



Canada Task Force 1
City of Vancouver Heavy Urban Search and Rescue
Team (USAR)



Information & Application for Membership

What is Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)?

USAR is defined as the location of trapped persons in collapsed structures using dogs and sophisticated search equipment; the use of heavy equipment such as cranes to remove debris; the work to breach, shore, remove and lift structural components; the treatment and removal of injured and uninjured people; and the securing of partially or completely collapsed structures.

The HUSAR initiative in Canada defines the spectrum of light, medium and heavy USAR capabilities. Public Safety Canada (PSC) has the mandate for developing a Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) capability on behalf of the Government of Canada. PSC addresses this mandate through the establishment of a HUSAR Secretariat responsible for the administration of the National HUSAR Program and Team (a 400 person special ops unit).

The goal of the HUSAR initiative is to develop Heavy USAR teams for deployment to any Canadian disaster causing structural collapse as part of a coordinated, multi-jurisdictional, all-hazard emergency response system. Achievement of the goal is expected to improve federal/provincial/territorial first responder capacity and contribute to development of operating procedures associated with a national emergency response.

The National HUSAR Team is comprised of five individual HUSAR Task Forces (TF's) located in Vancouver (TF1), Alberta (TF2), Manitoba (TF4), Toronto (TF3), Halifax (TF5) and Quebec (TF6). Each Task Force maintains different quantities of personnel and equipment. Furthermore, HUSAR Team members are most often local or provincial government employees (i.e. firefighter, police officer, paramedic and other specialties) who are employed in a HUSAR capacity on a part time or as required basis.

Team Structure

The structure of the team is scalar and pyramidal in shape. Authority is centralized at the top beginning with the Corporate Leadership Team for the City of Vancouver. The Team is managed by Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services with staff assigned to positions supporting the team. The budget and finances are also managed by VFRS. Associated departments and agencies also commit funds to supporting the team by supporting team members from their respective departments.



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What is HUSAR to the members who join CANTF-1 Vancouver?

CANTF-1 is comprised of people who are employees of the City of Vancouver & Vancouver Police Department, paramedics from the British Columbia Emergency Health Services, physicians and Engineers privately employed. From these two organizations, the major core skill requirements of the team are staffed as such:

1. Technical Search is primarily the responsibility of members from Vancouver Police Department.
2. Class 1 driving, structure evaluation, breaching, shoring and operation of heavy equipment is primarily the responsibility of members from Engineering Services.
3. Rescue and removal of entrapped or injured persons is primarily the responsibility of members from Vancouver Fire Rescue Services.
4. Medical Treatment and care of injured persons is primarily the responsibility of members from BCEHS.
5. Other skills common to the team such as Operations, Logistics, Planning and Communications are shared across all core skill components of the team.

Team Commitment

Members who are selected to the team must commit to the following;

- Successful completion of required training programs as made available at no cost to the member.
- Attendance to practices as scheduled by the Team.
- Attendance to 1 Team Exercise per year.
- Inoculation program as recommended for regional, national and international travel.
- Qualify for, and maintain a valid passport.
- Personal readiness for deployment operations involving 10-14 days away from family and workplace.
- A minimum of 5 years on the team.

2022 Recruitment

This year's recruitment has very tight timelines in order to have our new team members ready for the mandatory onboarding and certification course being held on Sept 19th to 23rd and Sept 26th to 30th. We encourage potential members and their managers to attend an information session on August 18th. Potential members also need to be available for an in person interview likely Sept 8, 9 or 12th (these dates are still to be confirmed).

Potential members applying with the technical support skillsets such as GIS, incident management, emergency communications, and information technology will be interviewed and on boarded to the team at a later date in 2022 as they are not required to attend certification training.



Personal Commitment

Members who are selected to the team must observe the following expectations and conduct:

- Conduct one's self in a manner at all times that will provide a safe environment for themselves and others.
- Conduct one's self in accordance with the Respectful Workplace Policy & Guidelines as outlined by the City of Vancouver.
- Observe and follow all acceptable methods as established by the HUSAR Team that allow for effective communications between members of the team.
- Conduct one's self in accordance with all Rules, Operating Guidelines, and Directives as set forth by the Team.
- Conduct their personal lives in a manner that will not bring reproach to the team.
- Maintain good physical and mental health, including a medical assessment or the completion of a medical release form to CANTF-1 if requested.
- Maintain in good order all assigned equipment or property of the team.
- Keep their home department supervisor informed of their team commitments and activities.

Information for Managers

By supporting the application of your department's team member, you are committing to the following:

- Without notice, for a deployment, your team member could be away from their regular position for up to 14 days in length. Often upon return from a deployment, an additional day of rest is required prior to returning to their regular position.
- Team members are expected to attend training once per month. They must obtain approval from their supervisor to attend and should only be withheld on the rare occasion due to operational needs.
- Wages for deployments and special training are usually covered by the USAR Team (who receives funds from the deploying agency). On the rare occasion, the department will have to fund this and notice will be provided.
- Wages for regular monthly training are covered by the team member's home department as an 'in-kind' cost. This includes the initial 2 weeks of training for new members.
- Team members are expected to communicate the team's time demands to their supervisor.
- Team members who enter into specialized positions will have additional time demands than a regular team member.
- Team Leads are always available to Managers to answer questions or concerns if/when they arise.



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CAN TF-1, VANCOUVER Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Application for Membership

I, _____ of _____ (address),
in the City of _____ BC, wish to apply for membership
in the City of Vancouver's Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Team. I am a regular, full
time employee.

My workplace department is: _____ and my
division/branch is _____.

My phone numbers are:

_____ (work), _____ (home),

_____ (work cell), _____ (personal cell).

I have discussed my application with my Branch/Department Manager and have
received their support for this application.

Manager Signature _____

Manager Name:

Title:

Phone number:



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Name (cont'): _____

- I am of sound physical and mental health and agree if requested, to complete a medical assessment or medical release form as requested by CANTF-1. (a medical assessment typically occurs as part of each deployment).
- As a HUSAR team member, I will, if medically able, accept all required inoculations as recommended for local, regional and overseas travel.
- As a HUSAR team member, I will maintain a valid passport.
- If selected to the team, I agree as permitted by my employer, to attend all required HUSAR practices, team exercises and meetings.
- If selected to the team, I agree to conduct my personal, workplace and HUSAR team activities in a manner that is safe and respectful according to the rules, policies and guidelines of my employer, the HUSAR team, and applicable Municipal, Provincial and Federal laws or regulations.
- If selected to the HUSAR team, I agree to use all acceptable methods as established by the HUSAR team for respectful and effective communications.
- If selected to the HUSAR team, I agree to maintain in good order all equipment or items assigned to me, and to return any such required items upon my departure from the HUSAR team.
- If selected to the HUSAR team, I agree to maintain my personal readiness for local, regional or international deployment that may be 10-14 days in duration.
- If selected to the team, I agree that my continued membership is contingent on successful completion of all required USAR training, courses, attendance to the required team practices and exercises, the maintenance of; a valid passport, good physical health, all assigned equipment and personal readiness for emergency deployment.
- I am committing to a minimum of 5 years on the team.

Signed _____, this _____ day, in the month of _____
in year 20_____.