



JUN 27 2017

MR. KIERON TESTART  
MLA, KAM LAKE

**Oral Question 799-18(2): Territorial Cannabis Legislation and Regulation**

On May 31, 2017, you had questions in the Legislative Assembly regarding the number of times that the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Legalization of Cannabis has met.

Officials in provinces and territories have been coordinating with the federal government for over a year to determine what steps are required to ensure jurisdictions are prepared for implementation. To date this has included 23 meetings by teleconference of the FPT Senior Officials Working Group on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation, and one “face-to-face” meeting in Ottawa. This group convenes calls on a go-forward basis every three weeks. Provinces and territories have also recently begun to hold additional teleconferences without Federal participation, to explore issues that may have implications particular to the jurisdictions. NWT officials have participated in all these meetings, and in addition NWT officials have also initiated a number of “one-on-one” exchanges with the Federal Cannabis Secretariat to seek information and advice on issues of specific interest to the NWT.

Within the GNWT, the Interdepartmental Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Working Group first met on August 2, 2016. It has convened in-person for six meetings to discuss the broad range of policy options that must be considered as we prepare for the upcoming public engagement on legalization, and the legislative development process and implementation activities to follow. In addition to in-person meetings, the Working Group serves as a forum for the various departments that are undertaking different aspects of the work related to legalization to share information and seek cross-departmental feedback as necessary.

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You also expressed interest in the Department's approach to communities that wish to prohibit the sale and use of marijuana. As was discussed at the June 7, 2017 presentation to the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning, this is an area where the GNWT will be seeking the views of communities before proposing a way forward. We recognize that communities and Aboriginal governments will likely want to have a role in the regulation of cannabis in the communities, consistent with the NWT regime for liquor, and we have been bilaterally engaging Federal officials on this issue. The Department of Justice anticipates that should it be determined that legislation is required to allow for communities to create additional restrictions or prohibitions on cannabis, the lead responsibility would likely rest with the Department of Finance, as is the case with community liquor restrictions and prohibitions.

Thank you.



Louis Sebert  
Minister of Justice

c. All Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Martin Goldney  
Deputy Minister, Justice

Mr. David Stewart  
Deputy Minister, Finance

Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator