



MR. MICHAEL NADLI  
MLA, DEHCHO

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**Oral Question 386-18(2): Small Community Restricted Drivers' Licenses**

This letter is to follow-up the Oral Question you raised on October 25, 2016 regarding small community restricted drivers' licenses and the Department of Transportation's (DOT) review of the related policy.

The Department holds safety as its highest priority, particularly around the mobility of NWT residents. Achieving that priority requires the Department to ensure an individual's driving skill meets the established practical driving test, which involves using infrastructure (such as traffic lights and curbs) not available in some communities. Consequently, these testing requirements cannot be met in some smaller communities where an individual's ability to handle driving a vehicle in a larger community or on a highway system cannot be determined.

Our tiered system of driver's licences includes restrictions categorized by the community where the testing occurred. Condition 'G' restricts a driver to operating a vehicle within 100 kilometres of their home address and condition 'B' restricts a driver to operating a vehicle within the NWT.

Other Canadian jurisdictions have similar policies. Saskatchewan clients tested north of the 55<sup>th</sup> parallel earn a restricted Class 5 licence, which equates to a learner's licence south of the 55<sup>th</sup> parallel. Manitoba clients tested in remote communities earn a license that restricts their driving to within a community not connected to a permanent road system. This licence reverts to a learner's licence in which case a supervising driver must be in the vehicle if the individual chooses to drive on a provincial highway or in another municipality. Nunavut licenses are issued with restrictions that are similar to the NWT.

The Department is currently reviewing the appropriateness of these conditions in relation to infrastructure, highway access, and the size of the community. DOT anticipates expanding the range of conditions to introduce one that will allow clients to drive further than 100 kilometres in areas where winter roads operate seasonally. This review is anticipated to be complete by January 2017.

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The majority of Canadian jurisdictions conduct driver testing at regional centres and clients are responsible to arrange travel to these locations regardless of the location of their home community, such as on Prince Edward Island. Moreover, some jurisdictions including Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Alberta do not conduct road test in communities where adequate infrastructure is not available.

Thank you.



Wally Schumann  
Minister of Transportation

- c. Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk  
Legislative Assembly
  
- Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator