



Lamont Fire Department

Box 33 Lamont, Alberta T0B 2R0

Mr. Larry Shaw

Director General

Telecommunications Policy Branch

Industry Canada

300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8

Subject: Proposals and changes to the Spectrum in Certain Bands Below 1.7 GHz - Notice reference number - DGTP-004-05

Dear Sir:

I am writing to voice my concern regarding Industry Canada's proposal to provide private users access to 150 MHz band width.

The bandwidth from 151.820 MHz to 154.600 MHz is used in Canada almost exclusively by the fire service, and the vast majority of the over 400 fire departments in Alberta are using this bandwidth. Capable of penetrating through building walls and through glass, the 150 MHz band with serves as an ideal way for firefighter communication when they have entered burning structures to save lives.

For years, the 150 MHz bandwidth has been set aside for emergency communications within defined and quite small geographical areas. In fact, only five years ago Industry Canada encouraged the fire service to migrate to that location in addition to reduced the split available from 24 kHz to 12 kHz within the 150 MHz band width.

To now propose that the five 150 MHz bandwidths be opened to multi-use radio service (MURS) will create significant hardship to fire services across Canada. Industry Canada's rationalization that "Canadians are large consumers of electronic devices and radio technologies and want similar radio products as those available in the U.S. market," is very alarming. Suggesting that consumer interests of this nature take precedence over public safety reflects a very narrow focus, one that does not even consider the ramifications of such a change on fire departments, firefighters and the safety of Canadians.

As an Alberta fire chief, I strongly recommend that Industry Canada discontinue its attempt to force Canadian fire departments to abandon their 150 MHz bandwidths. In addition to my concerns over the costs involved and the limited proposed transition period, my greatest concern is the potential for increased risks to firefighters, increased potential losses and, ultimately, the safety of those who we are trying to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Helton".

John Helton, Fire Chief