

BC Emergency Health Services Ground Fleet

The BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) ground fleet is designed to support paramedics in providing patient care on the scene of an emergency and during transport to hospital in a multitude of terrains and conditions throughout the province.

In 2017 the fleet travelled almost 23 million kilometers, or around the world approximately 573 times.

BCEHS is the largest emergency medical services provider in Canada, using close to 700 vehicles to deliver patient care:

- The majority of ambulances (463) are Basic Life Support staffed by primary care paramedics and emergency medical responders;
 - 28 ambulances are Advanced Life Support staffed by advanced care paramedics;
 - Seven ambulances are dedicated to the Critical Care Transport Program staffed by critical care paramedics;
 - Five ambulances are outfitted with specialized neo-natal, pediatric and obstetric equipment for the paramedic Infant Transport Team;
 - 34 modified ambulances used as medical support units, decontamination units and integrated communications units for large-scale responses;
 - 68 support vehicles for the community paramedicine program; and
 - 73 support vehicles for duty supervisors, primary response units, telecommunications, BCEHS Learning and special operations/events.
- The BCEHS fleet includes specialized vehicles for emergency patient care including:
 - Two bariatric ambulances equipped with hydraulic stretchers capable of lifting approximately 1,000 lbs (453.6 kg);
 - Nine 4x4 ambulances that are used in rural areas with rugged terrain and severe weather conditions;
 - Three four-wheel gator utility vehicles that are used at crowded events to help ensure quick transportation of patients in an emergency;
 - One Patient Transfer Unit, a partnership with the Northern Health Authority that transports patients to diagnostic appointments outside their communities.
 - And a fleet of bicycles utilized by 140 bike squad paramedics in several communities around BC, including a permanent bike squad at Vancouver International Airport.

FLEET DETAILS

- BCEHS ambulances are currently manufactured by Crestline Coach Ltd. Based in Saskatoon. Most ambulances are based on Chevrolet platforms.
- The newest model of Crestline ambulances was designed by a committee with input from BCEHS paramedics.

- About half of the BCEHS ambulance fleet is equipped with anti-idling technology. This technology reduces idling by up to 40 per cent by monitoring the battery condition and interior temperature and shutting down or restarting the engine as needed.

FLEET RENEWAL

- Annually, about 60-70 new ambulances are brought into service and a similar number are refurbished.
- After being in service for four or five years, BCEHS' refurbished ambulances are reallocated to stations with lower call volume in order to increase their useful lifespan.
- Generally, BCEHS ambulances are decommissioned after reaching a mileage of 350,000 kilometres, usually at about seven to eight years of service. Some decommissioned ambulances are repurposed as support vehicles or training vehicles.

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