



SURVEY REPORT

Canada's Alert Ready Test



Test Date:

November 16, 2022

Report date:

November 23, 2022

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Executive Summary

On November 16, 2022, provincial and territorial emergency officials, excluding Prince Edward Island, conducted tests of Canada's 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 products such as Alertable.

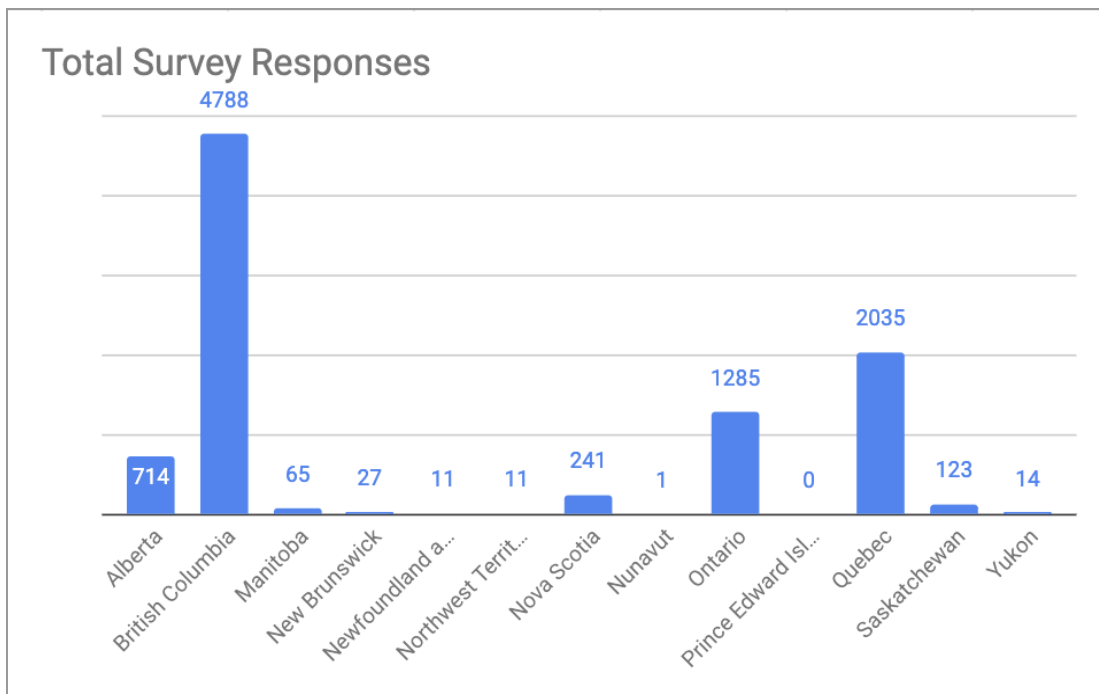
This was the ninth time that Alert Ready public tests incorporated wireless devices, after two tests in 2018, two in 2019, one in 2020, two in 2021 and one in May of 2022. Most provinces and territories issued their alerts at 1:55 PM local time.

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. Because of this, we take the initiative to solicit feedback by way of a national survey after each test. The survey questions are provided in the appendix.

9,415 survey responses were received, an increase of 32% from the previous survey. This increase was expected due to more provinces and territories participating in the latest test. Survey responses received included 99 from individuals who did not indicate the province or territory that they were in when they received the alert or indicated a location outside of Canada and therefore could not be confirmed as having received the alert message through their wireless provider or local broadcaster.

More than 51% of responses came from British Columbia. Overall, 92.9% of respondents said they received the alert, with most provinces showing results in the 90% and higher range. A third-party mobile app was the most popular alternative way of receiving the alert. The majority of respondents reported having received previous test alerts, with only 341 respondents reporting this being the first time they have received an alert. 94.3% thought the message was clear and easy to understand.

Results



- A total of 9,415 survey responses were received, an increase of 32% from the last survey.
- 99 survey responses received could not be accurately traced to a particular province or territory, either because the respondent didn't indicate the location or they indicated a location outside of Canada suggesting they received the alert some other way than a wireless test message. These responses were removed from the total number of responses received in calculating some of the statistics presented in this report.
- Prince Edward Island chose not to participate in this test due to active recovery efforts following Hurricane Fiona.
- 51.4% of survey responses came from British Columbia, 21.8% from Quebec, 13.8% from Ontario and the remainder from other provinces and territories.
- 92.9% of respondents reported receiving the wireless test message (a decrease of 1.8% from the last test), meaning 7.1% reported they did not receive the wireless test message.
- Of the respondents who reported problems receiving the test, 74% 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.
- Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories and Nunavut had the highest reported wireless success rate with 100%, followed by Ontario with 96% and British Columbia and Saskatchewan with 94%. Of the provinces that sent a test alert, Manitoba had the lowest wireless success rate reported with 86% received.
- 94.3% of respondents reported that the test message was clear and understandable, which is a 0.9% decrease from the last test.
- Next to wireless, the most popular alert distribution channels were third-party mobile apps and television. 36.5% of respondents reported receiving the alert through a third-party mobile app, television followed with 14.6%, radio with 6.0%, and social media with 4.3%.
- 52.5% of respondents reporting problems receiving the wireless alert were reported from those using an Apple device, and 45.6% were using an Android device.
- For devices that successfully received the wireless alert, 65% reported using an Apple device, while 34% reported using an Android device.

- 87.2% of the respondents reported having received a real alert for a recent emergency in addition to receiving the most recent test alert, which is up 39.9% since the last test.
- For the newly added question about preparedness, 17.6% of respondents reported feeling very prepared if the test had been a real-life emergency while 2.5% reported not being prepared at all. 79.8% of respondents reported being somewhat or not very well prepared.
- While many are happy with the current system, 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 settings, specifically volume, vibrate and silence/do not disturb modes.
 - Change the sound. While some want it quieter, others want it louder and more sustained. Several suggested that Amber Alerts be a different tone than other types of alerts and that a warning sound should occur before an actual alert.
 - Better mapping to allow for more targeted alerts to smaller geographical areas.
 - Ensure the message can stay on the screen of the device longer, even if they open the device to turn the sound off.
 - Make the alerts easier to read and understand. The alert information should be more clear and better instructions given. Bolding the event type and instructions or adding bullet points for the instructions were methods suggested to make them stand out.

Other Observations

- A longer vibration, flashing lights, and improved text-to-voice for those who have accessibility challenges are desired.
- 44.5% of respondents who reported not receiving the test alert were using Telus as their service provider, 25.2% were using Bell, and 13.7% were using Rogers.
- Providing the ability to filter what types of alerts a person receives and the ability to opt-out of test alerts is desirable.
- Respondents would like to have their phones recognize if they are driving and not send the test alert through to avoid potential accidents.
- Many suggested using different sounds for different types or levels of events.

- Additional languages would be beneficial, particularly Spanish.
- Many respondents commented on the use of the Alert Ready system for Amber Alerts. While some commented they did not want to receive Amber alerts at all, or not at night, or that these alerts should be targeted to smaller regions, many others support the use of Alert Ready for Amber alerts but would like to see more information given in these alerts such as a picture of the missing child. Providing a way to opt-out of Amber Alerts was asked for repeatedly, as was having a different sound for Amber Alerts than other types of alerts. The ability to silence Amber Alerts while sleeping, but still have them show up on your device was suggested as a way to provide useful information without angering people.
- Providing information about how to prepare for various emergencies that may happen in different areas of Canada with clear instructions was suggested. Targeted alerts with information about the most likely events to affect the area of the alert could mean providing different information to those in different provinces.
- The most common answers to the question “How and when do you think the Alert Ready system should be used?” was to continue using it the way it is currently being used and any time that there is a threat to human life. Other answers varied from not at all, to including all severe weather, environmental emergencies, any threat to property and missing children/vulnerable persons.

More Information

For more information regarding the Alert Ready test on November 16, 2022, please see here: <https://www.alertready.ca/>.

To see past survey reports, please see here: <https://peasi.com/emergency-preparedness-resources>

For more information on the community and workplace notification software, Alertable, which serves over 1,400 Canadian municipalities with a combined population of 10 million and counting, 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/iPad (Apple); Android (includes Samsung, Motorola, LG, and other phone brands); Feature-phone (ZTE, Sonim, etc.); 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 wireless emergency alert before, either from a test or a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test; Yes, from a real emergency; Yes, from both; No, never)

If Yes:

1. What type of mobile device do you have? (iPhone/iPad (Apple); Android (includes Samsung, Motorola, LG, and other phone brands); Feature-phone (ZTE, Sonim, etc))
 2. Who is your mobile service 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 wireless emergency alert before, either from a test or a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test; Yes, from a real emergency; Yes, from both; No, never)
2. Did you receive the emergency alert test message any other way? Check all that apply. (Radio; Television; Social Media; Public alert 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. Had the emergency alert test message been for a real-life emergency, how prepared do you think you and your household would have been for that emergency? (Very well prepared; Somewhat well prepared; Not very well prepared; Not at all prepared)
5. What Province/Territory were you in when the test message was sent? (Alberta; British Columbia; Manitoba; New Brunswick; Newfoundland and Labrador; Northwest Territories; Nova Scotia; Nunavut; Ontario; Prince Edward Island; Quebec; Saskatchewan; Yukon; United States)
6. If you could improve one thing with emergency alerts, what would it be?
7. How and when do you think the Alert Ready system should be used?

Alert Ready Test Messages

Province/Territory	Test Message
Alberta	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290650
British Columbia	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290660
Manitoba	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290630
New Brunswick	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290613
Newfoundland and Labrador	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290568
Northwest Territories	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290648
Nova Scotia	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290612
Nunavut	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290621
Ontario	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290611
Prince Edward Island	N/A
Quebec	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290619
Saskatchewan	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290631
Yukon	https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/290649

Sample Alert Ready Wireless Public Alert Test Messages

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

