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Annual Message from Troy Clifford, President of Ambulance Paramedics & Dispatchers of BC:

Hi, I'm Troy Clifford, president of Ambulance Paramedics & Dispatchers of BC. As the most memorable year in our collective lifetimes comes to a close, I want to "thank you" on behalf of our over 4,500 ambulance paramedics and emergency medical dispatchers.

It would be an understatement to say it has been a tough year for everybody, including for those of us who work on the frontline. We are trained for the worst scenarios, which we rise to every day. When we started hearing about COVID-19 almost a year ago, no one expected it would change the lives of every person on earth.

Your ambulance paramedics and emergency medical dispatchers worked hard on the frontlines to meet the challenges brought on by the global pandemic, including the increase in 9-1-1 calls. PPE requirements and protocols in our profession were changing daily and we remained agile so that we could continue to provide safe, high-quality, timely emergency medical treatment and transport to hospital.

Your nightly cheers of support inspired us, and for that, we are grateful. People sent our ambulance stations gifts and food, and even came by to decorate stations with paper hearts. Your support went a long way for our members, all of whom were managing new stresses. So, thank you.

On top of the global pandemic, we are coming onto 5 years of managing BC's other public health emergency – The Overdose Crisis. Recent statistics from the BC Coroners Service show 5 people are dying every day due to overdoses. These are people from all walks of life, all social classes, and all regions of British Columbia. Our condolences go out to their families.

With the holidays upon us, we are concerned that COVID-19 may compound an already lonely time of year for some. Please take the time to check on your loved ones frequently to make sure they are okay. If you are going to do drugs, please make sure someone else is present. We want everyone to have a safe holiday season.

Ambulance paramedics and dispatchers know we are tasked with extraordinary responsibilities every day and that our jobs carry risk. This year has brought on unprecedented physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion among our members. But we want you to know that we will continue to be there for you through these troubling times and beyond. All we ask for in return is that you continue to Hold the Line against COVID-19. Please stay current with the latest PHO guidelines and continue to socially distance, wear masks, and keep your interactions limited to your household.

With the vaccine rollout only just beginning, we still need everyone's cooperation and support on the frontlines in every community of BC.

Thank you again for your continued support. We wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year. Take care of yourselves and your families.

Please click to view our video message: <https://youtu.be/r9ljdOixhYM>