

**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MOBILE APP TO INCREASE SAFETY FOR WOMEN AT RISK FROM VIOLENCE

Vancouver, BC – Women at risk from intimate partner violence will soon have a new tool to help keep them safe. As part of Victims of Crime Awareness Week, the Ending Violence Association of BC, in partnership with SOS Response and TELUS, are launching a new mobile safety app that originated here in BC designed to work as a 24/7 mobile, monitored alarm system.

The launch of the program will start with a pilot project to run in five communities: Prince George, Terrace, Vernon, Courtenay and Surrey. The focus of the pilot will be on increasing the safety of women who are designated to be at high risk for domestic violence by an ex-partner who has been charged by police. “These sites were chosen because they all have Community-based Victim Services as well as Interagency Domestic Violence Case Assessment Teams in place. These services and the coordinated responses they manage are key to providing support to women at risk,” said EVA BC’s executive director, Tracy Porteous.

The SOS Response personal safety app can be downloaded to a smartphone that, when used, automatically sends images (30 photos in 30 seconds), GPS location and other valuable information to a live 24/7 professionally monitored station. With these visuals, trained operators instantly assess and dispatch the response needed to the person’s location.

Pertinent information about the person using the personal safety app will be logged into the 24/7 monitoring system managed by Securiguard. For women deemed high risk, this could include information about protection orders, specific threats and other critical information that will help both the police and the victim.

The mobile safety app is the brainchild of EvidencePix Founder & CEO Ray Sobol. After hearing about the kidnapping of a 16-year old girl from her family’s driveway, the father of five daughters set out to create a cell phone based personal panic button. The result was the SOS Response personal safety app.

“SOS Response is proud to partner with EVA BC to offer our integrated life safety solution to victims of violence. We recognize the importance of having the right tool at the right time, and when seconds count, SOS Response can reduce incident response times by minutes,” said Sam Ciacco, Vice President of SOS Response.

TELUS is also a significant partner with EVA BC, providing 20 smartphones and the network access for this pilot project.

“TELUS is pleased to collaborate with EVA BC on this vital pilot project, and we share their commitment to support women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence,” said Andrea Goertz, senior vice-president, TELUS Strategic Initiatives, Communications and Government Relations. “Through the use of technology we can help protect those who need it the most. As a community, it is essential we work together to end abuse in all its forms.”

Since 2000, TELUS, its team members and retirees have contributed more than \$3.5 million to charitable and not-for-profit organizations in support of programs that assist women at risk.

EVA BC works with communities across BC to end violence against women and children, supporting more than 240 programs who respond to sexual and domestic violence, child abuse and stalking.

Securiguard, SOS Response’s parent company, is based in Western Canada with offices in Vancouver, Edmonton, Victoria, Nanaimo, Kelowna and Kamloops. Internationally, Securiguard Middle East has established offices located in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and the United Arab Emirates.

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