



MAY 30 1995

12-02721


Northwest
Territories Minister of Renewable Resources

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MS. JEANNIE MARIE-JEWELL
MLA, THEBACHA

Dear Ms. Jewell:

On May 16th, you wrote to me with several questions regarding the Forest Fire Management Program. I believe all of the questions were answered in our meeting on May 19th.

Rick Pedersen is no longer with the Fire Management Program. His services are not required. The decision to proceed without Mr. Pedersen was made since I took responsibility for this program. It was necessary if we were to make a smooth transition to the new northern contractor and sub contractors for the fixed wing services for the fire operations.

Eddy Powder has been contracted to provide expert advice to me and my Deputy Minister on fire operations. He has a wealth of experience in fire fighting and I believe can be useful to me in determining how we can fight fires more effectively using northerners, more people on the ground, and more cost efficiently. A job description has not yet been finalized for him. A copy can be made available to you once it is agreed to with Mr. Powder.

Safety is of great importance to me but it cannot be used as a excuse to limit northern opportunity. I am confident that the northern air companies we are using know their business when it comes to hiring pilots and maintaining their aircraft. I take every safety concern seriously and so do the contractors but even at its best fighting forest fires is risky. No one is required to place themselves in a situation that they consider unnecessarily dangerous to them or others. If an agreement cannot be reached with staff who have concerns, efforts will be made to find them alternate employment.

I appreciate your anticipated cooperation and support in ensuring an efficient and successful fire season.

Sincerely,

Don Morin