



Paramedic Chiefs
of Canada

Chefs Paramédics
du Canada

Paramedic Chiefs of Canada: Key Message Bank

Key Messages on Protecting Public Safety and Emergency Medical Services Amid U.S./Canada Tariff Disputes

Prioritizing Public Safety

- Counter-tariffs on ambulances and life-saving medical equipment will directly impact the ability of paramedics to provide timely and effective emergency care to Canadians.
 - Ambulances are not just vehicles - they are essential, life-saving assets in emergency paramedic services.
- Delays in ambulance fleet renewal or increased costs could lead to longer emergency response times and compromised patient care.

Consequences of Counter-Tariffs on Ambulances

- Tariffs on ambulances would increase costs for paramedic services, creating financial strain on already stretched healthcare budgets.
- Ambulance service providers may be forced to delay purchases or reduce their fleets, which would reduce their ability to respond to emergencies.
- This is not just an economic trade dispute—this directly impacts public health and safety across Canada.

Urgent Need for an Exemption for Ambulances and Emergency Medical Equipment

- The federal government must act to ensure that ambulance vehicles and emergency medical equipment and their key components are exempt from counter-tariffs.
- More than 750 new ambulances will be needed across Canada in the next year alone. Without an exemption, healthcare systems will face increased costs and potential shortages.
 - An exemption would align with Canada's commitment to ensuring equitable access to emergency healthcare for all citizens.

Protecting Canadian Jobs and the Paramedic Supply Chain

- The Canadian ambulance manufacturing industry is a major employer and exporter. Tariffs could weaken its competitiveness, threatening jobs and long-term industry stability.
- Increased costs and reduced access to ambulance vehicles could impact not only Canada but also international markets that rely on Canadian-built emergency vehicles.

- By exempting ambulances from counter-tariffs, Canada can support its emergency response sector while maintaining a strong manufacturing industry.

A Call for Collaborative Government Action

- We urge the federal government to work closely with provincial and municipal governments, as well as industry stakeholders, to mitigate the negative effects of tariffs on paramedic services.
- The government should prioritize a trade resolution that does not put the lives of Canadians at risk by restricting access to critical emergency medical equipment.
- Immediate action is needed to ensure a stable, well-equipped paramedic and emergency medicine infrastructure for all Canadians.

Impacts on Healthcare System Overall

- **Increased Strain on Emergency Rooms:** There will be major delays in ambulance response times due to fleet shortages could lead to more critical patients arriving at hospitals in worse conditions, increasing ER overcrowding and healthcare costs.
- **Reduced Access to Timely Medical Care:** Rural and remote communities, which already face challenges in paramedic coverage, would be disproportionately affected if ambulance services cannot afford new vehicles.
- **Financial Pressure on Healthcare Budgets:** Provincial and municipal health services will be forced to absorb higher costs, diverting critical funding away from frontline healthcare services, including hospital operations, paramedic training, and community health programs.
- **Longer Wait Times for Non-Emergency Medical Transfers:** Many ambulances are also used for interfacility patient transfers. Increased costs could lead to delays in moving patients between hospitals and specialized treatment centres, impacting the efficiency of the entire healthcare system.