



Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee

% 405-15 Wellings Dr. Picton Ontario K0K 2T0
E-mail: www.deafwireless.ca X: [@DeafWirelessCAN](https://twitter.com/DeafWirelessCAN)

VIA EMAIL DISTRIBUTION and GC KEY

August 8, 2025

Mr. Marc Morin
Secretary-General
Canadian Radio-telecommunications and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
sec-gen@crtc.gc.ca

Reference: Public record: [1011-NOC2025-0180](https://www.crtc.gc.ca/1011-NOC2025-0180)

Dear Secretary General,

Re: [TBNC CRTC 2025-180](#) Call for comments – Improving the public alerting system -
Procedural Letter with Survey and Interview Questions for DDBHH Accessibility Research

1. The Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee – Comité pour les Services Sans fil des Sourds du Canada (DWCC-CSSSC or “**DWCC**”) writes to respectfully notify the Commission of its intent to participate in the proceeding Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-180.
2. **DWCC** has completed its development of questions and intends to disseminate community interviews and surveys related to public alerting and accessibility barriers in response to Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-180.

About DWCC

3. **DWCC**, a national consumer group representing Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing (DDBHH) communities, is committed to ensuring that the voices of equity-seeking groups are directly reflected in the public record.
4. The Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee - Comité pour les Services Sans fil des Sourds du Canada (**DWCC** - CSSSC or “**DWCC**”), advocates for the

full inclusion of diverse members within the Canadian Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing (DDBHH) community in Canadian society. The spectrum of DDBHH life experiences, including those that are Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+, and ranges from those with cognitive delay or have neurodiversity, immigrants learning English or French as a second language, those with various degrees of hearing loss, those with the unique “double” disability as Deaf-Blind, and finally native ASL/LSQ users. Additionally, **DWCC** supports that Indigenous users have the right to ask for support, including requesting Indigenous Sign Language interpreters. When **DWCC** writes DDBHH, it is inclusive of all those with intersectional identities.

5. **DWCC's** mandate is to advocate for accessible wireless communications equity for DDBHH Canadians, including but not limited to:
 - a. Cost-reasonable, accessible wireless data plans for ASL and LSQ users for two-way videocalls.
 - b. Accessible industry-wide promotions of wireless services and products.
 - c. Removal of disparities in the costs of the same accessible wireless products and services within each company.
 - d. Provision of functional equivalent wireless products and services, including wireless applications (apps).
 - e. Accessible wireless emergency services (including emergency alerts and direct text to 911).
 - f. Nationwide public awareness, education and outreach on currently accessible wireless and mobile communication products and services.

6. DWCC is currently undergoing a strategic update of its name and mandate to reflect today's evolving social and regulatory priorities, with an increased emphasis on addressing accessibility challenges in both broadcasting and telecommunications. This aligns with the *Accessible Canada Act* (royal assent: June 21, 2019), which affirms a national commitment to building a barrier-free Canada by 2040.

Survey

7. **DWCC** has developed a community-informed set of interview and survey questions that will gather lived experiences and feedback on:
 - a. Accessibility of public alerting systems across multiple platforms
 - b. Inclusion of DDBHH needs in emergency messaging (text, visuals, language access)
 - c. Preferred communication channels and devices (e.g., mobile tablets, Alert Ready, TV)

- d. Community feedback on the terminology (e.g., “public alerting” vs. “emergency notification”)
8. Please reference **Appendix A** for the final draft of the survey questions, developed in alignment with the CRTC 2025-180 questions and informed by the Neil Squire results. The **DWCC** intends to secure a larger pool of respondents (targeting **1,000+ participants**) and is implementing a strategy that includes:
 1. Offering Prizes, and
 2. Providing honorariums to individuals who assist in promoting the survey within their local and provincial communities as *Community Connectors*
9. **DWCC** intends to make these survey questions available to community participants in ASL, LSQ, English, and French, ensuring linguistic and cultural accessibility inclusive of DeafBlind Canadians. The collected results will be summarized in two supplementary evidential submissions with consent from participants.

Interviews

10. **DWCC** will complement its survey with up to 20 interviews of DDBHH Canadians to capture lived experiences during emergencies and disasters. These firsthand accounts reveal significant barriers to public alerting and will provide the Commission with critical insight into the communication challenges faced by DDBHH Canadians. Please see the final draft of the interview questions in **Appendix B**.
11. Fifteen of these interviews will be conducted in ASL, and five will be of LSQ community members, so transcription services will be required for the team to analyze them in text format for the preparation of the report.

Timeline

12. **DWCC** plans to release the survey by late August, with distribution continuing until mid-September, with a goal of at least 1,000 survey responses. The survey will remain open until two days after the Ottawa Deaf Expo on September 20, after which it will be closed. The team will then begin the process of compiling and analyzing the survey results to produce a final report.

July 27 - Finalize survey questions and interview questions

July 29 - French translations of survey questions

August 15 - Enter questions into Survey Monkey

Aug 22 - Insert ASL and LSQ video links into Survey Monkey

Aug 25 - Launch of Monkey Survey

Sept 20 - Ottawa Deaf Expo Booth exhibition with iPads for visitors to complete the survey

Sept 22 - Last day of running Survey Monkey

Oct 6 - Complete Survey report and Interview report

Oct 14 - Intervention due

13. **DWCC** respectfully requests that the Commission permit DWCC to proceed with the proposed interview and survey questions no later than **August 15, 2025**, to allow sufficient time for comprehensive translations into ASL, LSQ, and French and insert the English/French questions and ASL/LSQ videos into Survey Monkey. We further request that this timeline be formally acknowledged on the public record to ensure clarity of process. The team would like to begin the interviewing process shortly and launch the survey on **August 25, 2025**.
14. **DWCC** also confirms its intention to file its intervention in advance of the first proceeding deadline of **October 14, 2025**.

Interim Costs

15. After this document has been submitted, **DWCC** intends to apply for interim costs to pay for the expenses of a fully accessible survey and interview process. These costs will include:
 - a. translation in English, French, ASL and LSQ for the survey questions;
 - b. prize and honoraria with assistance from local community representatives, "Community Connectors," to disseminate the survey to meet the goal of at least 1,000 survey responses in Canada;
 - c. Booth participation at the [Ottawa Deaf Expo](#) on September 20, 2025
 - d. honorariums for the people whom the DWCC's team will interview;
 - e. professional fees for transcription and translation of the ASL and LSQ interviews to English transcripts for report writing
 - f. ASL-LSQ interpreters for LSQ interview;
16. Please note, **DWCC** is waiting for a pro forma or estimated cost invoice from one of the translation companies for transcription and translation services. Once we have received all the appropriate documents, we will submit the interim costs to be sent during the week of **August 11th, 2025**.

17. **DWCC** also confirms that these costs will be in addition to the resulting final cost application under CRTC 2025-180 for the consultant and analysts' work, and will follow best practices in accessibility, ethics, and transparency.
18. **DWCC** seeks approval for this work. **DWCC** appreciates a response at your earliest convenience so DWCC can enlist and confirm the vendors to do the translation and transcription work.
19. Please do not hesitate to contact us should any further clarification be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Beatty,
Chairperson,
Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee – DWCC

APPENDIX A
Survey Questions

DWCC 2025-180 - Survey Monkey Questionnaire

DDBHH Accessibility of The National Public Alerting System

The Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee ([DWCC](#)) is conducting a national survey to help improve the National Public Alerting System (NPAS), with a focus on accessibility for Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals across Canada.

The initiative is part of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commissions ([CRTC](#)) ongoing proceeding to improve the public alerting systems: [CRTC 2025-180](#).

What are Public Alerts?

Public alerts are important messages sent by the government to warn people about emergencies or danger. These alerts help keep people safe during urgent situations like wildfires, floods, or missing children. You might see or feel these alerts on your phone, TV, radio, or other devices. It is also known as an emergency alert. In this survey, we will use the word “emergency alert.”

What is the survey about?

This survey asks about your experiences with emergency alerts (also known as public alerts or public alerting) which are the the messages sent to your phone, TV, or other devices during emergencies like wildfires, floods, or missing persons.

DWCC wants to better understand:

- Accessibility barriers to receiving alerts
- Preferred languages and sign languages
- Nationwide gaps or inconsistencies in alerting
- How the system can be monitored and improved over time with feedback

This is an opportunity to have your voice and perspective included in national discussions about accessibility and public safety for DDBHH individuals in Canada.

Survey Details:

- Available in English, French, ASL, and LSQ
- Hosted on SurveyMonkey
- Available by request: PDF or paper mailed copy
- Up to 38 questions, covering both multiple choice and open-ended responses
- Approved by the CRTC (see link)

Why is this important?

DWCC’s goal is to ensure that NPAS becomes fully accessible, especially through:

- Alerts in sign languages (ASL and LSQ)
- Compliance with the Accessible Canada Act, which aims to remove barriers for people with disabilities by 2040.

- Compliance with Canadian Human Rights Act to duty to accommodate persons with disabilities including Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals across Canada

Your participation will provide valuable data that can help guide policy and implementation of accessible alerts in Canada.

Conditions for participation

To take this survey, you must be:

1. At least 18 years old; and
2. A Canadian consumer of a wireless or internet company for at least one year; and
3. Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, Oral deaf, or Late-deafened.

Your privacy, confidentiality and trust are important to us. All data collected will be stored according to industry wide data security standards. At the end of the survey you will have the option, it is your choice, to enter your name and e-mail to enter your name in a prize draw. *This contact information is used only for the verification purposes for the prize draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.*

If you have any concerns or questions, you may contact Jeffrey Beatty, DWCC Chair at chair@deafwireless.ca.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

PART I: QUALIFYING QUESTIONS (3 questions)

- 1. I hereby consent that my responses will be used to present the information to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Notice of Consultation [2025-180](#).**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 2. Are you Canadian or a resident of Canada?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 3. Are you 18 or older?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

PART II: DEMOGRAPHICS (8 questions)

ABOUT YOU (6 questions)

4. Are you Deaf-Blind or DeafBlind? (answers will lead to related questions)

***SKIP LOGIC* if No go to #6**

- a. Yes
- b. No

5. Which modes of communication do you use?

***SKIP LOGIC* go to #7**

- a. Sign Language
- b. Tactile ASL or Tactile LSQ (hand on hand communication)
- c. Protactile
- d. Two hand manual

6. How do you self-identify?*

- a. Deaf (a sign language user-- for example: ASL or LSQ)
- b. Hard of Hearing
- c. Oral deaf
- d. Late-deafened

7. How old are you?

- a. 18 to 24 years
- b. 25 to 34 years
- c. 35 to 44 years
- d. 45 to 54 years
- e. 55 to 64 years
- f. 65 years or older
- g. I prefer not to provide information

8. What is your gender?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Non-binary
- d. I prefer not to provide information

9. Which languages do you use? Click on all applicable languages.

- a. ASL
- b. LSQ
- c. English
- d. French

RESIDENTIAL INFORMATION (2 questions)

10. Which Canadian province or territory do you currently live in?

- a. British Columbia
- b. Yukon
- c. Alberta
- d. Northwest Territories
- e. Saskatchewan
- f. Nunavut
- g. Manitoba
- h. Ontario
- i. Québec
- j. Newfoundland and Labrador
- k. Nova Scotia
- l. Prince Edward Island
- m. New Brunswick

11. Where do you live (metropolitan vs. rural)?

- a. City or metropolitan/suburban area (50,000 or more people)
- b. City or town (between 2,500 – 50,000 people)
- c. Village (fewer than 2,500 people)
- d. I am nomadic, living from town to town
- e. I prefer not to provide information

PART III: DEVICE AND SERVICE USAGE (3 questions)

12. Do you use wireless and/or internet services?

- a. Wireless only (LTE/5G)
- b. Internet only (wifi)
- c. Both, Wireless and Internet (wifi)

13. Do you currently have a wireless Accessibility Plan (a plan that offers a discount or features specifically for people with disabilities)?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I did not know such a plan exists

14. What kind of device do you own that you receive or do not receive the alerts on? Click on all applicable answers.

- a. Apple iPhone
- b. Android (i.e. Blackberry, Google, LG, Samsung, Sony)
- c. Windows device
- d. Tablet (i.e. Apple iPad, or Android: Galaxy, Lenovo, or Amazon)
- e. I do not receive any alerts
- f. Other (please specify): [Textbox]

15. What other platforms do you receive emergency alerts other than smartphones or tablets? (Select all that apply)

- a. TV
- b. Visual Display in transportation centres (airport, ferry or train stations)
- c. Visual Signage on highways
- d. Public spaces in building spaces (ie. lobby)
- e. Instant Messenger and Chat
- f. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter/X)
- g. Email or text from government sources
- h. Emergency Alert app

PART IV: NATIONAL PUBLIC ALERTING SYSTEM (EMERGENCY ALERTS)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE (3 questions)

16. Have you ever received an emergency alert on your device(s)?

- a. Yes ***skip to 17***
- b. No

17. If you do not receive any alerts, why not?

Please type in your answer: _____ ***skip to 18***

18. What kind/type of emergency alerts have you received? Click on all applicable answers.

- a. Test Alert (Alert Ready system test)
- b. AMBER Alert (child abduction emergency)
- c. Weather Alert (tornado, blizzard, extreme heat/cold, severe thunderstorm etc.)
- d. Natural Disaster Alert (wildfire, flood, earthquake, etc.)
- e. Civil Emergency Alert (dangerous person, shooting, bombing, etc.)
- f. Environmental & Technological Hazards (radiological, chemical, infrastructure failure, etc)
- g. Emergency Alert (9-1-1 service outage, public health, etc.)

19. Do you want to be able to review past alerts?

- a. Yes
- b. No

TEST EMERGENCY ALERTS (3 questions)

20. Have you ever received a test emergency alert?

- a. Yes
- b. No ***skip to 21***

21. Is it important that you give feedback on a test emergency alert?

- a. Yes
- b. No ***skip to 21***

22. Where would you like to submit your feedback about the alert?

- a. Click a button on the alert notification
- b. Email
- c. Designated text number
- d. [Alert Ready](#) website
- e. Provincial or Territorial Emergency Management Office
- f. Local Broadcaster or Wireless Carrier
- g. I don't know/Not sure

23. Why is it important for you to be able to give feedback on a test emergency alert?

- a. To ensure alerts are delivered in accessible formats (e.g., visual, text, tactile, braille)
- b. To verify that alerts are effective for DDBHH individuals
- c. To test the technical effectiveness of current alert delivery methods
- d. To identify how alert language, visuals, or delivery might cause confusion
- e. To educate about the specific needs of the DDBHH community
- f. To support the development of more inclusive public safety systems
- g. To raise awareness about accessibility issues in emergency communication

EMERGENCY ALERTS ACCESSIBILITY (6 questions)

24. Do you find current alert systems accessible for you as a Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard-of-Hearing person?

- a. Yes
- b. Somewhat
- c. No

- d. I'm not sure

25. What are the main barriers you face when receiving emergency alerts?

- a. No visual notification (e.g. no flashing light or pop-up)
- b. No vibration haptic alert
- c. Audio-only alerts without text
- d. Alert not available in ASL or LSQ
- e. Poor timing or delays in alert delivery
- f. Difficult language (too complex or unclear)
- g. Alert not accessible on device
- h. Lack of instructions in the alert
- i. Internet or cellular service too weak to receive alerts
- j. Alerts don't match location
- k. Information on screen disappeared too quickly/could not review information
- l. Not enough details
- m. No photos of missing person
- n. Other (please specify): [Textbox]

26. Which format is the most accessible for you during an emergency? (Select all that apply)

- a. Sign language video (ASL or LSQ)
- b. Text captions
- c. Visual flashing alerts
- d. Haptic alerts
- e. Vibration alerts
- f. Visual icon or emoji for a specific emergency event
- g. Background and font colours
- h. Audio alerts
- i. Other: _____

27. Are you satisfied with the information included in the emergency alerts?

- a. Yes
- b. No **skip to question 23**

28. What information would you like included in emergency alerts? (Select all that apply)

- a. Plain language description of the emergency
- b. What to do next (instructions), ie. food rationing in supply chain crisis
- c. Links to where to go for shelter and safety (ie. cooling/warming centre)
- d. Specific phone number, text, or email to contact for help

- e. Visual alert with symbols or icons
- f. ASL or LSQ video explanation
- g. Location-specific details (e.g. nearby danger zones)
- h. How long the emergency is expected to last (be specific or say “unknown”)
- i. Where to go for updates (website, social media, etc.)
- j. Accessibility support information (e.g. VRS/VRI, DeafBlind assistance)
- k. Other (please specify): [Textbox]

PART V: LANGUAGES IN EMERGENCY ALERTS (3 questions)

29. Which languages do you prefer to receive the emergency alerts in? Click on all applicable languages.

- a. ASL (American Sign Language)
- b. LSQ (Langue des signes québécoise)
- c. English
- d. French

30. Do you support a federal requirement for sign language inclusion in all emergency alerts?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

31. Do you believe emergency alerts should be available in sign language across all platforms (TV, phone, social media)?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

PART VI: REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES (4 questions)

32. Have you been in a location where there was a disaster, shooting, extreme weather, or any other emergency event(s)?

- a. Yes
- b. No (skip logic)

33. What kind of emergency event was it?

- a. AMBER Alert (child abduction emergency)
- b. Weather Alert (tornado, blizzard, extreme heat/cold, severe thunderstorm etc.)
- c. Natural Disaster Alert (wildfire, flood, earthquake, etc.)
- d. Civil Emergency Alert (dangerous person, shooting, bombing, etc.)

- e. Environmental & Technological Hazards (radiological, chemical, infrastructure failure, etc)
- f. Emergency Alert (9-1-1 service outage, public health, etc.)
- g. Other (please specify): [Textbox]

34. Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview or focus group to share your experiences and barriers you faced in that emergency event(s)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

35. Please share your preferred contact method (optional):

[Textbox for Email or Phone]

PART VII: YOUR COMMENTS

36. Anything else that you would like to share with us and/or with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) related to accessibility of public alerting?

[type in text or video in ASL, LSQ, any ISLs in youtube and insert link here]

[Please write on the lines below or on the back of the last page of this survey]

Note: this contact information is used only for the draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.

Part VIII: TO ENROLL IN THE DRAW - OPTIONAL

37. I want to enter my name into the prize draw for this survey.

- a. Yes ***SKIP LOGIC to #58**
- b. No ***SKIP LOGIC to end thank you message**

38. If you would like to enter your name in the draw for the prizes - Choose which prize you want:

- iPhone
- Android

Name:

City of Residence:

Province:

Email or phone number (your preferable contact):

By entering this draw, I acknowledge and agree that winners' names and their cities will be made public. No other identifying information will be made public.

Note: this contact information is used only for the draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.

APPENDIX B
Interview Questions

Interview Questions – Focused on DDBHH Personal Experience with Emergency Alerts (CRTC 2025-180)

Developed by DWCC for in-depth insights

PART 1: Participant Profile (Brief Demographics)

Purpose: To provide context to their accessibility experience.

LINK - ENGLISH: <https://forms.gle/2VA9M3epeaPi6osPA>

PART 2: Devices and Access to Alerts

Purpose: To understand what devices they use and how they receive alerts.

1. Which device(s) do you usually carry or use daily?

- iPhone
- Android
- Tablet
- None
- Other: _____

2. Where have you seen or received emergency alerts before?

(Check all that apply or discuss)

- Smartphone or tablet
- TV
- Visual Display in transportation centres (airport, ferry or train stations)
- Public signage (e.g. highway, transit centre)
- Instant Messenger and Chat
- Social media
- Email or text from government
- Emergency Alert app
- I have never received an emergency alert

PART 3: Real-Life Experience with Disasters

Purpose: To gather specific stories from emergency situations.

Thank you for your time to meet with us to share your personal real life experience with an emergency situation that involves accessibility of alerting of such situations. We will spend less 1 hour to discuss

1. What kind of emergency situation were you in?

(Check all that apply or ask for narrative)

- AMBER Alert (child abduction)
- Natural disaster (e.g. wildfire, flood, earthquake)

- Severe weather (e.g. tornado, extreme heat/cold)
- Civil emergency (e.g. active shooter, bombing)
- Lockdown (due to shooting or unsafe situation, rape)
- Parliamentary lockdown (within government buildings)
- Civil disobedience (city lockdown for safety reasons)
- Highway of Tears abduction (MMIWG+)
- Border / Customs situations
- 9-1-1 service outage
- Other (please describe): _____

2. Which specific emergency situation, where was it? *(Prompt them to give location of situation) gather emergency specifics, ie. Fort McMurray fires, Fraser Valley Flooding, Ottawa Tornado, etc.* _____

3. Did you receive an emergency alert during that event?

- Yes – I received it and it was accessible
- Yes – but it was not accessible to me
- No – I did not receive any alert

4. Please describe what happened during your emergency situation.

(Prompt them to describe how accessible or inaccessible it was, and what barriers they experienced)

- *Where were you when it started?*
- *Were you indoors or outdoors?*
Were you alone or with someone?
- *Did you know something dangerous was happening right away? Or did you find out later?*

5. How did you find out about the emergency?

- *Was it on your phone, TV, computer, or somewhere else?*
- *What did the alert say or look like?*
Did it grab your attention right away?
Was it in your preferred language or sign language?

6. Did you rely on community members, family, or others to get accurate info or stay safe?

- *Did someone interpret for you or explain things?*
- *Did you rely on social media or group chats?*
- *Did the community help you out?*

7. What actions did you take after the alert or when you learned about the emergency?

- *Did you try to call/text 911 or a support person?*
- *Did you go to a shelter or follow instructions?*
- *Were you able to follow emergency directions independently?*

8. **How did the situation make you feel, especially in terms of safety and inclusion?**
 - *Did you feel excluded, confused, anxious, or unsafe?*
 - *Did you feel supported by others or left alone to figure things out?*
9. **Looking back, what do you wish had happened differently during the emergency to better support your needs?**

PART 4: Accessibility of Alerts

Purpose: To document barriers and preferences.

10. **What do you think were the biggest barriers with emergency alerts in that specific emergency situation?**
(Examples: no sign language, audio only, too complex language, poor timing, vibration didn't work, etc.)
11. **How do you think emergency alerts can be improved for Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing people from your experience in that specific situation?**
(Examples: ASL/LSQ videos, visual icons, simpler wording, etc.)
12. **Would receiving emergency alerts and test alerts in sign languages (ASL, LSQ, or Indigenous Sign Languages) have been helpful to you? Why or why not?**

PART 5: Final Reflection

13. **Is there anything else you want to share with DWCC or the CRTC about your experience or concerns with emergency alerting in Canada?**

****END OF DOCUMENT****