

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE
SEARCH & RESCUE**
Saving Lives on the Water



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tracy Lakeman, Board Chair	Message from the Board Chair and CEO	Page 3
John McCoach, Vice Chair	Strategic Plan	Page 5
Bruce Hayne, Secretary	Where We Are	Page 6
Tim Ayres	Volunteer Impact	Page 7
Linda Blake	Central Region	Page 8
Michael Ervin	Northern Region	Page 9
Dr. Nelson Jatel, DSoSc, PAg	Southern Region	Page 10
Catherine Lau	Recognizing Our Volunteers	Page 11
Scott Palmer, FCPA, FCA	Training Modernization	Page 12
Cliff Stewart	Kids Don't Float Program	Page 13
Hans Verbeek	Financial Information	Page 15

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND CEO

In the last year, RCMSAR's 952 dedicated and professional marine search and rescue (SAR) volunteers rescued 445 people in British Columbia, participating in 437 rescue missions many of which were executed in demanding and difficult weather conditions in isolated areas of the BC coastline. A number of these missions included continued response to marine emergencies while also serving an expanded role in providing support to ground SAR organizations.

Working together with other first responders, RCMSAR volunteers serve a valuable role in extracting casualties from isolated areas, supporting emergency organizations during natural disasters like this summer's wildfires and working with our partners to report and observe potential marine related environmental issues.

RCMSAR recognizes the importance of planning ahead to meet the challenges of the new realities in which we operate such as the effects of climate change, the effect inflation has on our financial stability and our ability to support our volunteers plus the lingering effects of COVID-19 and the threat of future pandemics.

In the coming years we will continue to be focused on improving our financial stability by identifying new sources of revenue and reviewing our processes to ensure every dollar is effectively utilized in support of our mission. Our training modernization project is well underway and has already made inroads in improving the content and delivery of training to our volunteers. We are also committed to raising the profile of this amazing organization in the communities we serve and its contribution to marine safety.

The Canadian Coast Guard and the Province of British Columbia continue to provide significant support to RCMSAR. We have been successful in obtaining grants from key partners such as the TK Foundation as well as the Western Group in support of our Kids Don't Float program. It is also important to recognize the amazing support our individual stations receive from their communities through grants from various municipal and regional governments and funds that comes from local people and businesses. Without this support we could not effectively respond to most marine emergencies.

We are very appreciative of the generous support that we receive from our search and rescue partners and generous supporters. Thanks to people like you, RCMSAR volunteers will always be ready to respond to calls for help on the water while accepting the risks that comes with search and rescue. Together we are making a difference by "saving lives on the water".

Sincerely,



Tracy Lakeman,
Board Chair



Bill Riggs,
Chief Executive Officer





RCMSAR 14 Gibsons training one the water.



RCMSAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2026

FOCUS & INITIATIVES

OUR VISION

Excellence in community-based marine safety

AWARENESS

Branding/Marketing

Relationship Building

OUR MISSION

Saving lives on the water

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Asset Strategy

Diversified Revenue

OUR VALUES

Safety | Trust | Teamwork

ONE CREW CULTURE

Training

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Volunteer Recognition

WHERE WE ARE

NORTHERN REGION

(North Coast, Haida Gwaii)

5

Stations

CENTRAL REGION

(Vancouver Island, Gulf Islands)

15

Stations

SOUTHERN REGION

(Lower Mainland/Shuswap)

10+1

*SAR
prevention
station*

Stations



SHUSWAP LAKE

VOLUNTEER IMPACT 2022-23

 **31**
STATIONS

 **952**
VOLUNTEERS

 **60,000+**
VOLUNTEER HOURS

 **437**
MISSIONS
CONDUCTED

 **50** PEOPLE
SAVED

395 PEOPLE
ASSISTED

 **17½**
MINUTES
AVERAGE
RESPONSE TIME

 **87%** OF CALLS FOR HELP CLASSED
AS IN DISTRESS OR IN DANGER

During 2022-2023, more than sixty thousand volunteer hours were directed towards protecting communities across British Columbia, from conducting missions and training exercises to participating in boating safety events all in pursuit of saving lives on the water.

Picture by Paula Keech Photography

CENTRAL REGION

BRENTWOOD BAY – STATION 31
COMOX – STATION 60
COWICHAN BAY – STATION 34
DEEP BAY – STATION 59
SALT SPRING ISLAND – STATION 25
LADYSMITH – STATION 29
NANAIMO – STATION 27
OAK BAY – STATION 33

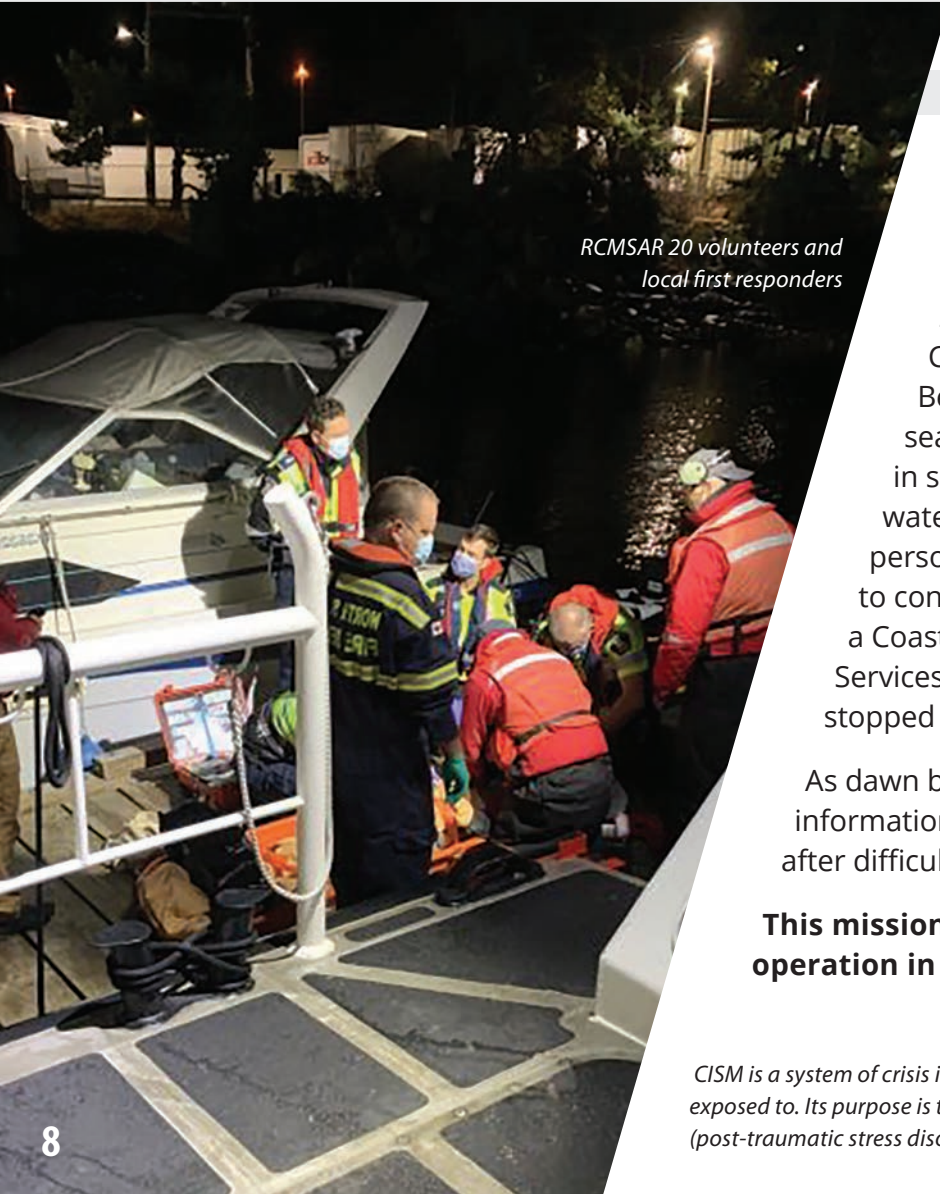
PENDER ISLAND – STATION 20
PORT ALBERNI – STATION 39
PORT ALICE – STATION 43
SIDNEY – STATION 36
SOOKE – STATION 37
UCLUELET – STATION 38
VICTORIA – STATION 35

20
vessels

471
volunteers

198
missions

14
people
saved



RCMSAR 20 volunteers and
local first responders

NOTABLE MISSION

Missing Person Bedwell Harbour

RCMSAR 20 Crew: Niall Parker, Kevin Gosling, Charles Eigl and Mike Fossi

In the early hours of the morning during the Labour Day weekend, RCMSAR 20 Pender Island volunteers were tasked by the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) to assist in the search for a missing person off a vessel in Bedwell Harbour. Spotlights and handheld thermal cameras were used to search the shoreline while the Canadian Coast Guard expanded their search in surrounding waters. RCMSAR volunteers located the missing person in the water, unresponsive. Two crew members entered the shallow water to lift the person onto the shore and attempt resuscitation. Coast Guard members arrived to continue first aid efforts while our volunteers helped transfer the person onto a Coast Guard vessel before reaching the shore to awaiting Emergency Health Services. Paramedics worked tirelessly to revive the person. Sadly, resuscitation was stopped when it was clear the person had passed.

As dawn broke, our volunteers returned to base where they received important information on Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) support that is often needed after difficult missions when lives are lost.

This mission was one of three recognized by the JRCC for an outstanding operation in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

CISM is a system of crisis intervention designed to reduce the negative psychological impact of traumatic events that people have been exposed to. Its purpose is to support one's return to their daily routine more quickly and with less likelihood of experiencing PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).

NORTHERN REGION

HARTLEY BAY – STATION 70
KITIMAT – STATION 63
LAX KW'ALAAMS – STATION 65
MASSET – STATION 45
PRINCE RUPERT – STATION 64

9

vessels

81

volunteers

24

missions

4

people
saved

19

people
assisted

NOTABLE MISSION

Medical Evacuation Naden Harbour

RCMSAR 45 Masset Crew: Chris Ashurst, Elin Price, Collin Camire and Sheldon Braman

Late one evening in June, a man visiting a fishing lodge near Naden Harbour appeared to be suffering from a suspected stroke. Unable to send a helicopter, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) contacted RCMSAR 45 requesting support to conduct an urgent medical evacuation. Just after midnight, four RCMSAR volunteers, one of whom was an on-duty paramedic, departed Masset Harbour where they had to carefully navigate through significant floating debris from high tides assisted by forward-looking infrared (FLIR) cameras and radar.

On arrival to the lodge, our volunteers administered first aid then took the man and his son to RCMSAR 45's vessel before returning to Masset Harbour to awaiting paramedics onshore.

Our crew returned home to their families at 03:00 hrs. Hundreds of RCMSAR volunteers serve rural and remote communities supporting first responders from the BC Ambulance Service, local police and firefighters.



RCMSAR 45
Masset All Women Crew

SOUTHERN REGION

CRESCENT BEACH – STATION 5
DELTA – STATION 8
GIBSONS – STATION 14
HALFMOON BAY – STATION 12
NORTH VANCOUVER – STATION 2
PENDER HARBOUR – STATION 61

RICHMOND – STATION 10
SHUSWAP – STATION 106
SQUAMISH – STATION 4
WEST VANCOUVER – STATION 1
VANCOUVER SAR PREVENTION – STATION 103

18

vessels

400

volunteers

215

missions

32

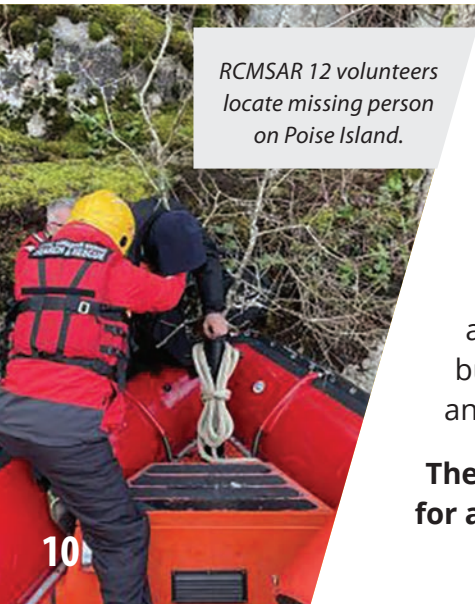
people saved

220

people assisted



RCMSAR 2 volunteers
evacuate injured hiker



RCMSAR 12 volunteers
locate missing person
on Poise Island.

NOTABLE MISSIONS

Locate and Assist Injured Hiker

RCMSAR 2 Crew: David McCutcheon, John McCoach, Devin Johnston, John Robertson and Tara McCarville

On a Saturday afternoon in April, RCMSAR 2 North Vancouver received a call to locate, assist and evacuate an injured hiker near Admiralty Point. Within 12 minutes, RCMSAR volunteers were able to locate the injured hiker who was in severe pain due to suspected bone fractures. Our marine search and rescue volunteers stabilized the injured hiker and used a clam shell stretcher to transfer her to RCMSAR 2's Deep Cove Lifeboat III returning to Deep Cove to awaiting paramedics on shore. Given the nature of her injuries, RCMSAR volunteers located the injured hiker and deliver her to shore in less than 90 minutes. Traditional ground search and rescue could have taken hours based on the location of the injured hiker.

Missing Person Poise Island Rescue

RCMSAR 12 Crew: Michael Metcalfe, John Howcroft, Duncan Smith

The conditions were windy and cold on the morning of February 13 when RCMSAR 12 Halfmoon Bay was tasked by the JRCC to check on an aluminium boat that was found barely floating and containing a person's cell phone. Assisted by the Cormorant, the Royal Canadian Air Force's search and rescue helicopter, and the local RCMP, the search began for a possible missing person. RCMSAR volunteers were alerted of a person on a rock ledge behind a tree on Poise Island. This person was rescued off the ledge, bundled up and transported to the nearest Government dock to awaiting paramedics. Our marine search and rescue volunteers were celebrated for helping save this person's life.

These missions were two of three recognized by the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre for an outstanding operation in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

RECOGNIZING OUR VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Each year RCMSAR celebrates the significant accomplishments of individual volunteers for demonstrating exceptional service in their communities, dedication to their crew and invaluable contribution towards the collective mission of saving lives on the water. These outstanding volunteers have received this year's Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) and RCMSAR Awards.

CCGA Administrative Excellence Medal

Ed Helm, RCMSAR Headquarters
Cliff Doherty, RCMSAR 106 Shuswap
Bruce Weicker, RCMSAR Station 106 Shuswap

CCGA Exemplary Service Medal

Justin Stephenson – RCMSAR 33 Oak Bay & RCMSAR 35 Victoria

CCGA Humanitarian Services Medal

Amber Sheasgreen, RCMSAR Headquarters, RCMSAR 37 Sooke,
RCMSAR 64 Prince Rupert

CCGA Leadership Medal

Jason King, RCMSAR 1 West Vancouver
Christopher Beech, RCMSAR 60 Comox
Fred Cameron, RCMSAR 60 Comox

CCGA Long Service Medal

25 years of Service

Peter Tabler, RCMSAR 39 Port Alberni
John Woodthorpe, RCMSAR 39 Port Alberni
David Cook, RCMSAR 103 Vancouver
James Nelson, RCMSAR 103 Vancouver
Robert Vickerstaff, RCMSAR 103 Vancouver

30 years of Service

Michael Janicki, RCMSAR 10 Richmond
Curt Hansen, RCMSAR 33 Oak Bay

35 years of Service

Bruce Jones, RCMSAR 59 Deep Bay
Gordon Jones, RCMSAR 59 Deep Bay

RCMSAR CEO Commendation

Dale Anaka, RCMSAR 8 Delta
Pat Gau, RCMSAR 106 Shuswap
Dave Harvey, RCMSAR 106 Shuswap
Allen Langworth, RCMSAR 106 Shuswap

RCMSAR New Member Award

Heidi Specht, RCMSAR 4 Squamish

RCMSAR Life Membership

Shawn Burchett, RCMSAR 2 North Vancouver
Tom McKeachie, RCMSAR 25 Gulf Islands

Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Outstanding Operations

RCMSAR 2 North Vancouver:

Locate and Assist Injured Hiker,
April 23, 2022

RCMSAR 12 Halfmoon Bay:

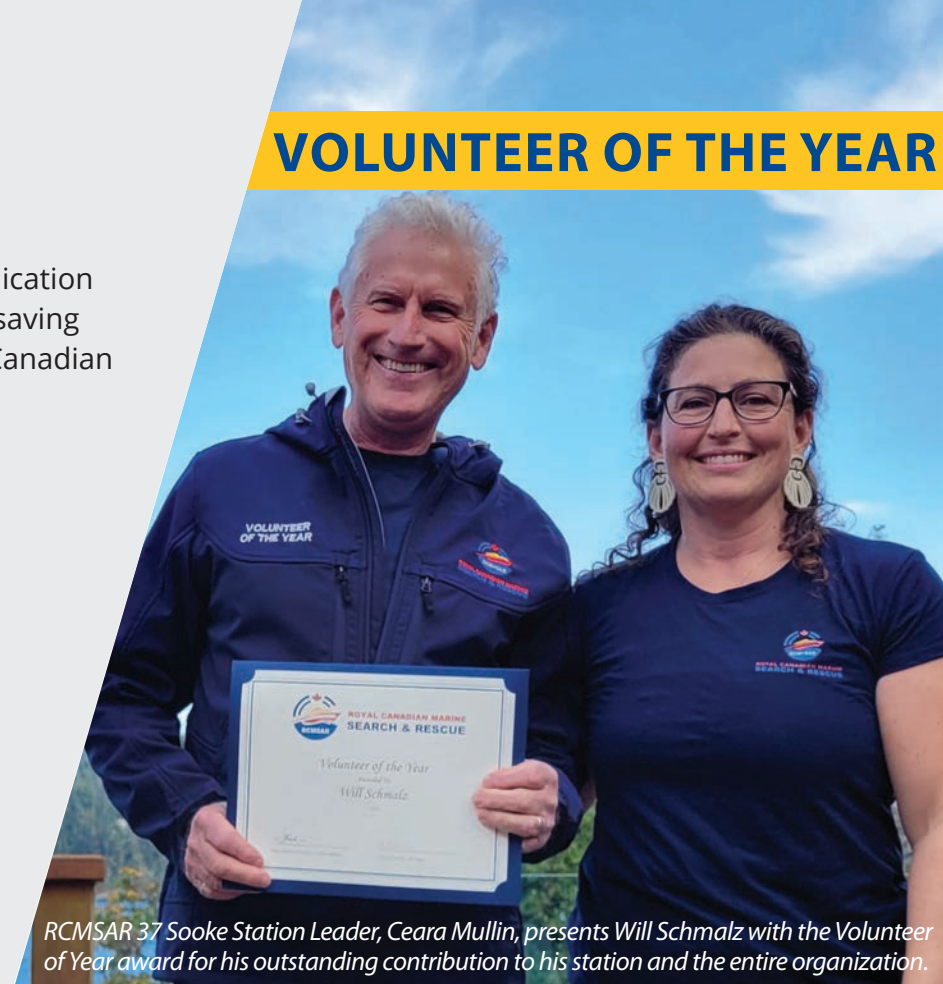
Missing Person Poise Island Rescue,
February 13, 2023

RCMSAR 20 Pender Island:

Missing Person Bedwell Harbour,
September 3, 2022

Volunteer of the Year

Will Schmalz, RCMSAR 37 Sooke



RCMSAR 37 Sooke Station Leader, Ceara Mullin, presents Will Schmalz with the Volunteer of the Year award for his outstanding contribution to his station and the entire organization.

International Maritime Rescue Federation Award: Amber Sheasgreen

Amber Sheasgreen, RCMSAR Operations Manager and volunteer with stations 37 Sooke and 64 Prince Rupert, received the 2023 IMRF award for an outstanding individual who is an inspirational role model for women and girls, helping develop and encourage women to join maritime search and rescue. Amber also works alongside less experienced female crewmembers volunteering with Sea-Eye and Refugee Rescue.



TRAINING MODERNIZATION:

The TK Foundation's commitment to marine search and rescue in B.C.

Thanks to the continued generosity of long-time marine safety partner, the TK Foundation announced their commitment to support our training modernization project by funding a complete upgrade to RCMSAR's aging rescue simulator. This funding aims to advance our training capability by providing the opportunity to offer hands-on simulation training to our volunteers in the communities they serve.

Funding for this initiative was made in memory of Art Coady, former Managing Director of the T.K. Foundation and Chairman of the Board of Directors. Art Coady understood the value of marine search and rescue training for our volunteers; he was an early champion of RCMSAR's first rescue simulator and construction of its training centre in East Sooke on Vancouver Island.

The TK Foundation has a long history of investing in B.C.'s marine search and rescue volunteers and we are grateful for our continued partnership.





KIDS DON'T FLOAT PROGRAM: Elevating Water Safety with Western Group

In 2023, RCMSAR and Western Group announced a new funding partnership that will promote and elevate children's safety on the water through RCMSAR's Kids Don't Float (but PFDs do!) program over the next three years. Thanks to Western Group, more infants, children, and youth will have free access to nearly one thousand lifejackets and personal floatation devices (PFDs). These PFDs are located in over one hundred loaner stations at marinas and public docks along coastal British Columbia and inland waters of the Shuswap.

Parents and guardians who do not own lifejackets, or who do not have appropriately sized PFDs for their children, can simply grab one and return it at the end of the day to one of 120 Kids Don't Float PFD Loaner Stations. More families can enjoy a day on the water knowing their children are safe thanks to water safety partners like Western Group.

[RCMSAR.COM/KDF](https://rcmsar.com/kdf)



Kim Stegeman,
Vice President, People &
Sustainability at Western
Group presents a cheque to
RCMSAR's Chief Executive
Officer, Bill Riggs.



RCMSAR 29 Ladysmith Volunteers, John Davis and Sue Wisely with Western Group's Brent Shillito and Cheryl from Ladysmith Fisherman's Wharf Association where a new Kids Don't Float PFD Loaner Station was built this past summer.

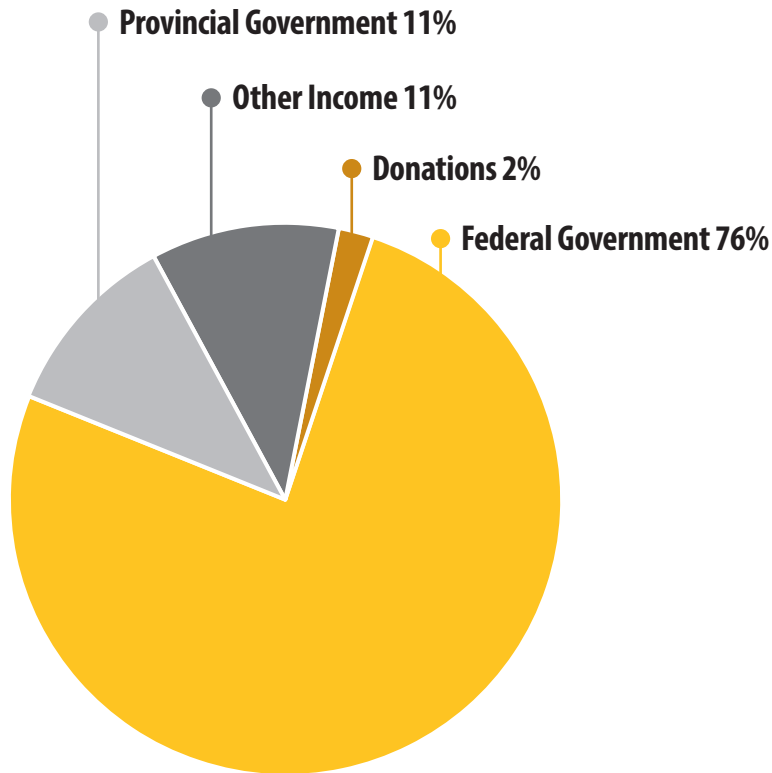


FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Being transparent about our financials is one way RCMSAR builds trust and accountability with our volunteers, donors and supporters. The following financial highlights are based on RCMSAR's financial statements for our year ending March 31, 2023.

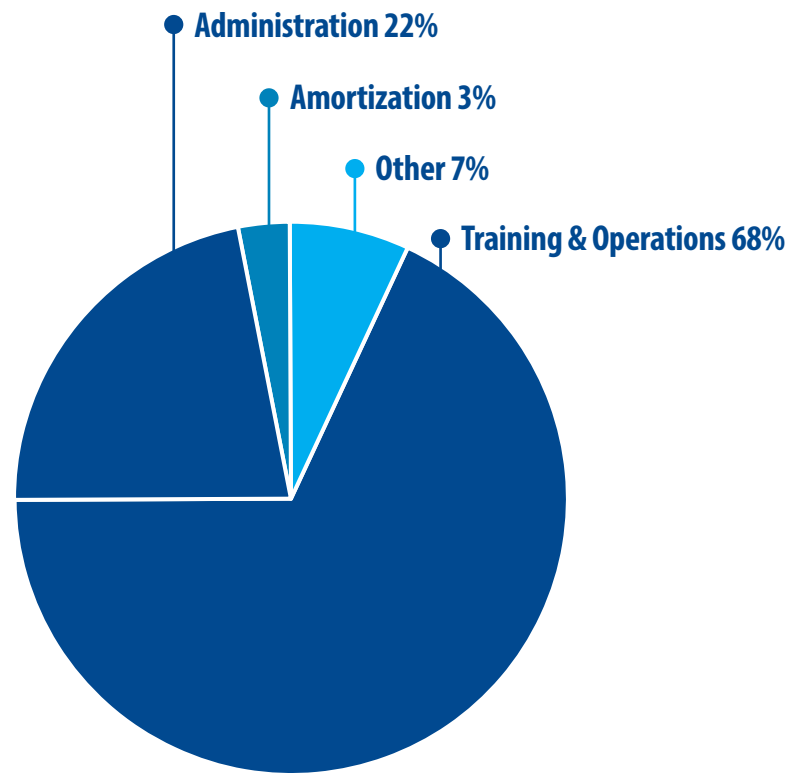
REVENUE

Federal Government	76%
Provincial Government	11%
Other income	11%
Donations	2%



EXPENSES

SAR Operations	68%
Administration	22%
Amortization	3%
Other Expenses	7%





Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Inc

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Charitable registration number: 1068 63137 RR0001

