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## BACKGROUND

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Ministry of Health  
BC Ambulance Service

### **BC AMBULANCE SERVICE AIR AMBULANCE PROGRAM**

- The BCAS Air Ambulance Program is one of the world's largest, covering great distances across a rugged territory through variable weather conditions and with limited access to many airports.
- In 2001/02, the BCAS Air Ambulance Program transported 7,031 patients by air. In 2006/07, BCAS air ambulance transported approximately 8,300 patients by air.
- All requests for air ambulance services are processed through the Provincial Air Ambulance Coordination Center (PAACC) located in Victoria, B.C. Fifteen emergency medical dispatchers work at the PAACC.
- In 2005/06, fixed-wing airplanes were deployed to 71 per cent of the air ambulance calls processed by PAACC. Helicopters were deployed the remaining 29 per cent.
- The BCAS Air Ambulance Program employs 56 Critical Care Paramedics located at air ambulance bases in Kelowna, Prince George and Vancouver. A helicopter base in Prince Rupert is staffed by local Primary Care Paramedics.
- BCAS air ambulance pilots are highly experienced flying in both day and night and in varying weather conditions and mountainous terrain. BCAS pilot qualification requirements are higher than those mandated by Transport Canada or the airline industry.

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Media contact: Chris Harbord  
Client Relations  
BC Ambulance Service  
250 953-3651

Sarah Plank  
Media Relations Manager  
Ministry of Health  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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