

Preliminary Summary for CAFC Members

For Reference:

CAFC's Prebudget submission recommendations: [Asks](#)

Copy of the Federal Budget [Budget 2021](#)

Potentially Relevant Measures (initial review):

- \$1.9 billion over five years, on a cash basis, starting in 2021–22, to Public Safety Canada to support provincial and territorial disaster response and recovery efforts.
- \$200 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, to Infrastructure Canada to establish a Natural Infrastructure Fund to support natural and hybrid infrastructure projects. This would help to improve well-being, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and prevent costly natural events.
- \$100.6 million over five years, starting in 2021-22, with \$4.7 million in remaining amortization, to the Parks Canada Agency to enhance wildfire preparedness in Canada's National Parks.
- \$28.7 million over five years, starting in 2021-22, with \$0.6 million in remaining amortization, to Natural Resources Canada to support increased mapping of areas in Northern Canada at risk of wildfires and enhance the capacity of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre, which is jointly funded in partnership with provinces and territories.
- \$1 billion over six years for the Universal Broadband Fund, to support access to high-speed internet by Canadians in rural and remote communities. This puts us on track to achieve our 98-per-cent high-speed coverage initiative by 2026.
- \$49.5 million over 3 years to support community-based organizations in the provision of migrant worker-centric programs and services, such as on-arrival orientation services and assistance in emergency and at-risk situations, through the new Migrant Worker Support Program.
- \$54.9 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, to Employment and Social Development Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, to increase inspections of employers and ensure temporary foreign workers have appropriate working conditions and wages.
- \$100 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, to the Public Health Agency of Canada to support projects for innovative mental health interventions for populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including health care workers, front-line workers, youth, seniors, Indigenous people, and racialized and Black Canadians.
- \$50 million over two years, starting in 2021-22, to Health Canada to support a trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) stream of mental health programming for populations at high risk of experiencing COVID-19 trauma and those exposed to various trauma brought about by COVID-19.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada is continuing to work with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and partners to implement and sustain an expanded pan-Canadian

suicide prevention service. Once fully implemented, people across Canada will have bilingual access to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, crisis support using the technology of their choice: voice, text, or online chat.

- The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is launching a regulatory proceeding to consult on a proposed three-digit hotline so Canadians have a memorable number they can call when they need help. The government is supportive ...including ensuring funds are available to support the creation of this hotline.
- Budget 2021 proposes to extend the wage subsidy until September 25, 2021. It also proposes to gradually decrease the subsidy rate, beginning July 4, 2021, in order to ensure an orderly phase-out of the program as vaccinations are completed and the economy reopens.

CAFC Commentary

The Board discussed the budget soon after its release. The preliminary view is that there is 'room to negotiate', much as we would have preferred more direct and explicit commitments.

Most of our prebudget requests are addressed 'in some way' albeit indirectly, from funding for response to disasters to universal broadband to temporary foreign workers, support to municipalities, to mental health. However, the specifics are yet to be determined.

A key component of how this budget translates will be in the detailing of what is included the various funds, such as the doubling of the Gas Tax Fund, now renamed the Community Infrastructure Fund. These are typically discussed post budget.

In addition, since many of the funds, such as the Disaster Response and Recovery Fund to Public Safety Canada will flow through the provinces, it will be essential for the National Advisory Council member organizations to consider their strategies in their provinces, territories or relevant jurisdictions. This will also be discussed at the National Advisory Council meeting.

Finally, noticeably absent from Federal Budget 2021 is any mention of our requests as they pertain to volunteer firefighters and a national fire advisor secretariat. We will continue to deepen our argumentation and efforts in these areas.

Moving forward, the CAFC will be looking to strengthen its government relations work potentially through additional staffing to focus on this file. In the meantime we will follow developments and take a positive and cooperative approach.

If members have additional information, comments or suggestions these are always welcomed. You may forward them to our Executive Director, Dr. Tina Saryeddine at tsaryeddine@cafc.ca