



**Edmonton United Services Institute**



**Invitation to the Annual EUSI Symposium and Mess Dinner**

**Saturday, 25 March 2023**

Major Alexander H. Tsang, CD (Ret'd), President,  
and the Board of Governors of the Edmonton United Services Institute (EUSI)  
request the pleasure of your company at EUSI's Annual Symposium  
followed by its Mess/Semi-formal Dinner.

Both events are held at the Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre (11843 Kingsway, Edmonton, AB).

**Symposium**

The Symposium examines natural disaster management and mitigation and offers presentations and Q&A sessions from experts in science, crisis communications, provincial and federal government policy, insurance industry's use of artificial intelligence and the Canadian Humanitarian Workforce program. The detailed program follows below.

*Cost is free. Continental breakfast, coffee and buffet lunch are provided.*

*Breakfast at 0820  
Symposium 0900 – 1620*

**Mess/Semi-formal Dinner**

The Mess/Semi-formal Dinner features keynote speaker Dr. Steven Ellis, Conservative MP, Cumberland-Colchester, Nova Scotia, and former Director of Health Services, Nova Scotia. Dinner music is provided by the band of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Civilian guests will be introduced to interesting aspects of etiquette as found at a military-styled Mess Dinner.

*Mess kit for active military personnel; veterans and civilians are asked to wear business attire or a dinner jacket with black tie.*

*Cost is \$100.00 per person.*

*Reception at 1830  
Dinner at 1900*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

People attending Symposium: \_\_\_\_\_ x Free

Speakers or Presenters attending Mess/Semi-formal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ x Free

Number of people attending Mess/Semi-formal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$100.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Regimental March Preferences: \_\_\_\_\_

 **RSVP by Sunday, 19 March 2023** 

Fill in the PDF and email to Alex Tsang at [alexanderhtsang@hotmail.com](mailto:alexanderhtsang@hotmail.com), or phone Alex at 1-780-456-3392. Mail dinner cheques payable to EUSI (\$100.00 per person, excluding symposium speakers and presenters), to EUSI, c/o 11035 – 163 Ave, NW, Edmonton, AB T5X 2A2.

Online registration, including Symposium attendance via Zoom, and dinner payments are available on behalf of EUSI through the RAUSI website at [www.rausi.ca/special-events](http://www.rausi.ca/special-events).



Edmonton United Services Institute



## Natural Disaster Management and Mitigation

Non-partisan Dialogue in Fact, Science, Policy, and Practice

25 March 2023, [Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre](#)

With generous support from the

[Royal Alberta United Services Institute \(RAUSI\)](#), Calgary

### Select references

1. [Communiqué posting 16 December 2023, Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial \(FPT\) Ministers Responsible for Emergency Management](#)
2. [M. Binding, What Threats Does Climate Change Pose to Canada and How Are We Situated to Face Those Threats? \(Vimy Paper CDAI March 2022\)](#)

### Ser Start Event / Topic / Presenter

1. 0820 Continental Breakfast, Meet and Greet

2. 0850 Opening Remarks

[Major Alex Tsang, CD \(Ret'd\), MHSA, BSW](#) is President, Edmonton United Services Institute that has sponsored annual symposium since 2013. Alex has extensive civilian and military experience in international peace and security operations, and has held several command appointments in the Canadian Armed Forces, including 15 Edmonton Service Battalion. He remains very active in community development, including the Last Post Fund and the Edmonton Salutes Committee.





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3. 0855 **Welcome from the Moderator**

[Lieutenant Colonel Brian Venables](#) currently serves The Salvation Army in the Alberta and Northern Territories division as the Public Relations and Public Affairs Secretary. He has served in this role previously from 1998 through to 2007 before being transferred to Vancouver in the same role for the British Columbia Division. From there, despite linguistic challenges he was posted to the Quebec division as Divisional Commander for four years and then returned to BC as the new Divisional Commander. April 2018 saw a new appointment to International Headquarters of The Salvation Army in London UK as Communications Secretary for the International Salvation Army. Different roles, diverse issues, and different locations, but the same need – communicating the truth.



Brian's remarks concern the purpose of the symposium, sequencing, and roster of speakers.

**Technical Support Team**

Nate Blackmore, CD, MA is a member of the Royal Alberta United Services Institute and most recently General Manager of the [Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry's Museum & Archives at The Military Museums, Calgary](#).



4. 0900 **Factual Evidence: Contexts of Recent Natural Disasters**

[Norm Leach](#) is a historian, award winning freelance writer, professional speaker, adventurer, and educator. He is the bestselling author of eight books on military history and an advisor to film producers on Canadian military history.

Norm overviews the impact of recent natural disasters, including the BC floods (November 2021), Lytton BC fire (June 2021), BC wildfire (August 2018, July 2017), Quebec floods (May 2017), Fort MacMurray fire (June 2016), Calgary floods (June 2013), and/or Slave Lake fire (May 2011).



5. 0920 **Questions and Answers**



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6. 0930 **Physical Sciences: Causal Factors of Natural Disasters**

[Sarah Kehler, MSc](#), is a PhD candidate and Senior Research Associate in the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Lab, University of Alberta. Sarah has an MSc in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and BA with a double major in Human Geography and Design. Her supervisor is [Jeff Birchall, PhD, RPP, MCIP](#), Associate Professor in Local-scale Climate Change Adaptation / Resilience and Associate Director of the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences, University of Alberta.



Their research is interdisciplinary in scope, and explores the broad theme of environmental resilience, with specific attention to local scale governance and decision dynamics around motivational factors and extent of planning for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Sarah assesses climate change impacts at the local scale, how this influences local planning / policy decision-making and how this translates into on-the-ground action for disaster risk reduction.

7. 0950 **Questions and Answers**

8. 1000 **Coffee and Muffins**

9. 1015 **Social Sciences: Impacts of Natural Disasters**

[Caroline McDonald-Harker, PhD, MA](#), is a Sociologist and Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology, as well as the Director of the Centre for Community Disaster Research (CCDR) at Mount Royal University.



Her areas of expertise and research include: the sociology of disasters; families; parenthood/parenting; children & youth; trauma and resilience; mental health; resilience; and quantitative and qualitative research methods. Over the last five years, Dr. McDonald-Harker has led and conducted three large-scale disaster research studies in collaboration with co-researchers from 4 universities and 32 community partners which examine the social-ecological effects of disasters.

Caroline identifies the social, psychological, and economic impacts of disasters on individuals, families, and communities based on research she conducted on the 2013 Southern Alberta flood, and the 2016 Fort McMurray wildfire. She discusses the implications for disaster response, recovery, and preparedness.



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10. 1035 Questions and Answers

11. 1045 **Social Sciences: Crisis Communications During Natural Disasters**

[Benjamin Morgan, MA](#) is a principal and the managing director at the Centre for Crisis & Risk Communications. He is also associate faculty at Royal Roads University where he teaches crisis & risk communications. He has held communication leadership roles during some of Canada's recent disasters: 2013 Calgary Flood; 2016 Fort McMurray wildfire; 2020 Lilloett, BC wildfire; and the 2021 BC atmospheric river flooding event. He has been called as a communications expert witness by the Government of Ontario during the public inquiry hearing of the Elliott Lake mall collapse and was a key contributor to a social media in emergency management research project conducted by the Department of National Defence.



In this session, he will highlight some of the core science-based principles of communicating in high stress, high concern situations.

12. 1105 Questions and Answers

13. 1115-1300 **Buffet Lunch Concurrent with Two Presentations**

14. 1135 **Policy – Federal: Current Canadian Armed Forces' Aid to the Civil Power**

[Captain \(ret\) Ron Kuban, CD, PhD](#), graduated from the Royal Military College (Kingston) to serve with the PPCLI regiment. His nearly 35 years in the field of emergency/disaster management, include 25 years as a consultant in China, Singapore, the Caribbean, and across Canada. Ron taught emergency and crisis management at the University of Alberta, NAIT, Royal Roads University and the Justice Institute of BC. He served as the President of the Canadian Risk and Hazards Network, was on the Advisory Committee for the Canadian National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, and was a member of the Canadian Delegation to Geneva for the 2011 UN Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.



Ron overviews the current basic philosophy, protocols, benefits, and limitations of CAF Aid to the Civil Power in natural disasters, with references to actual examples of practice.



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15. 1155 Break

16. 1215 **Policy – Federal: Future Canadian Armed Forces' Aid to the Civil Power**

[James Bezan, MP](#), is currently Shadow Minister for National Defense and represents the federal riding of Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Manitoba. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence from 2013-2015, he was active on files dealing with military procurement, mental health issues in the Canadian Armed Forces, the war against ISIS, and Russia's aggression in Ukraine. He was the Conservative Shadow Minister for National Defence and the Vice-Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence from 2015-2021.



Mr. Bezan outlines critical re-thinking roles and jurisdiction for the military in natural disaster management and mitigation.

17. 1235 **Questions and Answers**

18. 1245 Break

19. 1300 **Inter-agency Cooperation**

[Scott Roberts](#), MA, CEC, ABCP, Associate Director – Emergency Management/ Leadership Development, Sandhurst Consulting.

Over the course of his 40-year career, Scott has and continues to facilitate EM and Leadership instruction across Canada and the United States. Scott has facilitated instruction for many hundred government and private sector employees and executive leaders. Scott also provides executive and emotional intelligence coaching as a part of his emergency management and leadership development consultancy. Scott is a long-time member of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Canada Council where he is the current Vice-President.



20. 1320 **Questions and Answers**



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21. 1330 Policy - Municipal

[Erin Sieger, BA](#), Manager, Deputy Director Emergency Management, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

Erin reviews issues, successes, and shortcomings in managing and mitigating the Fort McMurray Ice Jam Flood (2020).



22. 1350 Questions and Answers

23. 1400 Coffee and Muffins

24. 1410 Practice - Private Sector: Assessing Losses in Natural Disasters

[Rob de Pruis, FCIP, CRM, National Director, Consumer and Industry Relations, Insurance Bureau of Canada.](#)

Rob sets out a strategic analysis and assessment of the full spectrum of insurance claims arising in catastrophic natural disasters at the national level.



25. 1430 Questions and Answers



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26. 1440 **Practice - Private Sector: Artificial Intelligence to Model Risks of Natural Disasters**  
[Bojan Ilić, ACIP, CRM](#), Manager, Non-Standard Risk Underwriting, INTACT Insurance.

Bojan explains the leading-edge issues of how the insurance industry utilises artificial intelligence for financial risk modeling and risk mitigation in future natural disasters.



27. 1500 **Questions and Answers**

28. 1510 **Coffee and Muffins**

29. 1520 **Practice - Humanitarian Space: Engage the Public in Disaster Management Planning**

[Captain Ron Kuban, CD \(Ret'd\), PhD](#) graduated from the Royal Military College (Kingston) to serve with the PPCLI regiment and has nearly 35 years in the field of emergency/disaster management, including 25 years as a consultant in China, Singapore the Caribbean, and across Canada. He taught emergency and crisis management in a variety of academic institutions and published on these topics.

Ron explores the under-researched question, "Why, despite tremendous encouragement, is the public not engaged in emergency planning or preparedness?"



30. 1540 **Questions and Answers**



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**31. 1550 Practice - Humanitarian Space: The Canadian Humanitarian Workforce Program and the Salvation Army**

Major Ben Lippers, CD, BA, currently serves as the Divisional Director for Emergency Disaster Services for the Alberta and Northern Territories division of The Salvation Army. His role requires he not only manage response operations but also attend and respond on the front line, network and build relationships with government and other caring agencies, and interact with supporters, volunteers and EDS teams across the country. He has been deployed across divisional and territorial boundaries in times of disasters. He has served in emergency management with The Salvation Army since 1999 and deploys his expertise in chaplaincy and logistical management.



Ben explains the Salvation Army's role in the Canadian Humanitarian Workforce Program and highlights the Salvation Army's capacity in emergency and disaster services.

**32. 1615 Closing Remarks**

[Major Alex Tsang, CD \(Ret'd\), MHSA, BSW](#) is President, Edmonton United Services Institute that has sponsored annual symposium since 2013. Alex has extensive civilian and military experience in international peace and security operations, and held several command appointments in the Canadian Armed Forces including 15 Edmonton Service Battalion. He remains very active in community development, including, the Last Post Fund and the Edmonton Salutes Committee.



**33. 1620 Symposium Adjourned**



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34. 1800 Semi-formal Dinner, Edmonton Inn and Convention Centre

Guest speaker is [Dr Stephen Ellis, MP](#). He represents the federal riding of Cumberland-Colchester, Nova Scotia. Formerly, he entered the Canadian Armed Forces' Medical Officer Training program and retired from the RCAF at the rank of Captain, and served as Honorary Colonel of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders.



[The Royal Alberta United Services Institute](#) (Calgary) is generously supporting this symposium.



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