous test in November 2020 reported a 85.9% success rate, indicating a 2.2% increase in delivery success, this time.
- British Columbia had the highest wireless success rate with 90.6%, followed by PEI with 80%. Of the provinces that sent a test alert, New Brunswick had the lowest wireless success rate reported with 56.2% 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 device setting, specifically volume, vibrate and silence/do not disturb modes
 - Ensure more people receive them (older cell phone models not compatible). Email database and landline database were suggested as possible solutions.

- The Alert information should be more clear and consistent and improve the content and display (e.g. include pictures, video, language translation, etc).
- 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 phone (Apple devices primarily) and they would prefer a less intrusive sound.
- Make an app available to download for devices that are not compatible with the Alert Ready system.
- **94.1% of respondents** reported that the test message was clear and understandable, which is a 1.2% decrease 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 third-party mobile apps and television, same as the last test in November 2020. 19% of respondents reported receiving the alert through mobile app (a 6.7% increase), television followed with 7.4%, radio with 4.9%, and social media at 3.8%.
- 51.1% of problems with receiving the wireless alert were reported from users with an Android device and 48.4% using an iPhone.
- For devices that successfully received the wireless alert, 61.5% reported using an iPhone while 38.5% reported using an Android device.
- Of the respondents who reported problems receiving the test, 50.9% 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.
- 7.3% 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, 15.8% reported that this was their first time receiving it.

Other

- There were a few reports received about wireless alerts being received in the United States but close to the Canadian border.
- 46.5% of respondents who reported not receiving the test alert were using Telus as their service provider, 21.3% were using Bell, and 20.5% were using Rogers.
- Respondents reported they did not have enough time to read the WPA message, and would like alerts to be more location specific and have the ability to filter what alerts they receive, while others would like a longer vibration for those who are hearing impaired and to have alerts sent through multiple channels (e.g. tablet, or an email list).

More Information

If you would like more information regarding the May 5, 2021 Alert Ready test, please submit your inquiry here: <https://www.alertready.ca/#contact>.

If you would like more information on the community and workplace notification software, Alertable, that serves over 1,300 Canadian municipalities and a population of nearly 10 million, 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 2020) or from a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test November 2020; 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 2020) or from a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test in November 2020; 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 Messages

| Province/Territory | Test Message |
|---------------------------|---|
| British Columbia | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189878 |
| Manitoba | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189872 |
| New Brunswick | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189855 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189849 |
| Prince Edward Island | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189863 |
| Saskatchewan | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189876 |
| Yukon | https://alertable.ca/#/details/2021/189880 |

Sample Alert Ready Wireless Public Alert Test Messages

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

