



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-03281**

BY: **MR. DOHERTY (CARIBOO-PRINCE GEORGE)**

DATE: **FEBRUARY 28, 2019**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE RALPH GOODALE, P.C., M.P.**

Response by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Governor General's Medals of Honour

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

Public Safety Canada strives to keep Canadians safe, whether at home, abroad or during outdoor activities that take Canadians off the beaten path, which might lead them to be involved in search and rescue (SAR) incidents.

The Department works in collaboration with the Volunteer Search and Rescue Council, which is comprised of the Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada, the Civil Aviation Search and Rescue Association and the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, to foster interoperability and coordination within the SAR community and its 18,000 trained SAR volunteers.

The dedication of the SAR volunteers is undisputed and profound. One of the many ways Public Safety Canada acknowledges the contributions made by SAR volunteers and professionals in the form of a prestigious recognition medallion, the Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award (EMESA). The award is open to any member of the SAR community, who has made an outstanding contribution to the SAR community. Past achievements recognized under the SAR category of the EMESA have included: outstanding contributions to the development, delivery and advancement of SAR; the development and delivery of search and rescue education; contributions to the body of knowledge that informs search and rescue response and prevention activities; a multi-jurisdictional search and rescue exercise; and, recognition of years of service. Award recipients have included individuals and teams.

The inaugural year of the award in 2018 was marked by a national award ceremony streamed online, where Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for Emergency Management presented the medals to the recipients.

SAR volunteers are also already eligible to receive a number of Canadian honours, such as the “Decorations for Bravery” which recognize people who risked their lives to try to save or protect another and the “Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers” which recognizes the exceptional volunteer achievements of Canadians.

The Government will continue working with the SAR community to improve SAR and to highlight the importance of volunteers in emergency management and in the SAR community.