



January 14, 1993

John Todd
Minister of Safety and Public Services

As January 15, 1993 is my last day as the Fire Marshal of the Northwest Territories I thought it appropriate to provide you and the members of the legislative assembly a progress report on the activities of the Office of the Fire Marshal as well as clarify the reason for my resignation.

In 1983, the year I joined the Office in then Frobisher Bay, the fire death rate averaged 10 persons per year and annual property losses exceeded 10.2 million (1992 dollars). In 1992 the death rate had been reduced to 4.8 persons per year and the annual property loss cut to 5.4 million. While the 1992 figures are still far from acceptable when compared to the rest of Canada, I feel significant progress has been made in reducing fire losses during the past decade.

The Office of the Fire Marshal staff have been able to assist the residents of the NWT in reducing fire losses by diligently and faithfully carrying out their duties as defined in the Fire Prevention Act. The number of fire safety inspections conducted annually has increased from 400 hundred in 1983 to over 2500 in 1992, annual construction plan reviews increased from 150 to over 400, fire fighters trained each year increased from 150 to 450, and public fire safety education in 1992 was taught to over 7300 persons. All of this work plus numerous fire investigations was accomplished by a staff of eight.

I have resigned my position as Fire Marshal because I am not prepared to serve a Minister who has exhibited such a cavalier attitude towards fire safety in his dealings with our Office. Your many public statements about the Office of the Fire Marshal have made it clear I would have to compromise myself to stay on as the Fire Marshal which is not an option I have to live with.

C. Bell
Fire Marshal

cc all MLA



