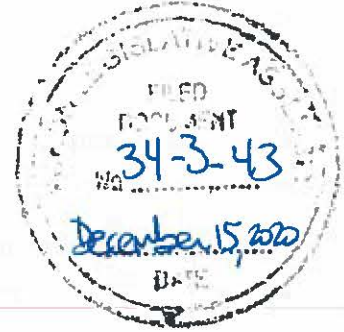




Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6



December 21, 2018

Hon. John Streicker
Minister of Community Services
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

Dear Minister Streicker,

RE: Improving support for Yukon's EMS volunteers

Thank you for your reply to my letter regarding Rural EMS issues, and for your reply to my written question regarding several matters pertaining to EMS. While I am confident that everyone involved in overseeing the operation of Yukon Emergency Medical Services is working to support EMS, there are several matters which I am concerned about.

The Yukon's ability to provide EMS service in most of our communities is dependent on the willingness of people who volunteer to serve their communities as members of the Yukon Emergency Medical Services team.

There appears to be a growing frequency of gaps in EMS coverage in rural communities, and the sustainability of this life-saving service is facing increasing challenges. While the current approach seems to be to cover gaps in local coverage by dispatching paramedics from Whitehorse, this unfortunately may not provide the speed of response needed in some health emergencies.

We have heard concerning reports that several Yukon communities are expected to have significant gaps in EMS coverage over this Christmas season. Would you please confirm if this is the case?

The increasing gaps in EMS coverage are creating a growing problem for the Yukon and its communities. A lack of local EMS coverage creates a health risk which is of interest to residents of those communities, their elected representatives, and to other Yukoners.

In recognition of what appears to be a growing crisis in Rural EMS, and as part of being open and accountable to the public about matters affecting their safety, I ask that you begin publicly issuing a "Yukon Emergency Medical Services Community Status Report" on a regular basis.

Please also provide this report directly to MLAs, First Nation and municipal governments, and local advisory councils.

I ask that you include the following as part of a "Yukon Emergency Medical Services Community Status Report":

- 1) A list of all gaps in local EMS coverage in the preceding months, shown by community.
- 2) A list of all deployments of paramedics by air to rural communities which were required during the previous months due to a lack of local EMS coverage.
- 3) Expected gaps in local EMS coverage, listed by community, for the upcoming month.
- 4) A report showing any communities with volunteers who do not currently have a full uniform kit, and the expected date of meeting that commitment to those YEMS members.
- 5) The schedule of upcoming training being made available to volunteer members of YEMS.

Thank you for your appreciation of the importance of these issues, and your consideration of my requests and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Brad Cathers
MLA for Lake Laberge
Official Opposition Critic, Protective Services