



JUN 10 2020

ROCKY SIMPSON
MLA, HAY RIVER SOUTH

Oral Question 251-19(2): Border Security

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on May 28, 2020 regarding Border Security.

Border security is one of the most critical pieces to ensure that we reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading throughout the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Travel Restrictions and Self-Isolation Protocol Order allows for exemptions, including for NWT Residents, Essential Service Workers and others, such as Supply Chain Workers, to travel within the NWT with certain precautions, such as self-isolation. These exemptions are processed by ProtectNWT, including providing the necessary documentation to exempted individuals before entering the NWT, whenever applicable.

There are many nuances to who might be an Essential Services Worker, who might be a Supply Chain Worker, and who might not fit into either exemption. There are considerable efforts being made to ensure there is clarity around these categories of exemptions. Training of all staff providing assistance with the Public Health Orders is ongoing, and will continue as we prepare for the second wave of COVID-19.

On Tuesday morning, May 26, 2020, a sales representative for a tool distribution company entered the NWT. At the border, the sales representative presented a Worker Self-Isolation Plan (WSIP) to the Border Officer operating the checkpoint. The Border Officers believed he was a supply chain worker as it indicated this on the WSIP, and they let him pass. The Border Officers accurately implemented the Travel Restrictions and Self-Isolation Protocol Order. The sales representative then drove to Hay River and Fort Smith to sell tools.

On Thursday, May 28, 2020, concerns were brought to the attention of the Compliance and Enforcement Taskforce. The Taskforce reviewed the WSIP, which indicated the sales representative was in the NWT carrying out essential service work and supply chain work. The Taskforce determined that the description of the activity that was being carried out and logged with ProtectNWT did not meet the criteria of a supply chain worker within the NWT.

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The sales representative was located by a Compliance and Enforcement Public Health Officer. After a discussion with the sales representative, it was determined the sales representative was under the impression he had not done anything wrong and was following advice provided to him. He then indicated that he was leaving the NWT voluntarily and crossed into Alberta May 28, 2020.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Thom". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Diane Thom
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs