House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(●) **an organization** **Organization name:** Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Military and public safety and security

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Canada's Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) Task Force program requires annual federal funding of $1.6 million for the next three years to sustain the current capability of the four Canadian Task Forces. This will meet the current funding shortfall following the cancellation of the federal Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) in 2013.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

3 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

The federal government should reallocate JEPP funds to meet the HUSAR program's perilous funding shortfall. $1.6 million in annual funding represents a small portion of the total canceled JEPP budget and is less than the $2.1 million previously allocated to HUSAR.

HUSAR reduces federal government costs as Incident Management Teams deploy into disaster areas to quickly assess, stabilize and ultimately re-establish essential local infrastructure and businesses. The HUSAR program mitigates the costs the federal government bears in lost tax revenue and federal emergency response funding.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

The sustainability of Canada's HUSAR teams is essential for the health and safety of all Canadians. These national response teams mitigate economic and personal damage caused by high risk disasters and are vital to recovery efforts. The deployment of their extensive capabilities facilitates business continuity and the restoration of community infrastructure as well as the protection of individual Canadians.

The strategic positioning of Canada's HUSAR teams allow for national deployment benefiting Canadians, businesses and governments across the country.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

HUSAR is an investment in the mitigation of economic and personal loss.

Disasters such as the one caused by the recent flooding in Alberta can be devastating to communities, individuals and local economies. Rapid response capabilities ensure resumption of local services and business activities in affected areas, which helps stabilize the community and local economy.

Topic: Please select from the pull-down menu

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

Please select from the drop down menu

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Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Topic: Please select from the pull-down menu

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

Please select from the drop down menu

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Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

The HUSAR program is much more than search and rescue. The 4 Canadian Task Forces can deploy singularly or in combination and bring a diverse set of Incident Management Team (IMT), Incident support Team (IST), Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and/or HUSAR skills that can be easily integrated into any community.

As just one example, the recent flooding in southern Alberta necessitated the deployment of both the Vancouver based Canadian Task Force 1 (CTF1) and Calgary based Canadian Task Force 2 (CTF2) teams to help the many affected communities alleviate the devastating circumstances and both coordinate and support response and recovery efforts.

The resumption of business following a disaster is essential to community restoration and economic recovery. The Calgary Floods severely impacted the business community as it affected a significant portion of the downtown core. The pumping and remediation efforts were significantly supported by the Canada Task Force 1 and 2 pumping crews, which allowed for a faster resumption of services and business in those areas. By all accounts, this greatly helped to stabilize the economic community in Calgary.

In High River, CTF2 provided an Incident Management Team, which took on the critical functions of Planning, Logistics, and Operations. CTF2 was in High River for 3 weeks with the deployment only concluding on July 31st.

Other examples of critical deployments of these teams include but are not limited to: 2011 fires in Slave Lake, AB; 2010 G8/G20 meetings in ON; 2011 flooding in MB; 2011 fires in Northern ON; 2007 tornado in Elie, MB; 2011 tornado in Goderich, ON; 2009 snow load collapse in MB; 2012 Johnson's Landing landslides in BC; 2010 Vancouver Olympics in BC; and the 2011 mall collapse in Elliott Lake, ON.

The devastation caused by these disasters can cost the federal government millions in disaster relief funding and lost tax revenue. The sustainability of the HUSAR program will save the federal government from additional expenditures and will help ensure business continuity through its nationally deployable emergency response and recovery capabilities.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided