



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6



February 19, 2019

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

Dear Minister Streicker,

RE: Yukon EMS Rural Coverage and Issues

Thank you for your letter of January 22, 2019, in reply to my letter of December 21, 2018. I note that your letter failed to address important issues raised in my letter to you.

I hope that you will take this opportunity to correct that, and take these concerns and suggestions regarding Emergency Medical Services seriously.

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, it is important to note that this may look fine on paper, but in reality will not provide the speed of response needed in some health emergencies.

We heard concerning reports that several Yukon communities were expected to have significant gaps in EMS coverage over this past Christmas season. In my December 21st letter, I asked you to confirm whether that was the case. Your letter did not answer that question. Were there gaps in volunteer coverage during the Christmas season, and which communities were affected?

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, in my December 21st letter, I urged you to begin publicly issuing a "Yukon Emergency Medical Services Community Status Report" on a monthly basis. I urged you to also provide such a report directly to MLAs, First Nation and municipal governments, and local advisory councils.

Your January 22nd letter ignored this request.

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

- 1) A list of all gaps in local EMS coverage in the preceding three months, shown by community.
- 2) A list of all deployments of paramedics by air to rural communities which were required during the previous three 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.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



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