

Date : 1/26/2024 1:40:47 PM

From : "Stoodley, Sarah" SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca

To : "Hoddinott, Fanny" FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca

Subject : Fwd: How does an accused sex offender get a ride-hailing licence?
Easy in Canada incompetent morons in positions of authority. The idiot who
gave it to the pervert won't be fired. SNAFU

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

40(1)

From:

Date: January 26, 2024 at 1:13:17 PM NST

40(1)

To: First

Reading <firstreading@postmedia.com>, abigail.bimman@globalnews.ca, Mercedes Stephenson <mercedes.stephenson@globalnews.ca>, nancy.ross@dal.ca, jennifer Raso <jennifer.raso@mcgill.ca>, "Abbott, John (MHA)" <JohnAbbott@gov.nl.ca>, "Bennett, Derek" <DerekBennett@gov.nl.ca>, "Conway Ottenheimer, Helen" <HelenConwayOttenheimer@gov.nl.ca>, "Dempster, Lisa" <LisaDempster@gov.nl.ca>, "Evans, Lela" <LelaEvans@gov.nl.ca>, "Gambin Walsh, Sherry" <SherryGambinWalsh@gov.nl.ca>, "Howell, Krista Lynn" <KristaLynnHowell@gov.nl.ca>, "O'Driscoll, Loyola" <LoyolaODriscoll@gov.nl.ca>, "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>, "Stoyles, Lucy" <LucyStoyles@gov.nl.ca>, bgrimes@lsnl.ca, arowe@lsnl.ca, erowe@lsnl.ca, rwhalen@lsnl.ca, lchafe@lsnl.ca, pmarks@lsnl.ca, awhitehead@lsnl.ca, jringrose@lsnl.ca, Judith <judith.seidman@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Marilou <marilou.mcphedran@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Julie <julie.miville-dechene@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Elizabeth <elizabeth.marshall@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Gwen <gwen.boniface@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Paula <paula.simons@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Denise <denise.batters@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Raymonde <raymonde.saint-germain@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Chantel <chantal.petitclerc@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Margaret <margaretdawn.anderson@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Patti <patti.laboucane-benson@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Marty <marty.deacon@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Diane <diane.bellemare@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Josee <josee.verner@sen.parl.gc.ca>, Leah <leah.gazan@parl.gc.ca>, Lindsay <lindsay.mathyssen@parl.gc.ca>, Rachel <rachel.blaney@parl.gc.ca>, Carol <carol.hughes@parl.gc.ca>, Heather <heather.mcpherson@parl.gc.ca>, NIKI

<niki.ashton@parl.gc.ca>, Laurel <laurel.collins@parl.gc.ca>, "Jenny - M.P. Kwan" <jenny.kwan@parl.gc.ca>, Kerry <kerry-lynnne.findlay@parl.gc.ca>, Shannon <shannon.stubbs@parl.gc.ca>, candice.bergen@parl.gc.ca, Cathay <cathay.wagantall@parl.gc.ca>, Raquel <raquel.dancho@parl.gc.ca>, "Marilyn - M.P. Gladu" <marilyn.gladu@parl.gc.ca>, Tracy <tracy.gray@parl.gc.ca>, Karen <karen.vecchio@parl.gc.ca>, Rosemarie <rosemarie.falk@parl.gc.ca>, Lianne <lianne.rood@parl.gc.ca>, Cheryl <cheryl.gallant@parl.gc.ca>, "Rachael - M.P. Harder" <rachael.harder@parl.gc.ca>, Stephanie <stephanie.kusie@parl.gc.ca>, Diane <diane.finley@parl.gc.ca>, Michelle.Rempel@parl.gc.ca, Elisabeth Briere <elisabeth.briere@parl.gc.ca>, Julie <julie.dzerowicz@parl.gc.ca>, ANITA <anita.anand@parl.gc.ca>, CAROLYN <carolyn.bennett@parl.gc.ca>, Jennifer.OConnell@parl.gc.ca, Sherry <sherry.romanado@parl.gc.ca>, Mary <mary.ng@parl.gc.ca>, Karina <karina.gould@parl.gc.ca>, elizabeth.may@parl.gc.ca, Brenda <brenda.shanahan@parl.gc.ca>, ruby.sahota@parl.gc.ca, Filomena.Tassi@parl.gc.ca, Judy <judy.sgro@parl.gc.ca>, Patricia <patricia.lattanzio@parl.gc.ca>, Salma <salma.zahid@parl.gc.ca>, Gudie <gudie.hutchings@parl.gc.ca>, Julie Dabrusin <julie.dabrusin@parl.gc.ca>, Anita <anita.vandenbeld@parl.gc.ca>, anju.dhillon@parl.gc.ca, Emmanuella <emmanuella.lambropoulos@parl.gc.ca>, Yvonne <yvonne.jones@parl.gc.ca>, Alexandra <alexandra.mendes@parl.gc.ca>, Diane.Lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca, Chrystia <chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca>, Kamal.Khera@parl.gc.ca, "Patty - M.P. Hajdu" <patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca>, Pam.Damoff@parl.gc.ca, Annie <annie.koutrakis@parl.gc.ca>, "Hedy - M.P. Fry" <hedy.fry@parl.gc.ca>, MARIE <marie-claude.bibeau@parl.gc.ca>, Marie <marie-france.lalonde@parl.gc.ca>, gINETTE.petitpastaylor@parl.gc.ca, Soraya <soraya.martinezferrada@parl.gc.ca>, Joyce <joyce.murray@parl.gc.ca>, Kirsty <kirsty.duncan@parl.gc.ca>, Sonia <sonia.sidhu@parl.gc.ca>, Carla <carla.qualtrough@parl.gc.ca>, "Joly, Mélanie - M.P." <melanie.joly@parl.gc.ca>, Helena <helena.jaczek@parl.gc.ca>, Jean <jean.yip@parl.gc.ca>, Mona <mona.fortier@parl.gc.ca>, Rachel <rachel.bendayan@parl.gc.ca>, Iqra <iqra.khalid@parl.gc.ca>, Bardish.Chagger@parl.gc.ca, blake.desjarlais@parl.gc.ca, "Melissa - M.P. Lantsman" <melissa.lantsman@parl.gc.ca>, "James - M.P. Bezan" <james.bezan@parl.gc.ca>, Leslyn Lewis <leslyn.lewis@parl.gc.ca>, Normandin Christine - Députée <christine.normandin@parl.gc.ca>

Subject: How does an accused sex offender get a ride-hailing licence? Easy in Canada incompetent morons in positions of authority. The idiot who gave it to the pervert won't be fired. SNAFU

40(1)

Reply-To:

The idiot who gave it to the pervert won't be fired. SNAFU

How does an accused sex offender get a ride-hailing licence?
PCs demand answers, Liberals mum (msn.com)

From: Stoodley, Sarah
Sent: Sunday, January 28, 2024 11:04 PM
To: Dutton, Sean
Cc: Hoddinott, Fanny
Subject: FW: open conversation to resolve issue for suspension license

From: Red Sea <redsea162016@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 28, 2024 10:50 PM
To: Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>, [REDACTED] 40(1)
Subject: open conversation to resolve issue for suspension license

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister Sarah Stoodley
MHA Mount Scio Minister of Digital Government and Service NL,

We extend our warm greetings to you. We are writing to address the recent suspension of our license by your esteemed department. We want to assure you that we are treating this matter with the utmost seriousness and urgency.

Our team is working diligently to thoroughly investigate the underlying causes that led to the suspension. We highly appreciate your patience and understanding during this challenging time. Rest assured, we are fully committed to resolving this situation promptly and effectively.

We understand the importance of your trust and partnership, and we are determined to continue serving you with excellence and unwavering integrity. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

We value open communication and are eager to address any inquiries you may have.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Redsea Ride sharing

Date : 1/29/2024 1:53:31 PM
From : "Stoodley, Sarah" SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca
To : "Hoddinott, Fanny" FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca
Subject : Fwd: Thanks for everything you have done for our family

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] 40(1)
Date: January 29, 2024 at 12:24:13 PM NST
To: "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Thanks for everything you have done for our family

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out to address my concerns about a recent case of yosief tesfamicheal [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Thinking how could such a thing be approved, and what else can slip through the cracks of justice: Imagine such an oversight

hope you got your headline and pictures were taken.

Thanks

Sent from Outlook

February 1, 2024

31(1)(l)

40(1)

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for your e-mail of January 29, 2024.

I apologize for any upset the publicity around the Transportation Network Company licence for Redsea Riding Sharing has caused you and your family. Our intention was to provide an open process for the private sector to offer a safe transportation option for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. As soon as we found out about the serious legal matter involving the applicant for Redsea Riding Sharing, we suspended the licence until further notice.

40(1)

Sincerely,



SARAH STOODLEY, MHA
District of Mount Scio
Minister

From: Red Sea <redsea162016@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 4:27 PM
To: Hoddinott, Fanny, Stoodley, Sarah, [REDACTED] 40(1)
Subject: open conversation to resolve issue for suspension license

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister Sarah Stoodley
MHA Mount Scio Minister of Digital Government and Service NL,

We extend our warm greetings to you. We are writing to address the recent suspension of our license by your esteemed department. We want to assure you that we are treating this matter with the utmost seriousness and urgency.

Our team is working diligently to thoroughly investigate the underlying causes that led to the suspension. We highly appreciate your patience and understanding during this challenging time. Rest assured, we are fully committed to resolving this situation promptly and effectively.

We understand the importance of your trust and partnership, and we are determined to continue serving you with excellence and unwavering integrity. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

We value open communication and are eager to address any inquiries you may have.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Redsea Ride sharing

From: 40(1) [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 7:37 PM
To: Stoodley, Sarah
Cc: Hoddinott, Fanny
Subject: Re: For Immediate Attention

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister Sarah Sloody,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to discuss the recent suspension of our ride-sharing license, which was issued on January 19, 2024. As per our previous email conversation, we have been in contact with other directors of our company, Redsea Ride Sharing, to address this matter.

On Monday, we collectively reached out to you via email, providing additional information and seeking an open conversation to resolve the issue at hand. We understand the importance of adhering to regulations and ensuring the safety and well-being of our passengers. Therefore, we are committed to working closely with the relevant authorities to rectify any concerns and comply with all necessary requirements.

We kindly request your assistance in expediting the resolution process and lifting the suspension on our ride-sharing license. Our team is eager to resume operations and continue providing a reliable and convenient transportation service to the community.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt response. Please feel free to contact us at redsea162016@gmail.com for any further information or clarification. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Yosief

On Fri, Jan 19, 2024 at 4:35 PM Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Redsea Riding Sharing,

See the attached letter, for immediate attention.

Sarah Stoodley

MHA Mount Scio

Minister of Digital Government and Service NL

From: Boland, Gail
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 9:26 AM
To: Roberts, Jessica
Subject: FW: Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators

31(1)(l)

Please action DM as FYI.

Thank you.
Gail.

From: [REDACTED] 40(1)
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 9:18 AM
To: Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; King, Lisa M. <lisaking@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators

Dear Minister Sarah Sloody,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to discuss the recent suspension of our ride-sharing license, which was issued on January 19, 2024. As per our previous email conversation, we have been in contact with other directors of our company, Redsea Ride Sharing, to address this matter.

On Monday, we collectively reached out to you via email, providing additional information and seeking an open conversation to resolve the issue at hand. We understand the importance of adhering to regulations and ensuring the safety and well-being of our passengers. Therefore, we are committed to working closely with the relevant authorities to rectify any concerns and comply with all necessary requirements.

We kindly request your assistance in expediting the resolution process and lifting the suspension on our ride-sharing license. Our team is eager to resume operations and continue providing a reliable and convenient transportation service to the community.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt response. Please feel free to contact us at redsea162016@gmail.com for any further information or clarification. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Yosief

40(1)

On Wed, Jan 17, 2024 at 3:30 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

Thank you for your email its means a lot to me I being wait this to happen for almost 8 years back thank you so much I will pay tomorrow or Friday in mount pearl MDV office ?

Sincerely
Yosief

On Wed, Jan 17, 2024 at 1:16 PM Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon Yosief,

I am happy to advise that your application has been approved. Please see attached for your licence and the terms and conditions of your licence.

The original licence will be sent in the mail. As well you will receive your invoice for payment within 30 days. Please note that you can start operations immediately and will be required to pay your invoice upon receipt.

Failure to submit the required payment will result in the cancellation of your licence.

Thank you and congratulations,

Krista Cull

Deputy Registrar (A)

Motor Registration Division

Digital Government and Service NL

Ph: 709-729-2520

Fax: 709-729-0102

kristacull@gov.nl.ca

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 9:25 AM
To: Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>

40(1)

Cc: Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; King, Lisa M. <lisaking@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators

Good evening Krista

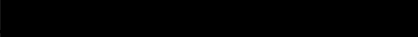
Sorry I am late to get respond please find the attached file below regarding our policy of the company and each driver they sign this document when we hire them either full time or part time .

If you have any questions please let me know thank you .

Sincerely ,

Yosief

40(1)

On Wed, Jan 17, 2024 at 12:16 AM  wrote:

Good evening Krista

Sorry I am late to get respond please find the attached file below regarding our policy of the company and each driver they sign this document when we hire them either full time or part time .

If you have any questions please let me know thank you .

Sincerely ,

Yosief

40(1)

On Tue, Jan 16, 2024 at 3:16 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

I will send this evening when I get from filed to the office I will send it to you all detail what our policy and what the drivers recently we offer them job in what base .

Sincerely

Yosief

On Tue, Jan 16, 2024 at 2:05 PM Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Thank you Yosief,

Are you able to provide a copy of your companies policy? Or can you provide a recent job ad or contract with drivers that include these requirements?

Krista Cull

Deputy Registrar (A)

Motor Registration Division

Digital Government and Service NL

Ph: 709-729-2520

Fax: 709-729-0102

kristacull@gov.nl.ca

From: [REDACTED] — 40(1)
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 11:41 AM
To: Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>; King, Lisa M. <lisaking@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators

As per conversation on the phone earlier today

Our company policy for all driver

providing the information about the driver requirements for Redsea company.

It appears that drivers must meet the following criteria:

1. Age requirement: Drivers must be 25 years old or older.
2. Police clearance: Drivers must have a clearance from the police.
3. Driving record abstract: Drivers must have a clearance of their driving record abstract.
4. Riding insurance policy: Each driver must have a riding insurance policy on their insurance policy.

These requirements are in place to ensure the safety and security of both the drivers and passengers.

I confirm that all the drivers on my list, which I submitted today, have been confirmed with police clearance and abstract clearance.

Sincerely

Yosief

40(1)

On Tue, Jan 16, 2024 at 11:40 AM [REDACTED] wrote:

As per conversation on the phone earlier today

Our company policy for all driver

providing the information about the driver requirements for Redsea company.

It appears that drivers must meet the following criteria:

1. Age requirement: Drivers must be 25 years old or older.
2. Police clearance: Drivers must have a clearance from the police.
3. Driving record abstract: Drivers must have a clearance of their driving record abstract.
4. Riding insurance policy: Each driver must have a riding insurance policy on their insurance policy.

These requirements are in place to ensure the safety and security of both the drivers and passengers.

I confirm that all the drivers on my list, which I submitted today, have been confirmed with police clearance and abstract clearance.

Sincerely

Yosief

40(1)

On Tue, Jan 16, 2024 at 10:26 AM [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Kelli,

Thank you for your message. I'm glad to hear that you have received my application. I will be eagerly waiting for your review and any further communication from you.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to reach out to me. Thank you again for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Yosief

On Tue, Jan 16, 2024 at 10:06 AM Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Thank you for your message Yosief, I have received your application thank you. I will review your submission quickly and will contact you if I have any questions.

Finally, Ive noted your new location on Torbay road. Please reach out to me at any time,

Sincerely,

Kelli

Kelli Penney, Registrar of Motor Vehicles

Ph: 709-729-4175 (Toll free: 1-877-636-6867)

www.gov.nl.ca/motorregistration/

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40(1)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 10:01 AM
To: Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>; King, Lisa M. <lisaking@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Kelli Penney,

I hope this letter finds you well. I wanted to inform you that I have submitted my application today, along with all the necessary information. I made sure that everything is clear and easy to understand. The platform is user-friendly, making it accessible for both users and drivers.

Additionally, I have attached the names of all the drivers. We have also filed their driving license copies, police clearances, and abstracts for our records in the office. We are looking forward to hearing from you soon.

On another note, we recently leased a new office space on Torbay Rd, Suite 200. It is located in the central city, making it convenient for everyone to reach and accommodate our users and drivers.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to any updates from you.

Sincerely,

Yosief

On Thu, Dec 21, 2023 at 11:33 AM Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Good morning Mr. Tesfamicael,

As per todays news release, the Digital Government and Service NL is now accepting applications from operators interested in offering ride sharing services in the province; I have provided the link to this release below for your convenience.

Additionally, I have also included links to important information such as the amended regulations (including the new *Transportation Network Company Regulations* under the Highway Traffic Act); the application for a Transportation Network Company Licence; and information regarding the fees and requirements for the companies, drivers and vehicles that are approved to deliver ride-sharing services throughout the province.

- ? [Provincial Government Now Accepting Applications from Interested Ride Sharing Operators - News Releases](#)
- ? [Amended regulations: Newfoundland and Labrador Gazette \(December 21, 2023\)](#)
- ? [How to apply for a Transportation Network Company licence:](#)

Transportation Network Companies (Ride-sharing Services)

- ? [Application](#)

? [Fees Policy](#)

If you have any questions please contact our office any time at 709-729-4517/4175 or by email to RegistrarMRD@gov.nl.ca.

Thank you for your continued support to the transportation needs of the public; have a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Sincerely,

Kelli Penney, Registrar of Motor Vehicles

Ph: 709-729-4175 (Toll free: 1-877-636-6867)

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From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 2:21 PM
To: Hoddinott, Fanny
Subject: Fwd: Remain Silent we need to open dialogue to sort out issue

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>
Date: February 2, 2024 at 2:15:53 PM NST
To: "Dutton, Sean" <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Remain Silent we need to open dialogue to sort out issue

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] 40(1)
Date: February 2, 2024 at 11:32:49 AM NST 40(1)
To: [REDACTED] "Cull, Krista"
<KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>, "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>, redsea162016@gmail.com
Subject: Remain Silent we need to open dialogue to sort out issue

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you receive them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Krista,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to discuss the recent suspension of our ride-sharing license, which was issued on January 19, 2024. As we discussed in our previous email exchange, we have been in touch with other directors of our company, Redsea Ride Sharing, to address this issue.

On Monday, we collectively emailed you, providing additional information and requesting an open conversation to resolve the matter. We understand the importance of following regulations and ensuring the safety of our passengers. Therefore, we are committed to working closely with the relevant authorities to address any concerns and meet all necessary requirements.

We kindly ask for your assistance in expediting the resolution process and lifting the suspension on our ride-sharing license. Our team is eager to resume operations and continue providing a reliable and convenient transportation service to the community.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and anticipate your prompt response. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us at redsea162016@gmail.com for any further information or clarification.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

N.B.

40(1)

Let me introduce the President of Redsea company, [REDACTED] He is one of the Redsea co-founders and currently resides in the USA. He will be fully involved in all communications to address any necessary actions that need to be taken. Redsea company provides a platform for drivers to offer their services to the community at affordable prices and with convenience. It is important to have all the necessary documentation on record to ensure a safe and reliable service. If you have any specific questions or need assistance regarding Redsea, feel free to ask!

Sincerely,

Yosief

From: [Stoodley, Sarah](#)
To: [Hoddinott, Fanny](#)
Subject: Fwd: Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks, CBC Article, Feb.1/24
Date: Monday, February 5, 2024 7:00:38 PM
Attachments: [VSV Info Sheet -2024.pdf](#)
[Vulnerable Sector Checks Explained- overview.pdf](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

40(1)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: February 5, 2024 at 6:56:29 PM NST
To: "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>, meredith.dellandrea@cbc.ca, bridget@sjwomenscentre.ca
Cc: [REDACTED] 40(1)
Subject: RE: Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks, CBC Article, Feb.1/24

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Honourable Sarah Stoodley, B.A.
Minister of Digital Government and Service,
Newfoundland and Labrador

Bridget Clarke,
Advocacy Coordinator,
St. John's Status of Women's Council.

Meredith Dellandrea,
Senior Managing Director,
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)
Newfoundland and Labrador

I read with interest the recent article published February 1st, 2024, by CBC regarding the Newfoundland/Labrador rideshare industry and criminal record checks. The article was entitled - ***"Redsea Riding owner did not submit criminal record check because he wasn't driving, minister says"*** I have appended the article here for reference.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/red-sea-riding-ride-sharing-sarah-stoodley-bridget-clarke-1.7101461>

As is with any topic reported on, or spoken of, there are several technical nuances and subject matter expertise that is available which may ensure the

accuracy and minimize the potential for downstream misrepresentation, or in this case, a false sense of security by some. Criminal record checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks are one of those largely misunderstood matters which can impact the safety and security of organizations, volunteers and most importantly, the users of those services. I certainly appreciate that the writers and those referenced in the article, are not deeply engaged in this industry. It cannot be over-stated that the subject of criminal record checks and vulnerable sector checks is patently confusing.

For clarification, and increased awareness, I would like to highlight some areas of these checks that may bring a clearer understanding of the disclosure provided by these checks, the differences, and frankly, some of the gaps. As I often state when people ask for additional information on the Vulnerable Sector Check (VSV) you are certainly not alone when it comes to fully comprehending the process, the differences and the potential disclosure that can be forthcoming to organizations requesting criminal record checks from a potential applicant. Please accept the contents not as criticism, but for what it is designed to be and that is an increased awareness document.

So, who am I and why am I writing to you? Am I credible?

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I have appeared before the Ontario government when they initiated and later introduced the **Police Record Check Reform Act**, providing clarifying information and recommendations for their legislation - which to this today remains the only provincial legislation dealing with consistent and complete legislative guidelines. This legislation is presently subject to a legislatively mandated review by the province as we speak, and I have provided guidance and comments to the province as recent as the fall of 2023. A further document was prepared and sent to the Ontario government summarizing our positions.

I have had substantial continuous dialogue with the departments of the RCMP that are responsible for regulatory and interpretive guidance on all types of Criminal Record Checks. Over the past 13 years I have met with and provided guidance and interpretations to Chiefs of Police and Records department managers across Canada on this topic - both individually and at conferences. I have delivered presentations to community organizations, private sector companies, police conferences, volunteers and volunteer organizations, community organizations and associations, all levels of government across Canada as well as provided webcasts and seminars addressing criminal record checks in Canada.

As a footnote, both the government of Canada and the Senate of Canada are presently studying areas of change within the application of Criminal Records Checks/terms of disclosure and I have co-authored lengthy responses to their initiatives on behalf of the screening industry in Canada. For your

information, more Criminal Record Checks are completed by the screening industry vendors annually than by all Canadian Police Services combined.

In short, Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector checks have been a strong focus of mine for over 13 years and I am recognized as a subject matter expert in the area, relied upon by the those within the industry, governments, clients, end users and applicants themselves, to provide knowledge and clarity to an often somewhat muddled and misunderstood landscape.

With that in mind, I want to constructively point out a few notations and comments surrounding criminal record checks which I trust will address some areas of the February 1st CBC article. I hope it will be received in the fashion it is intended.

Criminal Record Checks may be called or referenced by a number of descriptors- Police Information Checks, VS Checks, CPIC Checks, Standard Police Check, Basic Criminal Record Checks, Level One Police or Level Two police checks, Enhanced Criminal Record Checks, Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check (Ontario) and likely other terms. In the end they fall into three main buckets which largely describe what is checked, what results can/are provided and who can conduct them. Criminal record checks - all types - are essentially queries of a variety of robust, national police databanks and do not involve interviews of applicants or other personal involvement. A significant majority of private screening companies and an increasing number of police services, use innovative technology to conduct both the applications for a check and the disclosure of the results ONLINE. Results are shared with the applicant.

The results of ALL criminal record checks including VS checks should not be an immediate stop to the onboarding. The hiring body should be prepared to look at the offences through the lens of a review weighing the **Recency** of the conviction, the **Relevancy** to the job/position and the **Severity** of the offence. To do otherwise could be potentially interpreted as discriminatory if challenged. So, while the article mentions having an exploratory conversation is enabled with a VS check, that conversation and thought process should be a part of every discovered criminal conviction or outstanding charge. It is no more or less required in each style of check. Conducting criminal record checks, including a VS could be best categorized as informed decision making. No check should on its face disqualify a person from a job or position.

The three main types of Criminal Record Checks and what they discover are as follows:

1. A Basic Criminal databanks and Record Check. This returns only Indictable Convictions held in the RCMP national Repository. No Summary Convictions (lesser in penalty/severity) and no Provincial offences (i.e. liquor, traffic etc.) Conducted and provided by BOTH police services and the screening industry.

2. An Enhanced Criminal Record Check/Police Information Check/Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check. This returns a much more complete overview of both the background and present issues. It includes: the **same Indictable Convictions** in the RCMP National Repository(same as #1 above) PLUS it reveals charges in a national police records management system that

offers localized police information visibility to Summary convictions or even Indictable convictions not in the RCMP data bank/repository as yet for one reason or another; outstanding criminal charges before the courts presently; court dates; warrants for the applicant; bail conditions; prohibitions or suspensions of the applicant as imposed, and peace bonds that are in place. A very thorough search that is the most comprehensive in Canada.

Germane to this conversation is that any sex offence convictions where there has not been a pardon or record suspension approved will be disclosed in these checks. We have 4 million people in Canada with criminal records, and only a small minority have applied for record suspensions.

This check is conducted and provided by BOTH police services and the screening industry

3. The Vulnerable Sector Verification, or VS Check. This check includes all the above results and searches. It adds but ONE additional data bank that is searched, (One ONLY), that being the Pardoned Sex Offender Database, held by the RCMP. This separated data bank (unique from the National Repository) which hold the identities of Canadians who have been convicted of a one of a mandated and specific set of sexual offences (listed in the Criminal Records Act), served their time, paid all fines, been criminality free for TEN years and then applied for a Pardon or a Record Suspension (as it is known now). If approved by the National Parole Board, their convictions are not expunged or removed, but instead moved to the separated data bank This databank may be accessed for disclosure ONLY if the applicant is applying to work with Vulnerable members of our society and the organization has applied for the check. A very novel and incredibly privacy invasive check, it was initiated in the year 2000 to enhance safety.

Once the databank is searched and should there actually be a "hit" and before any downstream disclosure, the Minister of Public Safety reviews the pardoned offence against a lengthy list of established review criteria contained in the Regulations of the Criminal Records Act. Results are then transmitted back to the requesting organization. Not all positive hits are disclosed after this review – the government of the day has refined what they will disclose to organizations, based on their review. There are less than 200 positive hits a year, and as noted, not all those are disclosed to the organizations (see attached CBC article on this subject). Organizations are NOT advised that this was an "adjudicated" clear result or "nothing to disclose" when the results are sent to them. Thus, the very risk of a false or misleading sense of security for organizations can occur. Over FOUR Million VSV's are conducted annually in Canada.

What is equally an issue for many organizations is what they will do when confronted with their applicant's results that expose a historical sex offence conviction that was granted a pardon, and, the applicant has faced no criminality since the date of the offence commission to the present date of the disclosure. That delta has the possibility of being 15-20 years hence from the offence date and often even more.

The VSV is conducted ONLY by the police service in which the applicant lives NOW. The private screening industry does not conduct these checks, except where they operate technology on behalf of the police service to fulfill local checks for citizens.

The only difference between a regular Enhanced Criminal Record Check/Police Information Check and the Vulnerable Sector Check - besides the additional data bank query - is that a Vulnerable Sector check will include a check of local police records (where the applicant lives now) to determine if there exists a "pattern of behaviour" that would present a direct threat to the safety of vulnerable persons exists. The Ontario legislation has further outlined specifics on this type of pattern of risk behaviour with vulnerable individuals and when it is allowed to be reported upon. This exceptional disclosure must meet very detailed criteria over specific time periods and is rarely allowed.

Fingerprints "MAY" be required for a VSV check, which adds costs and delays to the return of results.

I have included a few documents that further explain the Vulnerable Sector Verification, detailing what it checks, what it does not, who may apply for one (it is NOT mandated, but is an available tool for organizations fitting the criteria), the limitations of the check, the processes and where many individuals and organization may operate with a misguided sense of security if their onboarding of applicants is limited solely to any type of criminal record checks. Unfortunately, that is the case in many instances and it is always recommended that in onboarding practices, criminal record checks, while important, are but one of the tools used to gauge the appropriateness of the applicant. See additional resources and attachments.

All criminal Record checks, including the Vulnerable Sector Verification, are only conducted with the required informed consent of the applicant. The parameters of that consent document are mandated by the RCMP and both police services and the private screening industry use an identical consent document. Disclosure of results is also mandated by the RCMP and there are limits as to what is disclosed. On that point, Ontario has gone further than other provinces in articulating what offences may be released/disclosed dependent upon the type of check conducted. There is a comprehensive schedule within the legislation. The private screening industry almost without exception, uses these same Ontario guidelines and standards as their consistent best practices and operational guidance.

All criminal record checks will NOT include any information pertaining to health records, mental or physical.

For your information private screening companies operate within an executed Memorandum of Understanding between the RCMP (guidelines and standards), the private screening company itself AND the third component, which is a police service who is contracted to perform the data searches and disclose the results. Accordingly, all searches conducted by private screening companies search the exact same police and national data banks as police do in their searches. Private screening companies do NOT have direct access to the RCMP or police information systems or data banks. Accordingly, the police services are compensated for their efforts which bring forth results that produce several valued differentiators: nationally consistent results/process, comprehensive results; reduced costs to a client or applicant; quicker results (often within hours) and online processes providing additional convenience to applicants and prospective employers.

Rideshare applications

In many jurisdictions across Canada there are municipal or provincial guidelines that address the background checks which must be conducted on drivers and/or operators prior to licensing. BC for example has very strong provincial legislation. Not all legislation/bylaws mandate a VSV. A Criminal Record and Judicial Matters/Enhanced check (#2 above) is frequently relied upon for drivers and operators.

If a VSV is required at the outset of onboarding/credentialing and if the driver is seeking certification annually, as is often the case, they need not get another VSV. An enhanced check (#2) is sufficient as a renewal because before an applicant can get a suspended conviction, they would have to earn a conviction that would be apparent in the criminal record check as either a charge or conviction. To get a sex offence pardoned, realistically the process takes 12-15 years from the date of the offence. Should an applicant re-offend, or exhibit ethical/moral issues after the granting of the suspension, the conviction(s) are unsealed and available to all with a standard or enhanced check (#1 or 2 above). This form of renewal can be ordered online with results within hours.

Checks conducted on backgrounds of rideshare or taxi driver operators should in my opinion include criminal record checks, just as the screening should also include drivers licence verifications and abstracts. Third party social media searches or even reference checks/past employer verifications are also items that can be considered – all of which could bring reputational damage to the industry and the regulator/government agency if there was uncovered negative feedback. All are readily available in an online process.

As to whether the owners of the services should be checked as well as drivers, that is a localized decision. There are factors of openness, credibility and fairness which would suggest there is merit to protect and ensure the public's confidence in the licencing process that would support that decision. As was apparent in the present circumstances, the confidence in those doing the checks and of the rideshare/taxi industry could be positively enhanced by these checks, as would be the increased feeling of passenger safety.

Criminal record checks reflect their searched history at a point in time when the check was done - no further. An added component to consider is a self disclosure policy. Applicants while in between conducted checks, may be charged or convicted of a criminal offence that is impactful to their position. Policy should dictate an immediate disclosure to a named individual should they be charged or convicted. A forthright discussion should ensue.

As indicated earlier, the purpose surrounding this document is strictly to increase the awareness of individuals tasked with making decisions or legislation surrounding criminal record checks and those who are reporting on the subject. I readily appreciate the complexities within the subject.

I am available for and would be pleased to provide additional guidance or background information on this subject should you require. My contacts are listed below.

Additional resources.

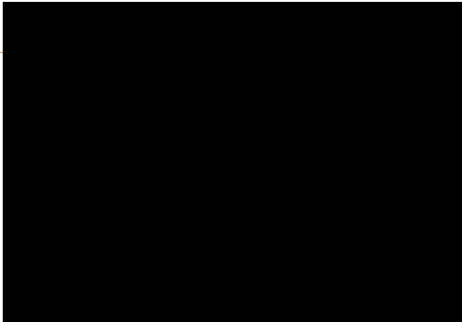
- The Criminal Records Act. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-47/>
- The Criminal Records

Regulations <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2000-303/index.html>

- The RCMP website with respect to Criminal Record Checks. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/types-criminal-background-checks>
 - The Public Safety Ministerial Directive of 2010. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnsprnc/ns-trnsprnc/mnstrl-drctn-rcmp2010-grc2010-en.aspx>
 - The Dissemination of Criminal Record Information policy of the RCMP. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/dissemination-criminal-record-information-policy>
 - CBC News article in 2018, (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/vulnerable-record-checks-act-improperly-applied-1.4651608>)
 - Ontario legislation <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/15p30>
 - Public Safety Canada's and Volunteer Canada handbook on screening - The Screening Handbook, 2012 Edition
- Vulnerable Sector Checks explained - both an overview explanation and a more extensive report (see appended documents below)

All the best,

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Vulnerable Sector Checks Explained – Overview

Be assured, you are not alone if you do not understand what this check is or who requires it. There is often indecision as to whether a client should request from their applicant a Vulnerable Sector Verification (VSV), or as it often called a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC).

Hopefully this paper will provide a summary education and awareness documentation to assist you arriving at an informed decision.

Let's start with a bit of history on this check.

It was permitted as an additional check in 2000 when the Criminal Records Act of Canada was amended to include legislation that *permitted* this query to protect children and vulnerable persons. It is important to understand at the outset that the VSV is **allowed but NOT MANDATED** in a very specific set of circumstances.

The one step result of this separated data bank is the only difference between an Enhanced Criminal Record Check and the VSV.

What is a Vulnerable Sector Check?

The Vulnerable Sector check "permits" a review of the RCMP's pardoned, or record suspended data bank within their repositories.

This separated data bank lists those individuals in Canada, who have been convicted of a sexual offence, been tried and convicted, served their entire sentence and any parole/probation, waited the mandatory ten years of good behavior (no other charges or documented immoral behavior) and then applied to the Canadian government for a record suspension. Once applied for, the government approval, if granted, may take 8-18 months. A record suspension is the modernized term for a Pardon.

In the end the legislative change allows for organizations to have visibility into whether an applicant has applied for and received a pardon or record suspension for a specified sexual offence.

It is available only in Canada, and it **ONLY** exposes suspended Canadian convictions for sexual offences. Suspensions/pardons granted for all other criminal convictions (i.e. drugs, property crimes, impaired driving, robbery etc.) remain completely off limits and will not be discovered.

Organizations may wish to consult the RCMP site to review the FAQ's listed or the Public Safety Canada's [The Screening Handbook, 2012 Edition](#) which provides organizations with guidance on what level of criminal record screening they may require and how best to determine their screening requirements.

What does a Vulnerable Sector Check NOT include?

There are often misperceptions as to what the Vulnerable Sector Check reports results from, with the view being that a VSV includes more than it actually does. For example, it has been positioned that the check result contains: non criminal convictions (i.e. highway traffic act or liquor violations); a Sex Offender Registry check; an Interpol query; opinions of requesting police services on suitability of the candidate; United States conviction records, or offences other than sex offences that have been

pardoned. NONE of these are allowed or included. Additionally, it is a query restricted only to those residing in Canada.

What is the process for a Vulnerable Sector Checks?

1. Organizations or employers requesting this check must be able to substantiate they meet the restrictive criteria for these queries.

The following quotation from the RCMP website explains the circumstances and specific criteria where it is allowed:

“People who volunteer or have jobs where they are in positions of trust or authority over children (under age 18) or vulnerable persons can be asked to obtain a vulnerable sector check.

*Being in a position of trust or authority is more than just having contact with children or vulnerable persons. To meet the legal requirements for a vulnerable sector check, **the nature of the position – not the person – must cause the person to have authority over, or trust of, children or vulnerable persons.** (emphasis added)*

Vulnerable sector check requests have been refused to be completed when the applicant’s position does not fit the criteria.

It is an offence to conduct a vulnerable sector check if the position does not meet the requirements of the [Criminal Records Act](#).

2. Once the organization has met this standard, they can request their applicant consent to this check and apply. The check may only be completed when the applicant attends at the police service where they presently reside. If the position does not meet the requirements of the [Criminal Records Act](#) for a vulnerable sector check, it is illegal for the police service to conduct one.
3. The check is requested and is subject to a review by the local police to ensure it fits the limited criteria as stated above.
4. The police service will do the Enhanced Criminal Record check, identical to the ScreeningCanada service, i.e. criminal convictions in the RCMP National repository, check the CPIC Investigative data bank (outstanding charges before the court, bail conditions if any, prohibitions, warrants) and also the Police Information Portal (a national police records management system) for additional convictions not presently populated in the RCMP repository. This latter search reveals criminal convictions which are Indictable offence (serious) and also summary convictions usually limited by practice to being within the past five years (less serious). They will then select the one additional query of the separated data bank of record suspended/pardoned sexual offenders and request that check be conducted.
5. The query of the data bank is done by the RCMP and results returned to the police service applying for the check. It is then communicated to the organization requesting the check. Prior to being returned to the police service, a mandated review is conducted by Public Safety Canada.
6. Important to note:

- a. The separated data bank of suspended sex offenders is not one which is routinely cleansed or updated. By that, we mean, it is historical from inception and contains individuals who have passed away or are now in their 70's, or older.
- b. It contains approximately 14,000 names and dates of birth. It is relatively static and has not grown substantially in the past five years due to restrictive changes implemented by the government of the day. An overwhelming component of individuals within the data bank are men.
- c. The youngest person in this data base remains to be a male, born February 28th, 1986. (38 in February 2024)
- d. If an individual who has been granted a pardon and it is found later that they lied in their application, or they exhibit immoral behaviors, or, are subsequently charged/convicted, their details are no longer subject to the privileges of the suspension and removed from the separated data bank. Applicant's criminal records are then exposed to any routine record search of the RCMP National Repository - either a standard or enhanced criminal record check.
- e. All individuals in the separated data bank were approved after an application and a thorough review by the National Parole Board for a pardon/suspension and have remained free of any charge/conviction since the time they committed the sexual offence, or any other later conviction. If we do the calculations, that could mean the offence that was pardoned could realistically be at least 12-15 years old and likely even more. The individual has remained "clean" since at least since the date of the conviction(s) being suspended.

What if there is a suspended record for a sexual offence discovered?

"Hits" are indeed rare. Less than 150 are discovered annually of the approximately 4 to 5 million Vulnerable Sector Checks requested annually in Canada. If the RCMP check reveals the applicant is in the data base, the information **must then be reviewed** by the federal Ministry of Public Safety **BEFORE** it is released to the police service and then the requesting organization/applicant.

The Ministry officials have a strict "relevancy" criteria list which is outlined in the Criminal Record Act regulation that they utilize to establish whether the record is allowed to be discovered.

This review includes consideration of: the offences they were convicted of; any other convictions they may have; the nature of the offences as to degree of violence; does it involve children or vulnerable persons or a breach of trust: the age of the applicant at time of conviction, and, the sentences imposed at time of conviction.; the length of time since the conviction and the behaviour since the offence date.

Interestingly and very importantly, a recent CBC News article in 2018, (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/vulnerable-record-checks-act-improperly-applied-1.4651608>) revealed and confirmed some alarming statistics relative to a return of the hit or the

return being marked as no record located. Prior to 2016, the government returned over 95% of the discovered "hits". Since 2016, the government of the day has reviewed the interpretation of the regulation and the number of returned hits is less than 40% of actual matches. Translation - people with suspended records for sex offences are being returned to organizations as CLEAR or no record. There is no additional info communicated that this is an adjudicated clear by the government or a simple no record located!

The CBC investigation contains an insightful quote from the RC MP at the time that states: *"the RCMP has taken issue with changes the Liberal government made to criminal background checks and the pardons system, pointing to cases of people with "disturbing" records applying to work with vulnerable individuals."*

Are fingerprints required for this check?

Recent changes in 2012 to the process have resulted in a not insignificant number of males mainly being required to obtain, at additional cost, fingerprints to validate their identity.

Explanation? The vulnerable sector check is a name and date of birth check that is run initially on the applicant's name, gender and DOB, but then a second check is automatically completed on their date of birth ONLY, capturing matching records ten years on either side of the applicant's date of birth. If their DOB matches the date of birth in this wider search, they are then mandated to submit their fingerprints to validate who they say they are.

The RCMP is precluded from saving fingerprints in civil collections such as this, with the end result that applicants can expect to re-submit their fingerprints each and every time they are requested to complete a VSV.

The cost of fingerprinting can range from \$45 upwards and must add an RCMP processing fee of \$25 if the position sought is not a volunteer one.

What should I be considering as a hiring manager?

First, ensure that your "position" meets the criteria of the legislation and that the check is in fact allowed. Some positions may even be mandated by municipal or provincial legislation to conduct a VSV. You may ask, is my applicant under 37 years of age?

Secondly, if it is a discretionary additional query, you should review if the results of the check are adding relevant and valued information to your hiring process.

Thirdly, if there is a hit returned, will your internal human resources policies allow reference to it if the individual has been clear for 12-15 years or more? Will you feel secure that a No Record located is actually the true result, or do you have concerns this is one of the sixty plus percent that are an adjudicated result.

Importantly, Will the resort to the results of this hit and the exclusion of the individual perhaps raise the issue of discriminatory hiring practices brought forth, especially if the offence date is at least 15-20 years ago, was not a serious offence and the applicant has led an exemplary life, free of other convictions since the date of the offence.

Where can I review additional information?

Please check the RCMP website under Criminal Record Checks.

Info Sheet - Vulnerable Sector Verifications (“VSV”) in Canada

Objectives of the document:

- Enhanced awareness of the law and the technical nuances of the Vulnerable Sector Verification
- Drive consistent messaging both within and outside the screening industry on the VSV for engagement with prospects, clients, policymakers, media and the public
- Identify the potential unknowns and gaps in the VSV offering, as well as common misconceptions, that can create a false sense of security and that which contributes to significant overuse and undue reliance of the VSV
- Encourage industry-wide consistency, best practices, and compliance with legislative guidelines for both screening providers and end users.

Introduction

Established by the federal Criminal Records Act, the Vulnerable Sector Verification (“VSV”), also known as a ‘vulnerable sector check’, provides an exceptional privacy disclosure of pardoned or suspended conviction information. The VSV was originally created in 2000 by the federal government to increase the safety of children under 18 and vulnerable adults within organizations or locations where they may be in a position of dependence on, or placed at greater risk by, the actions of persons in a position of authority or trust. The VSV is available only in Canada, and only to Canadian residents. The federal Criminal Records Act, the accompanying Criminal Records Regulations, Public Safety Ministerial Directive (2010) and the RCMP Dissemination of Criminal Record Information Policy, noted below in the appended resources, create the VSV and describe the definitions, legal requirements, and application, while outlining the process to obtain this unique disclosure. Other guidance on VSVs can be found in the resource documents section below.

While the VSV check may be a relevant tool for some organizations, there is no federal mandate to complete it; each organization must determine its own risks and needs. However, some associations, regulators or other bodies may mandate members, or regulated organizations, to use the VSV.

This document is designed to provide information about the history, nature, requirements, and limitations of the VSV.

History

While the VSV was once conducted by third party providers, such as background screening companies, the RCMP declared in November 2009 that this practice would end, and the restriction on third party providers conducting VSVs continues to this day. Apart from providing intake and technology support to some police services, the VSV itself must be conducted, and results delivered, by the applicant’s local police service of jurisdiction where the applicant **currently** resides only.

The Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA), screening companies, and police providers have advocated for the RCMP to allow third party providers to assist in both relieving police services of many of these time-consuming checks and achieve a timelier result to the millions of Canadians for whom no positive “hits” will be found and they in turn may also have to obtain fingerprints.

Anecdotal observations by PBSA members indicate that over time, misconceptions of the process have developed, resulting in overreliance on the VSV where it may not in fact be compliant with the Act, or necessary, including in province- or industry-specific rules mandating VSVs in certain circumstances. This overreliance may result in additional expense and time for applicants when the search may neither be

legally required nor provide the information expected. In the face of these misconceptions, third-party screening providers are often asked by prospects and clients to clarify the VSV and its application. The intent of this document is to support PBSA members in providing a consistent and accurate baseline knowledge of the VSV, allowing individuals and organizations, as well as the general public, to make informed decisions around its use. Clients may wish to seek legal guidance for additional direction.

What is a VSV?

A VSV has three components: the first two are already readily available frequently combined into a “police information check” or “criminal record and judicial matters check” product, as are searches for criminal convictions and non-conviction police records in local, provincial, and federal police databases (in contrast to a simple criminal record check, which only searches for criminal convictions held in the RCMP’s National Repository of Criminal Records). What sets a VSV apart is the third additional data bank query: a check to see if a person has a pardon or record suspension for a sexual offence listed in Schedule 2 of the Criminal Records Act (referred to hereafter as “scheduled offences”). The first two components, (the “police information check”), will result in disclosure of all convictions for, or other disclosable police information about, including sexual offences that have not been pardoned or suspended. This captures the overwhelming number of sex offenders in Canada.

For additional clarity, a positive disclosure from the pardoned sex offender search component of the VSV will occur only if all the following conditions are met:

- the applicant has been charged and convicted for a Schedule 2 sex offence in Canada;
- the applicant has completed all terms of incarceration, probation, parole and paid all fines;
- the applicant has been of good behavior for ten years with no additional charges/convictions which would negate the pardon/record suspension application;
- the applicant has applied for the pardon or record suspension to the National Parole Board (NPB); the pardon or record suspension application has been reviewed by the NPB and then approved for the pardon or record suspension; and
- the applicant has been of continuous good behavior since being granted the pardon or record suspension so as to not have the pardon or record suspension revoked.

It can easily take 12-15 years and often longer from the date of the offence to the pardon being issued. A pardoned individual must maintain their good character.

During this pardoned sex offender search, if a potential pardoned or suspended sex offence is found, a detailed review must then be done by Public Safety Canada to determine if the disclosure should be made to the police service and organization requesting the search. Full information on the Public Safety review criteria utilized are found within the Criminal Records Regulations (appended). Frequently, after this review, applicants with a pardoned/suspended record discovered do not have this record disclosed to organizations.

A VSV does not contain any of the following:

- Information concerning any other pardoned or suspended convictions, for example, drugs, violent crimes, fraud, and property crimes. Pardons or record suspensions granted for all other offences are rightly not discoverable in a civil background check;
- Convictions from outside Canada;
- Whether or not an individual is named on a sex offender registry, which is accessible to police services only;

- Whether or not the individual has investigational findings with municipal or provincial child abuse registries;
- An opinion from police on the applicant's suitability for the position. Applicants are not interviewed or vetted by police; the VSV is strictly an electronic data bank query review only.

Local Police policies and practices, as well as turnaround times regarding a VSV can be geographically unique across Canada, based on their interpretations of these articles of guidance and their oversight bodies' policies. In British Columbia, the VSV may be conducted by the Provincial Solicitor General, via the Criminal Records Review Act. Only Ontario has guiding legislation.

The Pardoned Sex Offender Data Bank.

This data bank, which is searched for a VSV, is managed by the RCMP, contains approximately 14,000 names and dates of birth, and is not routinely purged. The population contained in the database is overwhelmingly male, and solely tied to individuals who received a pardon or record suspension for a sexual offence.

Evolving application and interpretations of the Criminal Records Act have critically reduced the availability of pardons/records suspensions for those convicted of sex offences upon vulnerable persons since 2012. The age of the youngest individual known to be in the Pardoned Sex Offender data bank has a date of birth from February 1984 and the data bank has not been purged for individuals who are now deceased.

The goal of the VSV is that only those individuals with convictions for sex offences will be discovered and potentially, disclosed. However, since an individual may have additional offences pardoned or suspended at the same time as the sex offender record was pardoned, on occasion, those additional pardoned or suspended offences "may" also be released at the same time.

Over five million VSVs are conducted annually, resulting in only 130-150 actual hits. That number of hits is further reduced by the Public Safety Canada review process. This is a very small number of actual VSV records disclosed through this process.

How long does a VSV take?

As with all criminal record checks, a VSV is usually nothing more than a computerized search of relevant data banks which, in principle, can be done with a short turnaround time. What sets the VSV apart in this respect is that there is frequently a requirement for fingerprints to confirm identity where there is a match of the applicant's sex and birthdate, but not name, and positive identification is required to ensure the applicant is not avoiding detection through a legal name change. In those cases where fingerprints must be taken and sent to the RCMP for comparison, which can be a lengthy and privacy-invasive process. This requirement **most often affects men in the 40-55 age group**. The reason for this targeted group is that any record will have a 10 year +/- recommendation and this encompasses the largest group of VSV applicants with possible records on file.

Who is authorized to apply for and conduct a VSV?

The VSV must be conducted by the police service of local jurisdiction where the applicant currently resides. A gap exists here in that a recently moved applicant, or an applicant who lives and works in different locations, must satisfy the local police that they are a current resident, which may be difficult in those circumstances. Police services will only do VSVs for their own residents. Only the organization or individual responsible for the vulnerable persons may authorize an application for the VSV. While the applicant generally must take the application to the police, they must present to the police signed

documentation from the organization that outlines the role and position sought and that clearly identifies the applicant's position as being one of trust over vulnerable persons. It is an offence to conduct a VSV if the position does not meet the requirements of the Criminal Records Act.

As importantly noted on the RCMP website: "being in a position of trust or authority is more than just having contact with children or vulnerable persons. To meet the legal requirements for a VSV, as stated on the RCMP website directly, *the nature of the position* – not the person – must cause the person to have authority over, or trust of, children or vulnerable persons". Simply having (or potentially having) incidental or casual contact with vulnerable persons during the course of duties, will not necessarily qualify an applicant for a VSV, unless, their role actually puts them in a position of trust or authority. As a real example, those positions considered to be administrative, janitorial, or Board roles within education sectors are often requested to complete VSV checks, but they do not actually meet the requirements of the search. These are situations where the VSV is required for the principal individual applicants only and not all the other types of positions within the environment. Police services may refuse to conduct the VSV if the criteria are not met. In some cases, regulators and organizations have created policies surrounding VSV checks that conflict with these rules.

Does an individual need a VSV each time a police check is conducted?

Not necessarily. Once a VSV is completed, if the individual remains within the same role or position, and criminal record checks are conducted regularly, there is no opportunity for the applicant to receive a new record suspension without a routine criminal record check showing the conviction well in advance. Logically, one must be convicted first - creating a discoverable criminal record - before a record suspension application can even be done. Of course, as the Public Safety Canada decision on disclosure of pardoned or suspended offences is based on the applicant's role, if the individual materially changes their role, they should be rechecked. If the applicant changes roles or positions, a new VSV will be required. If you are a PBSA member delivering criminal checks and your customer is requesting regular criminal checks, it might be helpful to remind them another VSV may not be required.

Organizational policy considerations

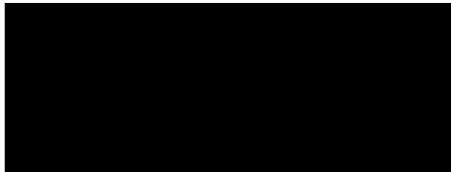
Organizations requesting VSV's should consider what steps they will take should an applicant's pardoned or suspended sex offence be disclosed. To remain fair and compliant with human rights and privacy legislation in many Canadian jurisdictions, they may wish to proactively consult with legal counsel to avoid any discriminatory hiring practices resulting from pardoned or suspended convictions.

Resource Documents

- The Criminal Records Act. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-47/>
- The Criminal Records Regulations <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2000-303/index.html>
- The RCMP website with respect to Criminal Record Checks. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/types-criminal-background-checks>
- The Public Safety Ministerial Directive of 2010. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnsprnc/ns-trnsprnc/mnstrl-drctn-rcmp2010-grc2010-en.aspx>
- The Dissemination of Criminal Record Information policy of the RCMP. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/dissemination-criminal-record-information-policy>

February 19, 2024

31(1)(l)



40(1)

Thank you for your correspondence dated February 5, 2024, regarding Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks.


On December 21, 2023, the Provincial Government opened the application process for operators interested in offering ride-sharing services in the province. To operate as a ride-sharing service, a Transportation Network Company (TNC) licence is required from the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. The application requirements include confirmation that a Certified Criminal Records Check has been received for all affiliated drivers and a copy of the applicant's policies and procedures related to these criminal record checks. The applicant must also provide the driver's licence number for all affiliated drivers so that the required Class 4 (taxi/ride-share only) licence can be confirmed.

Furthermore, one of the conditions for maintaining a TNC licence is that the ride-sharing company must ensure that all affiliated drivers are not subject to any undertaking, release order, recognizance, probation order, prohibition order or other court issued order prohibiting or preventing them from performing any function relating to the provision of a ride-sharing service.

The focus of these safety checks is the driver because of their direct engagement with the passenger. If the owner(s) of a ride-sharing company is also a driver, then the owner(s) are expected to do same.

For more information about the ride-sharing program in our Province, and the safety measures put in place to protect passengers, please visit our website: [Transportation Network Companies \(Ride-sharing Service\) - Digital Government and Service NL](#).

40(1)

Thank you very much for the information provided. The experience and knowledge you gained  is very insightful and valued. If you have any questions, please contact our Deputy Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Krista Cull at kristacull@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,

SARAH STOODLEY, MHA
District of Mount Scio
Minister

Date : 2/19/2024 2:03:19 PM

From : [REDACTED] 40(1)

To : "Hoddinott, Fanny" FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca

Cc : "Stoodley, Sarah" SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca

Subject : Re: Letter from The Honourable Sarah Stoodley

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for the update and the letter.
Should the Minister wish additional information, suggestions, or best practices concerning your legislation impacting rideshare and taxi licences, I am always available.

40(1)

[REDACTED]

All the best,

[REDACTED] 40(1)

On Mon, Feb 19, 2024 at 10:20 AM Hoddinott, Fanny
<FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Good Afternoon, [REDACTED] 40(1)

Please see the attached letter from The Honourable Sarah Stoodley, Minister of Digital Government and Service NL, in response to your correspondence of February 5, 2024, concerning criminal record checks and vulnerable sector checks. Thank you.

Fanny

FANNY HODDINOTT

Administrative Assistant to the Honourable Sarah Stoodley

Department of Digital Government and Service NL

2nd Floor, West Block, Confederation Building

709.729.4712 (t)


709.729.4754 (f)

fannyhoddinott@gov.nl.ca

www.gov.nl.ca

31(1)(l)

-----< HPE Records Manager record Information >-----


Title : Response - February 5, 2024 - Criminal Record Checks and
Vulnerable Sector Checks, CBC Article

“This email and any attached files are intended for the sole use of the primary and copied addressee(s) and may contain privileged and/or confidential information. Any distribution, use or copying by any means of this information is strictly prohibited. If you received this email in error, please delete it immediately and notify the sender.”

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:38 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Media Headlines - Friday, January 26

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 10:08 AM
To: Bannister, Mike <mbannister@gov.nl.ca>; Bishop, Jean E <JeanBishop@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Connors, Kara <karaconnors@gov.nl.ca>; Duggan, Thomas <ThomasDuggan@gov.nl.ca>; Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Healy, Mark <MarkHealy@gov.nl.ca>; Jones, Scott <ScottJones@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>; Putt, Susan <SusanPutt@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Andrew <AndrewRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>; White, Blair <BlairWhite@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Media Headlines - Friday, January 26

VOCM

Man Charged With Impaired Following Single-Vehicle Collision in St. John's Jan 26, 2024 | 7:03 AM

A 43-year-old man is facing an impaired driving charge following a single-vehicle collision in St. John's yesterday evening.

Police responded to the collision in the centre city area shortly after 5 p.m.

Witnesses at the scene told officers the driver showed signs of impairment. The man was taken to police headquarters to undergo testing by a drug recognition officer.

The man was released to appear in court at a later date.

New Members Appointed to Workplace NL Board of Directors Jan 25, 2024 | 5:38 PM

The provincial government has announced various appointments and reappointments to Workplace NL's Board of Directors.

John Peddle and Greg Viscount have been reappointed as chairperson and employer representative respectively.

New to the board are James Farrell and David Hammond as workers reps, while Patsy Coish-Snow and Wayne Pardy are on as employers.

The reappointment of Viscount was based on a recommendation by the NL Employers Council, and Farrell's appointment is based on a recommendation from the Federation of Labour.

All others were appointed following a merit-based process.

Man Charged With Impaired Following Multi-Vehicle Collision on Outer Ring Road

Jan 25, 2024 | 4:08 PM

A C.B.S. man has been charged with impaired following an early morning collision on the TCH in St. John's.

Emergency crews first responded to reports of a multi-vehicle collision near the Team Gushue Highway, just after 8 a.m.

Police say a pickup truck travelling in the eastbound lane rear ended a sedan, resulting in that vehicle crossing the median and colliding with an SUV travelling westbound.

The drivers of the sedan and SUV were taken to hospital for what are believed to be non-life threatening injuries.

The 33-year-old driver of the truck has now been charged with impaired driving causing bodily harm. His license has been suspended.

The investigation remains active and anyone with information is asked to contact the RNC or Crime Stoppers.

Meanwhile, while attending to the accident police noticed numerous drivers slowing down to take pictures and videos of the scene on their cell phones.

As a result, seven drivers have been ticketed.

CBC

Police charge C.B.S. man with impaired driving after accident that closed Outer Ring Road

RNC tickets multiple drivers for recording accident while driving

CBC News · Posted: Jan 25, 2024 9:31 AM NST | Last Updated: January 25

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary say they've arrested a suspected impaired driver following an accident that forced the closure of a section of the Trans-Canada Highway on Thursday morning.

Police said Thursday afternoon that an eastbound pickup truck rear-ended a sedan, resulting in the sedan crossing the median and colliding with a westbound SUV. The drivers of the sedan and SUV were sent to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, said the RNC.

Police say they've arrested the driver of the pickup truck, a 33-year-old man from Conception Bay South, charging him with impaired driving and impaired driving causing bodily harm. His licence has also been suspended, say police.

The RNC also ticketed multiple rubberneckers with phones in hand following an accident that shut down both sides of the Outer Ring Road in St. John's on Thursday morning.

The police force said several drivers passed by the multi-vehicle crash with their phones out, taking pictures and recording video of the scene.

"Please pass through the collision scene attentively with first responders on foot," reads a post from the constabulary on social media.

The crash happened around 8:30 a.m. near the Team Gushue exit on the Outer Ring Road. Traffic quickly backed up in both directions of the divided highway, clogging all four lanes for long stretches.

NTV

Man facing impaired driving charge after collision in St. John's

Posted: January 26, 2024 8:31 am

— By Web Team

On Thursday evening the RNC responded to a single vehicle collision in St. John's.

Multiple witnesses at the scene advised officers that they believed the male driver was showing signs of impairment.

Officers detained the 43-year-old male and he was taken to police headquarters where he underwent testing by an RNC Drug Recognition Officer.

The male was charged with impaired operation of a motor vehicle. He was released from custody and will appear for court at a later date.

The Telegram

'It's misleading and it needs to be corrected'

Woman, 78, at risk of losing her vehicle, frustrated with Motor Registration Division

The Telegram (St. John's) 26 Jan 2024 CAMERON KILFOY cameron.kilfoy@saltwire.com
[@cameronkilfoy](https://twitter.com/cameronkilfoy)

Helen Forsey, 78, says she is facing a car conundrum. She said the trouble between her and the Motor Registration Division has left her frustrated.

"It isn't at all necessary. It isn't at all warranted. It is harassment," said Forsey.

Forsey said she was preparing to store her car for the winter, as she does every year. During the time the car is stored, she removes her liability insurance due to the fact she won't be driving.

"I bought my car in 2016. I have done this every year and have never had a problem," Forsey said.

However, this year, she received notifications suggesting insurance cancellation, she said.

Due to the mix-up, she is at risk of losing her vehicle, she said.

'IT NEEDS TO BE CORRECTED'

"On Nov. 11, I got an official email warning about the supposed end of my insurance policy."

Puzzled by the notification, she contacted both her insurance company and Motor Registration, Forsey said.

“Motor Registration assured me it was a standard notification. It was due to a partnership they had with the insurance industry,” she said. “I thought it was sorted.” But the warnings kept coming, and on Dec. 1, 2023, she received a threat that her vehicle registration could be suspended, she said.

Her efforts to obtain clarification from Motor Registration failed, she said.

“It’s misleading and it needs to be corrected.”

FLAW IN SYSTEM

Forsey says she contacted Motor Registration many times to resolve the issue, and she found the official letters to be deceptive, revealing a flaw in the system.

“The system they have isn’t working and that’s the problem. Their system flagged my vehicle despite the fact I had proper coverage.”

Forsey contacted the office of Digital Government and Service NL and spoke with minister Sarah Stoodley about her situation.

Forsey said the authorities explained the notifications as part of preventing uninsured driving.

MUCH GREATER HASSLE

“I didn’t challenge Stoodley on that, but in my opinion, it wouldn’t make things safer,” said Forsey.

“Stoodley said too many were driving without liability (insurance) and that had to be stopped.”

Forsey said she was offered the option of keeping her plates for a year if she followed specific procedures, a proposal she considered unnecessary.

“All this was a much greater hassle to me rather than a solution to a perceived problem,” she said.

Forsey said her car is still off the road and no resolution has been presented to her.

MAINTAINING VALID INSURANCE

In response to Forsey’s situation, the Department of Digital Government and Service NL provided details on the requirements for vehicle insurance in the province.

“It is the individual’s responsibility to maintain valid insurance coverage while operating a vehicle on public roads,” the department stated.

The department also referred to the procedure for contesting registration suspensions due to insurance issues — an online submission option or direct contact with the Motor Registration Division.

“Once an active policy is confirmed, suspensions are lifted, with affected owners notified,” the department said.

INSURANCE VALIDATION

The department said the insurance validation program is something people can turn to when in a situation like Forsey's.

The program aims to ensure accurate tracking of insurance status, enabling timely warnings to vehicle owners when discrepancies arise.

Additionally, the department said there is the option for owners to declare seasonal use.

"This option safeguards against unnecessary registration suspensions during inactive months," the department added.

Ride-sharing rules need to be fixed, Opposition says

Tories say ride-sharing application process needs to be fixed

The Telegram (St. John's) 26 Jan 2024 JUANITA MERCER [@thetelegram.com](mailto:juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com)
[@juanitamercer_](https://www.thetelegram.com/@juanitamercer_)

As he stood in the Confederation Building lobby Thursday afternoon, Progressive Conservative Leader Tony Wakeham said Digital Government and Service NL Minister Sarah Stoodley should be the one standing there talking to reporters.

Wakeham said he has concerns about the ride-sharing licence application process, calling it "a total disaster."

On Tuesday, Jan. 23, Stoodley's department confirmed it suspended the province's first ride-sharing licence on Friday, Jan. 19, the same day a news release went out congratulating the company, Redsea Riding, and its CEO and co-founder Yosief Tesfamicael on the accomplishment.

The department said new information was brought to its attention potentially related to the licensee, and the matter was under further review.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE CHARGES

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary's Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Unit launched an investigation against a person named Yosief Tesfamicael after receiving a complaint in May 2021.

Tesfamicael was charged that month with one count each of sexual violence against two youth, including sexual assault, sexual interference, child exploitation, and committing an indecent act.

He also faces two counts of corrupting the morals of a minor and two counts of making sexually explicit material available to a minor.

Tesfamicael, 43, is alleged to have committed the offences in Mount Pearl between Aug. 6, 2013 and May 3, 2021.

He is scheduled for trial in St. John's on some of those charges this fall.

On Thursday, Wakeham questioned how someone who is an alleged sex offender could get a licence to operate a ride-sharing service. He said the process needs to be fixed.

"I think the minister owes an explanation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador on exactly how this type of mistake could happen," Wakeham said.

REDSEA MET REQUIREMENTS

Saltwire requested an interview with Stoodley on Wednesday, but her department sent an emailed statement instead.

The statement said the Motor Registration Division evaluated Redsea Riding's application, determined it met the requirements, and issued a licence.

The statement said applicants for licences to operate a ride-sharing service are required to provide proof that they obtained certified criminal record checks for all drivers, and if the applicant is a corporation, it also requires a current Certificate of Good Standing from the Registry of Companies.

The statement said that once licensed, the licence holder is required to ensure all drivers have a Class 4 driver's licence and are not subject to a court-issued order preventing them from performing any function relating to providing a ridesharing service.

Four-vehicle crash closes TCH in St. John's

The Telegram (St. John's) 26 Jan 2024 telegram@thetelegram.com @Stjohnstelegram

One person had to be extricated from their vehicle and at least two people were taken to hospital after a four-vehicle collision during the morning rush-hour on the Trans-canada Highway westbound in St. John's Thursday, Jan. 25.

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary said it has arrested a 33-year-old Conception Bay South man in relation to the crash and charged him with impaired driving.

The crash occurred shortly after 8 a.m. just east of the Team Gushue Highway.

Upon arrival, officers observed the scene and assisted the St. John's Regional Fire Department and paramedics in providing support to the occupants of the vehicles involved. RNC collision analysts determined that a pickup truck travelling eastbound collided with the rear-end of a sedan, resulting in the sedan crossing the median and colliding with an SUV travelling westbound.

The operator of the sedan and the SUV were taken to hospital for treatment of injuries believed to be non-life-threatening.

St. John's Regional Fire Department platoon chief Dean Foley told Saltwire none of the injuries were considered serious even though there was extensive damage to a number of the vehicles involved.

The driver of the pickup truck was charged with impaired driving causing bodily harm and impaired driving while over 80 mg of alcohol.

His licence has also been suspended.

The crash closed all four lanes of the TCH in the area of the Team Gushue Highway and left a large amount of debris on the road. Traffic came to a stop in both directions for more than an hour.

While examining the collision scene, officers observed multiple drivers using cellphones to take video or photos of the scene, police said, and seven drivers were issued tickets for using a cellphone while operating a motor vehicle.

The RNC reopened the highway later in the morning after its investigation.

The investigation into the collision remains active and the RNC is asking anyone with information to assist the investigation to contact the RNC at 709-729-8000. If people wish to remain anonymous, they can contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222TIPS (8477) or visit www.nlcrimestoppers.com.

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR
Media Relations Manager
Digital Government and Service NL
709-729-4748

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From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:40 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Media Headlines - Tuesday, January 30

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 9:13 AM
To: Bannister, Mike <mbannister@gov.nl.ca>; Bishop, Jean E <JeanBishop@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Connors, Kara <karaconnors@gov.nl.ca>; Duggan, Thomas <ThomasDuggan@gov.nl.ca>; Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Healy, Mark <MarkHealy@gov.nl.ca>; Jones, Scott <ScottJones@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>; Putt, Susan <SusanPutt@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Andrew <AndrewRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>; White, Blair <BlairWhite@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Media Headlines - Tuesday, January 30

VOCM

Police Confirm Death of Second Woman in TCH Crash Near Arnold's Cove

Jan 29, 2024 | 3:46 PM

A second woman has died due to a two vehicle crash on the TCH near Arnold's Cove.

On January 21, police were called to reports of a collision between an SUV and a car on the Trans Canada near Arnold's Cove at 3:15 p.m. that afternoon.

Police confirm that the 22-year-old driver of the car has succumbed to her injuries. The 22-year-old passenger of the car died at the scene.

The driver of the SUV was rescued from his burning vehicle by bystanders. Police say the 71-year-old man showed signs of impairment so a blood sample was obtained. That investigation continues.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Clarenville RCMP or Crime Stoppers.

Around 600 Electric Vehicles Purchased by NLers Over Past Year

Jan 29, 2024 | 3:31 PM

Close to 600 electric vehicles were purchased by consumers in Newfoundland and Labrador last year as the move away from gas and diesel-powered vehicles continues to emerge.

Drive Electric NL says our numbers pale in comparison to other provinces. In British Columbia, for example, one in four drivers has an electric vehicle. Newfoundland and Labrador is nowhere near that percentage, but Jon Seary of Drive Electric says that will change over the next ten years.

Seary says the vast majority of owners of electric cars charge them at home—not at a public charger.

People who are commuting from outside the city or visiting the province from away are the ones who will be using the public chargers, says Seary. There are 33 fast charging sites in the province currently with plans to add ultra fast capacity to some of the busier ones which means you'll have time for a coffee and a bathroom break before you'll be on your way again.

CBC

2nd woman dead following head-on crash near Arnold's Cove

Driver of the vehicle died on scene last week

CBC News · Posted: Jan 29, 2024 4:03 PM NST | Last Updated: January 29

A second woman involved in a fatal head-on collision on the Trans-Canada Highway near Arnold's Cove last week has died.

The 22-year-old woman was the passenger inside a Hyundai Elantra, which collided with a Chevrolet Equinox SUV on the highway on Jan. 21.

The woman had been transported to hospital in Clarenville and was transferred to St. John's but succumbed to her injuries.

The driver of the vehicle, also a 22-year-old woman, died at the scene.

The RCMP are continuing an investigation into the crash, which involved a blood sample taken from the driver of the Chevrolet Equinox. Police said in a press release after the crash that the 71-year-old man showed signs of impairment.

The investigation could result in the man facing charges of impaired driving causing death, said the press release.

NTV

Impaired driver arrested in western Labrador

Posted: January 29, 2024 9:21 am

— By Web Team

On Sunday the RNC conducted a traffic stop on Circular Road in Labrador City.

Officers determined that the 33-year-old male driver had a suspended driver's license and owed almost \$3000 in fines. The man was also impaired which resulted in a further suspension of his driving license.

The vehicle was impounded as a result of the traffic stop.

The Telegram

Cheers & Jeers

JEERS: to dropping the ball on ride-sharing.

It doesn't look good — and isn't good enough — when government departments do not dig deep enough into the background of individuals and companies they are dealing with. On Jan. 19, the province announced the first ride-sharing licence in N.L. had been issued to Redsea Riding, owned and operated by Yosief Tesfamicael. Days later, government suspended that licence when it was

found that Tesfamicael is awaiting trial on a number of sex-related charges in Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court involving two youth. It appears that Tesfamicael kept his legal troubles to himself in any dealings with the department or Minister Sarah Stoodley, but background checks by the department should have uncovered the charges. They were, after all, in plain sight. The charges stem from an investigation that began back in 2021 and Tesfamicael's name has been on the court dockets at various times since as the case made its way through the system. Tesfamicael's guilt or innocence hasn't been determined, but the department's decision to suspend the license was correct. In the days following, Stoodley's department appeared to be in damage control mode, but that also isn't good enough. Stoodley should be angry — and angry enough to find out, in detail, how this could have happened, how this oversight was made, who is responsible, and to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Driver, 22, who was critically injured in Jan. 21 head-on collision has died

The Telegram (St. John's) 30 Jan 2024

A second person has died as a result of a two-vehicle collision that occurred on the Trans-canada Highway near Arnold's Cove on the afternoon of Jan. 21.

The 22-year-old female driver of one of the vehicles has succumbed to her injuries. The crash had claimed the life of a 22-year-old passenger in that vehicle last week.

The investigation into the cause of the collision continues.

The driver of the other vehicle involved in the collision, a 71-year-old man, remains under investigation for impaired operation.

The collision occurred after 3:15 p.m. on Jan. 21. Clarenville RCMP responded to a two-vehicle head-on collision east of Arnold's Cove involving a grey Chevrolet Equinox SUV and a white Hyundai Elantra car.

The driver of the SUV was rescued from his burning vehicle by passersby who came upon the collision. The RCMP say he showed signs of impairment and received serious injuries. The man was arrested and a blood demand was provided.

Clarenville RCMP asks anyone having information or dashcam footage of events leading up to the collision to contact Clarenville RCMP at 709-466-3211 or, to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers: #Sayithere 1-800222-TIPS (8477), visit www.nlcrimestoppers.com or use the P3tips app.

AllNewfoundlandLabrador

Red Tape Thwarts New Housing: CFIB

Cutting red tape for renovations is one way municipalities could help address the housing shortage, a new Canadian Federation of Independent Business report says.

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR

Media Relations Manager

Digital Government and Service NL

709-729-4748

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From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:41 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 3:08 PM
To: Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

Minister, FYI for tomorrow's interview.

From: Jonny HODDER <jonny.hodder@cbc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 3:00 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

Hi Krista,

Jonny here from the CBC Morning Show.

I wanted to circle back around regarding tomorrow's interview with Minister Stoodley.

While the main focus of the interview will still be highway safety and the Highway Traffic Act, after discussing it with some of my colleagues, we think it's also important to take a moment to address the recent news and developments around Redsea's ridesharing licensure and ridesharing in the province more generally.

Given that the issue of ridesharing safety is still front of mind for a lot of people, we'd like to give Minister Stoodley an opportunity to respond to some of those concerns as well.

Thanks again,

Jonny

Jonny Hodder (he/him)
Producer
St. John's Morning Show
CBC Newfoundland & Labrador
jonny.hodder@cbc.ca

On Tue, Jan 30, 2024 at 11:47 AM Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Thanks Sarah. That times works for the Minister. You can reach her at 709-725-5195.

From: SARAH BLACKMORE <sarah.blackmore@cbc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 10:13 AM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Jonny HODDER <jonny.hodder@cbc.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

Hello all,

Currently, we're thinking the interview with Minister Stoodley would take place around 7:40am on Thursday, if that works on your side.
Of course, this time slot could change depending on breaking news and shuffling schedules. We will confirm this time slot for sure prior to the show, tomorrow afternoon.

Let us know if this tentative time works for you, and which number would be best to reach Minister Stoodley on Thursday morning.

Regards,
Sarah

On Mon, Jan 29, 2024 at 4:10 PM Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Sounds good. Thanks for getting back to us so quickly. We'll await your reply with a specific time.

Krista

From: SARAH BLACKMORE <sarah.blackmore@cbc.ca>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 3:55 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>; Jonny HODDER <jonny.hodder@cbc.ca>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

Hi Krista,

About a minute before you replied I just looped Tina in as I realized I had forgotten to cc her originally. My mistake!
Thanks for catching that.

Thursday should work for us! We will be in touch tomorrow with a more specific time frame, but of course for the morning show it will be sometimes between 7am - 9am.

I am also looping in my producer Jonny Hodder to the conversation.

Best Regards,
Sarah Blackmore

On Mon, Jan 29, 2024 at 3:51 PM Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Hello Sarah,

Minister Stoodley is not available tomorrow, but is interested in joining the conversation. She is available on Thursday (February 1). Will that work?

Also, please include Tina Newhook (communications director) and I on media requests so we can ensure they're actioned.

Thank you

Krista

From: SARAH BLACKMORE <sarah.blackmore@cbc.ca>

Date: January 29, 2024 at 2:38:28 PM NST

To: "Stoodley, Sarah" <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>

Subject: Comment on letter from Gail Thorne

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Minister Stoodley,

I'm writing from CBC in St. John's to let you know that tomorrow morning Gail Thorne will be joining us on the St. John's Morning Show. She's going to talk about the recent vehicle collision outside Arnold's Cove.

Gail has let me know that she sent over a letter to you calling on a revision of the Highway Traffic Act, specifically enhancing the penalties for DUI offences. We will be asking her about this letter on the show.

Would you like the opportunity to come onto The Morning Show to respond to the letter, or would you like to offer a statement on the collision and subsequent response from Gail Thorne?

I appreciate your time and consideration on this issue.

Regards,
Sarah Blackmore

40(1)

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:42 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Afternoon media headlines for TODAY (February 1)

From: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 4:51 PM
To: Askary, Ali <AliAskary@gov.nl.ca>; Bannister, Mike <mbannister@gov.nl.ca>; Bishop, Jean E <JeanBishop@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Brockerville, David <DavidBrockerville@gov.nl.ca>; Connors, Kara <karaconnors@gov.nl.ca>; Cull, Krista <KristaCull@gov.nl.ca>; Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>; Duggan, Thomas <ThomasDuggan@gov.nl.ca>; Dutton, Sean <sutton@gov.nl.ca>; French, Denise <DENISEFRENCH@gov.nl.ca>; Healy, Mark <MarkHealy@gov.nl.ca>; Hoddinott, Fanny <FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca>; Hodge, Judy <JUDYHODGE@gov.nl.ca>; Jones, Scott <ScottJones@gov.nl.ca>; Legge, David <davidplegge@gov.nl.ca>; Mayne, David <DavidMayne@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>; Putt, Susan <SusanPutt@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Andrew <AndrewRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Jessica <JessicaRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Savory, Pamela <PamelaSavory@gov.nl.ca>; Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>; White, Blair <BlairWhite@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Afternoon media headlines for TODAY (February 1)

VOCM Open Line - Thu, February 01, 2024

RED TAPE REPORT CARD: "Stephen" is calling to talk about the Red Tape Report Card and NL has a grade of F. He says that one of the things that is happening is the red tape people have to go through to add a in-law suite in their house. He says that this is impacting builders because it just takes too long to get things done and then people move on.

VOCM - St. John's - Open Line @ 10:39:00am Duration: 00:10:00 Reporter: Paddy Daly

CBC St. John's Morning Show

[Minister Stoodley on demands for changes to the Highway Traffic Act/ government accountability on Redsea Riding](#)

[N.L. minister breaks silence: Criminal record checks required only for ride-hailing drivers, not owner](#)

Service N.L. Minister Sarah Stoodley tells the CBC that Redsea Riding — which was granted Newfoundland and Labrador's first ride-hailing licence — met the government's application criteria. While drivers must undergo a criminal check, the owner of the company does not. The government suspended Red Sea Riding's licence after learning its owner is accused of sexual assault, but questions still remain about the process.

CBC

Redsea Riding owner did not submit criminal record check because he wasn't driving, minister says

Women's group calls for use of vulnerable sector checks instead of criminal records

CBC News · Posted: Feb 01, 2024 12:35 PM NST | Last Updated: 2 hours ago

Digital Government and Service N.L. Minister Sarah Stoodley says the owner of a ride-hailing company who stands accused of sexual assault was not backgrounded by her department because he wasn't going to drive for his company.

Stoodley spoke with CBC News on Thursday, nearly two weeks after her department granted the province's first ride-hailing licence to Redsea Riding and promptly suspended it when "new information came to light."

The man is facing charges of assault, sexual assault, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, making explicit material available to a child under 16 and exposing his genitals.

Stoodley said the company met all the requirements at the time of its application. The department only needed background checks on the drivers, and not on the owner of the company.

"In this instance, the licensee was not a driver and it would not be lawful for that person to have interacted with the public in person in a driving capacity," she said.

The province announced on Jan. 19 that it was granting a licence to Redsea Riding. It learned about the "additional information" — believed to be the criminal charges — that same day.

The province told media outlets it had suspended the licence on Jan. 23.

Vulnerable sector check vs. criminal record check

While the onus is on companies to provide criminal record checks on their drivers, the St. John's Status of Women's Council doesn't believe that's the best approach to minimize the potential for harm.

Bridget Clarke, advocacy coordinator for the council, said more care should have been taken given previous cases of taxi drivers and police officers accused or convicted of assaulting passengers.

"It's especially disappointing, given the kind of local culture and the prevalence of violence happening in these kinds of spaces," Clarke told CBC News. "I also think this situation is an opportunity to think critically about criminal record checks."

Clarke believes the use of criminal record checks is problematic for a few reasons: They only show a list of someone's criminal convictions and no other context for those offences, and they are often used to disqualify a person from a role without considering the kind of context that can come with a vulnerable sector check instead.

"[A vulnerable sector check] doesn't automatically eliminate anyone who has a criminal record, but rather it is a chance to kind of explore the nature of somebody's record, and identify patterns that could be really dangerous and problematic in this kind of industry for example," Clarke said.

Vulnerable sector checks can also turn up more information, such as any outstanding warrants, unresolved court cases and pardoned convictions.

Clarke said this is a complex issue, but she hopes it isn't used as an example to exclude anyone with a criminal record from working for a ride-sharing company.

"It doesn't mean that they shouldn't work ever," she said.

"But what we're saying is that for this particular situation, it's a really good example of an industry that needs some careful consideration of someone's background and the kind of pattern we're seeing here."

Saltwire

PAM FRAMPTON: Will we ever make inroads against impaired driving?

'Driving drunk is always the wrong choice, and a dangerously selfish one'

It's sobering to think it, but there are probably few Canadians who don't know someone who has been hurt by impaired driving.

It might be innocent strangers maimed or killed by a driver under the influence, or a driver who fatally or seriously harmed themselves or their passengers while driving drunk or stoned.

More than a few Canadians have gotten into a vehicle driven by someone who had drinks or did drugs before getting behind the wheel or have had a drink or two themselves before turning the key.

Always the wrong choice

The decisions are made when our reasoning is already impaired.

There are no excuses. Driving drunk is always the wrong choice, and a dangerously selfish one.

When you hear about impaired driving in the news, it's easy to become exasperated and give up hope of ever conquering the problem.

We owe a debt to advocacy groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), who persevere in trying to dissuade the public.

Completely avoidable

Impaired drivers defy demographic categorization; they can be wet-behind-the-ears teenage drivers who feel invincible or seasoned senior drivers who should know better than most.

Crashes and collisions happen at all hours of the day and night, on all kinds of vehicles — cars, trucks, ATVs, snowmobiles, motorcycles, dirt bikes, boats.

It's infuriating, deadly and completely avoidable.

Little empathy

So it's no wonder we have little patience or empathy when we hear of cases where someone has been found guilty of impaired driving for the 19th or 20th time, particularly if their action has resulted in trauma, injury and death for somebody else.

Like many people who react viscerally to such reports, I've often wondered why repeat impaired drivers who have injured or killed other people aren't simply designated dangerous offenders by the courts and locked away for our safety.

Dangerous offenders are criminals who have been convicted of serious injuries or sexual offences and are likely to reoffend.

On the decline?

We tend to hear about recidivist under-the-influence drivers because statistics at the upper end of the scale grab our attention, but University of Winnipeg criminal justice professor Michael Weinrath says impaired driving — including cases where someone is killed — is actually declining.

“As a criminologist, I prefer that policy decisions are made on the basis of logic, reason and objective facts,” he said in an email last week.

“Despite the sensational nature of some impaired driving deaths, calls for measures such as a dangerous offender designation fly in the face of reason....”

“Alcohol-related impaired driving causing death charges consist of 145 cases in 1998, a rate of 0.48 per 100,000. There were 45 cases in 2022, a rate of 0.14. If I add in other impaired causing deaths (alcohol and drugs, unspecified), the total is still only 65, a huge drop.”

Weinrath also said we don't have enough data on convicted impaired drivers who make the decision not to drink and drive again.

Worrisome issue

Still, impaired driving is an issue that worries many Canadians, as it should.

According to the Canadian Traffic Injury Research Foundation's 2022 Road Safety Monitor, 75.2 per cent of respondents in its annual opinion poll described drinking and driving as a very or extremely serious problem.

"There are no excuses. Driving drunk is always the wrong choice, and a dangerously selfish one."

Perhaps the fact that so many people take it seriously is a contributing factor to the decline in numbers.

At least, I hope so.

Step in the right direction

According to MADD Canada, the number of short-term alcohol and drug-related licence suspensions and federal impaired driving charges laid per year has gone down (with some fluctuations) in every Atlantic Canadian province between 2010 and 2021.

It's a step in the right direction; of course, statistics are of no solace to someone whose life has been forever marred by somebody else's irresponsible decision.

We need to keep the pressure on through screening and enforcement, by reporting suspected cases, and continuing to hammer home the message that vehicles, booze and drugs make a toxic cocktail — with trauma, death and grief as lethal chasers.

Tina Newhook

Director of Communications
Digital Government and Service NL
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

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Like us on [Facebook](#)

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From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:43 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Media Headlines - Wednesday, Feb. 21

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Bannister, Mike <mbannister@gov.nl.ca>; Bishop, Jean E <JeanBishop@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Connors, Kara <karaconnors@gov.nl.ca>; Duggan, Thomas <ThomasDuggan@gov.nl.ca>; Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Edwards, Shawn V <ShawnVEDwards@gov.nl.ca>; Healy, Mark <MarkHealy@gov.nl.ca>; Jones, Scott <ScottJones@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>; Putt, Susan <SusanPutt@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Andrew <AndrewRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>; White, Blair <BlairWhite@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Media Headlines - Wednesday, Feb. 21

The Telegram

Speedy approval for N.L.'S first ride-sharing company

Redsea copied many documents from Uber, Jugnoo

The Telegram (St. John's) 21 Feb 2024 JUANITA MERCER THE TELEGRAM juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com @juanitamercer_

It took about 27 hours for the provincial government to approve Redsea Riding's ridesharing licence in January, the first of its kind to be issued in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Last month, the provincial government faced a backlash and questions about due diligence when it gave Redsea owner Yosief Tesfamicael, 43, a ridesharing licence even though he faced a number of sex-related charges against two youth. The licence was suspended two days after it was granted.

Here's how it all happened, according to records obtained by Saltwire this week through access to information legislation.

'I WILL REVIEW YOUR SUBMISSION QUICKLY'

At 10:01 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 16, Tesfamicael emailed Kelli Penney, registrar of motor vehicles, informing her that he submitted his application.

"Additionally, I have attached the names of all the drivers. We have also filed their driving license (sic) copies, police clearances, and abstracts for our records in the office," he wrote.

Penney replied within five minutes.

"I have received your application thank you. I will review your submission quickly," she wrote in part.

At 11:41 a.m., Tesfamicael emailed Penney. He indicated they had spoken on the phone, and he provided a brief, basic list of his company's policies for drivers, such as a requirement to be at least 25 years old, with clearance from police and with insurance.

“I confirm that all the drivers on my list, which I submitted today, have been confirmed with police clearance and abstract clearance,” Tesfamicael wrote.

NO EVIDENCE OF RECORD CHECKS

Included in the documents provided to Saltwire was a simple list of 10 drivers’ names, which were redacted.

There is no evidence in the records obtained by Saltwire that Tesfamicael provided proof to the province of the drivers’ criminal record checks.

That afternoon, Krista Cull, deputy registrar with the Motor Registration Division, asked Tesfamicael if he could provide a copy of his company’s policy, a recent job advertisement, or a contract with drivers that include the drivers’ requirements.

Shortly after midnight, Tesfamicael wrote to Cull, as well as three other people in the department, including Penney. He attached the company policies, which he said each driver signed when they were hired.

REDSEA PLAGIARISES UBER

The documents he attached were copied and pasted almost entirely word-for-word from Uber’s website. This included portions that mentioned “Ontario vehicle insurance” and details for drivers with a licence address in Barrie, Ont. Only a few words were changed, such as replacing the word “Uber” with “Redsea.”

By 1:16 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 17, Cull wrote to Tesfamicael: “Good afternoon Yosief, I am happy to advise that your application has been approved. Please see attached for your licence and the terms and conditions of your licence. The original licence will be sent in the mail.

“As well you will receive your invoice for payment within 30 days. Please note that you can start operations immediately and will be required to pay your invoice upon receipt. Failure to submit the required payment will result in the cancellation of your licence. Thank you and congratulations.”

It was about 27 hours between the time Tesfamicael wrote to Penney to say he had submitted his application and the time that Cull wrote to say his application was approved.

Two days later, on Friday, Jan. 19, Cull wrote to Tesfamicael and asked him which insurance companies he and his drivers were using. He told her they had individual policies with different companies. This question was asked after his application was approved, even though the motor registration website says companies must provide proof of insurance with their application.

NEWS CONFERENCE CANCELLED

On Thursday afternoon, Jan. 18, communications officials in the Department of Digital Government and Service NL had a news release prepared for Minister Sarah Stoodley, which she approved about 30 minutes after receiving it.

The news release was sent to media outlets Friday morning, Jan. 19. A news conference with the minister was scheduled for noon that day.

Media outlets had their cameras set up and were waiting for the news conference to begin when a communications official in the department arrived to say it was cancelled.

The reason provided to reporters was that Stoodley was in a cabinet meeting that she couldn't get out of.

Saltwire arranged an interview with Tesfamicael that day, using contact information for him provided on the news release from the provincial government.

He told Saltwire he was an Eritrean immigrant who was homeless for a period of time after his arrival in the province, and that he overcame adversity to become the CEO and founder of Redsea.

LICENCE SUSPENDED

By 4:35 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 19, Stoodley had emailed a letter to Tesfamicael: "It has come to our attention that there is a serious legal matter involving the Applicant of Redsea Riding Sharing (78270 Newfoundland & Labrador Inc.), and we will be suspending your Transportation Network Company Licence until further notice. We are open to having discussions with the other company directors regarding this application."

At 4:57 p.m. Tesfamicael replied: "Is there any reason? After we announce and doing hardworking (sic). Let us know because all our drivers they are ready and we make them promises."

Stoodley replied that night, indicating they could discuss it further on Monday, to which Tesfamicael was agreeable.

There were subsequently three redacted pages in the records provided to Saltwire. The reason provided for the redactions indicated the pages contained legal advice that would disclose opinions provided to a public body by a law officer of the Crown.

NAME ON COURT DOCKET

By Monday, Jan. 22, VOCCM learned that someone named Yosief Tesfamicael was on the court docket at Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court.

Communications officials in the department sent VOCCM a statement that was subsequently sent to other media outlets, indicating Redsea Riding applied for a licence, the Motor Registration Division evaluated the application, determined it met the requirements, and issued a licence.

The statement said new information was brought to the department's attention potentially related to the licence, and the matter was under further review, with the licence suspended for the foreseeable future.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE CHARGES

Saltwire confirmed that the

Royal Newfoundland Constabulary's Child Abuse and Sexual Assault unit launched an investigation against Tesfamicael after receiving a complaint in May 2021.

He was charged that month with one count each of sexual violence against two youth, including sexual assault, sexual interference, child exploitation, and committing an indecent act.

He also faces two counts of corrupting the morals of a minor and two counts of making sexually explicit material available to a minor.

Tesfamicael is alleged to have committed the offences in Mount Pearl between Aug. 6, 2013 and May 3, 2021.

He is scheduled for trial in St. John's on some of those charges this fall.

REDSEA WANTS SUSPENSION LIFTED

On Tuesday morning, Jan. 23, Stoodley received an email from St. John's lawyer Anna Morgan, who said she was legal counsel for Redsea and Tesfamichael.

Morgan asked Stoodley which steps the company could take for the suspension to be lifted so it could be operational. Morgan said there were other directors of the company who were prepared to be head of operations, if necessary.

"Please let us know as soon as possible, so that we can move forward with this initiative," Morgan wrote.

EARLIER COMMUNICATIONS

Tesfamicael's ride-sharing application in January wasn't the first time he communicated with the department.

Prior to applying for the licence, Tesfamicael emailed Stoodley's executive assistant on Nov. 21, 2023.

He indicated his intentions to apply once the ride-sharing regulations were complete, and he attached a document about his company, Redsea.

Much of the document appears to be copied from an Indian app-based ride-hailing company called Jugnoo.

For example, the document describes Redsea as Canada's "first auto-rickshaw aggregator." Jugnoo describes itself as "India's first auto-rickshaw aggregators."

In another example, the document includes a map showing all of Redsea's locations, with the statistics "75+ Countries, 350+ Clients, 50M+ Rides." The same visual is on Jugnoo's website.

QUESTIONABLE WEBSITE

The document also provides a website for Redsea: outsourcedigitalprojects.com. This website mentions nothing about the ride-hailing service — it doesn't even mention the word Redsea.

Instead, it indicates it does website and app development, creative design, social media marketing, content writing, call centre service and more.

It lists its address as Karachi, Pakistan, and has a phone number with a California area code.

AGGRESSIVE TIMELINE

On Thursday, Nov. 30, Stoodley replied to Tesfamicael, thanking him for his interest in starting a transportation network company.

In her letter, Stoodley said the transportation network company regulations were still going through the approval process.

“We are working toward a very aggressive timeline, with the intent to having these regulations implemented, and the licensing application available, early in the New Year,” she told him.

AllNewfoundlandLabrador.com

Loblaw plots new stores amid grocery code tension

Loblaw Companies Ltd. is investing \$2 billion in its stores – including building five new ones in Atlantic Canada – as it holds out on signing a grocery code of conduct that would empower suppliers.

City News

Fines for Toronto parking offences could increase significantly

Fines for more than 120 parking offences set to increase

New recommendations would see penalties for illegal on-street parking increase from \$30 to \$75 and parking in a bike lane may end up costing drivers \$200. Mark McAllister breaks down what to expect.
By Mark McAllister

Posted February 20, 2024 5:22 pm. Last Updated February 20, 2024 6:02 pm.

Fines for parking offences are set to increase significantly in Toronto as the city aims to keep vehicles moving and collect some extra funds at the same time.

A review by city staff that compared Toronto fines to other Canadian municipalities determined more could be charged for parking offences on the streets. It follows a similar move for city and privately-owned parking lots last fall

There are 123 offences associated with parking a vehicle, stopping and standing on city streets listed in the report that could possibly incur much higher penalties.

“I think people will give it a second thought if the fine is higher,” said Councillor Jennifer McKelvie. “We found that in the city lots, for example, the fine is about \$30. Increasing to \$75 makes people think twice before they leave their car spot where they shouldn’t.”

Some of the proposed increases include parking in bike lanes going from \$150 to \$200, not paying at parking machines increasing from \$30 to \$75, not having a permit where one is required will now be \$75, as will parking or stopping in a zone where signs say otherwise.

A full list of the parking offences that would be adjusted can be found in the report.

It’s estimated that the city could make an additional \$62 million in revenue from the increase based on the number of tickets issued, but city staff suggest it will likely be around \$40 to \$50 million.

“I would be happy if nobody got a parking ticket because they were parking where they should in the city really. It’s about increasing mobility, making sure that we can keep people moving to where they need to get to. That means that we need better compliance on where you can and you cannot park in the City of Toronto,” added McKelvie.

The City is also looking to create new offences for electric vehicle charging stalls in off-street parking lots so using them without charging can be enforced.

“We’re starting to see more electric cars in the City of Toronto. That is a good thing, but it means that they do need those parking spots with those chargers so that they can charge their vehicles. That means that for the rest of us, we have to park where we should, too,” shared McKelvie.

The recommended increased penalties are set to be debated at the Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting next week before going to council for approval on March 20. If approved, they would take effect August 1.

Global News

Ottawa scaling back carbon price rebate for small businesses

By Mia Rabson The Canadian Press

Posted February 20, 2024 5:25 pm

The federal government is cutting the amount of financial relief small businesses will receive from carbon pricing revenues so it can increase the size of the rebate it is providing to rural families.

That’s despite the fact the government still owes businesses more than \$2.5 billion in promised carbon pricing revenues from the first five years of the program — and refuses to say when that money will flow.

Small businesses were already paying more than they were getting back, and the change will make that shortfall even worse, said Dan Kelly, the president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

“It is deeply unfair,” Kelly said.

“I expect the outrage level among small businesses toward this tax to rise once business owners find out about the bad tax being even a bigger ripoff.”

The CFIB estimates small businesses contribute as much as 40 per cent of the government’s overall carbon price revenues. Clean Prosperity, an economic and climate change think tank, puts it closer to 25 per cent.

But they were never set to receive more than seven per cent of the revenues back, and now that amount is dropping to five per cent.

Information posted to the federal government website last week shows Ottawa intends to return \$623 million in carbon pricing revenues to businesses for the 2024-25 year.

In 2023-24, the government allocated almost \$935 million for small business, which is 50 per cent more than it was when the carbon price itself was \$15 less per tonne.

Get the latest Money 123 news. Sent to your email, every week.

That is happening as the federal government increases the rebates paid to rural households, which initially were getting a 10 per cent top-up to the household carbon rebate. As of April 1, that goes up to 20 per cent.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the move last fall at the same time as he promised a three-year exemption from carbon pricing for heating oil.

He said the government has and will continue to help small businesses “transform” their operations to save energy, but acknowledged the extra funds for rural rebates had to come from somewhere.

“In every policy we have to make choices,” Trudeau said last October.

Questions to Environment and Climate Change Canada and Finance Canada about the change have thus far gone unanswered.

The change also comes as Ottawa has paid out only a small fraction of what it already promised small businesses to begin with.

The carbon price was designed so that 90 per cent of the money collected from consumers and smaller businesses would be provided to individual households in the form of a rebate.

Small and medium-sized businesses — those without major carbon footprints of their own — were to get about seven per cent back through various grant programs designed to encourage investments in more energy-efficient equipment, appliances or building retrofits.

The rest was to be shared between Indigenous communities, municipalities, hospitals and schools, again through a myriad of programs to contribute to energy efficiency upgrades.

The carbon rebates have flowed as promised to households, but various problems, including the COVID-19 pandemic, caused the other programs to stumble out of the starting gate.

Just over \$100 million has been returned through the programs so far, including \$35 million to small business, \$60 million to schools and about \$6 million to Indigenous communities.

That failure to launch prompted Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland to promise a new system to distribute the \$2.5 billion owed to small businesses for the first five years of carbon pricing.

That plan, announced in 2022, was to target businesses in “emissions-intensive and trade-exposed sectors,” but those have yet to be defined. Beyond the shrinking share of the pie, no additional details have been released.

Environment Canada would provide no details when asked about the \$2.5 billion promise earlier this month.

“The government of Canada is working hard to launch these fuel charge return programs,” the department said in an emailed statement.

Not only is the change unfair, it’s undermining the whole purpose of carbon pricing, Kelly said.

“The whole principle of a carbon tax is you tax carbon-based activities and you give the money back so that then people make decisions to use those dollars in lower-carbon activities,” he said.

“The whole concept doesn’t work if you don’t give the money back.”

Michael Bernstein, the executive director of Clean Prosperity, said he doesn’t think the reduction is justified.

“I do think there’s a legitimate concern there.”

Bernstein said he has advised the government to offer businesses a tax credit to offset what they pay in carbon pricing.

Ottawa mulling new ombudsperson to field concerns over online harms: source

By Stephanie Taylor The Canadian Press

Posted February 21, 2024 7:27 am

The federal government’s evolving plan to help protect Canadians from harm online could include a new ombudsperson to field public concerns and a regulator that would oversee the conduct of internet platforms.

The new positions would be established as a part of the forthcoming online-harms legislation, which the government is currently hoping to announce by April, said one senior official with knowledge of the plan.

“It’s very nearly ready to go,” said the source, who has seen a draft of the legislation. The source spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss details that have yet to be made public.

Online safety and technology experts have for months been pressuring the governing Liberals to present their long-promised legislation aimed at protecting Canadians, and in particular minors, from online harms.

Canadian children are currently less protected than kids living in the United Kingdom, the European Union and Australia, where such laws currently exist, they warn.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau first promised the measure during the 2019 election campaign, but a bill targeting online hate speech died on the order paper when he triggered an early election in 2021.

Justice Minister Arif Virani would be the one to introduce the new bill, which he has vowed would strike the right balance between offering protections to Canadians while upholding the right of freedom of expression.

Privacy experts and civil liberties groups roundly criticized the government’s proposal from 2021, which included a requirement that gave online platforms just 24 hours to remove content flagged as harmful.

Such a threshold would have risked encouraging companies to take an overly cautious approach, removing acceptable material pre-emptively for fear of running afoul of the rules, they warned.

Organizations like the National Council of Canadian Muslims also expressed concerns that efforts to target terrorist-related online content — one of the bill’s stated goals, according to Trudeau — could disproportionately impact its members.

The government ultimately went back to the drawing board and assembled a new group of experts to advise it on how best to proceed.

That advice included establishing a regulatory role that would hold online platforms accountable for the content they host and impose penalties on services that fail to do so.

The proposed regulator would have a mandate to ensure online giants comply with federal law, the official said.

The government is also planning to establish a new ombudsperson whose job would be to field concerns from ordinary Canadians who encounter problematic material or scenarios online.

In a recent speech to the Canadian Bar Association, Virani said he was confident the government could legislate measures to promote an online world where “users can express themselves without feeling threatened or fuelling hate.”

“It also means requiring online services to address and mitigate the risk of such harmful content on their platforms, as well as to give users tools and resources to report harmful content and seek help,” he said.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre has already signalled his concerns with the idea of a new regulator, because it would raise questions about who the government would appoint to fill such a role.

He has accused the Liberals of promoting censorship through previous laws that sought to regulate social media giants.

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR
Media Relations Manager
Digital Government and Service NL
709-729-4748

Follow us on Twitter @DGS_GovNL

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:43 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

From: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 1:12 PM
To: Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

From: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 1:10 PM
To: McCabe, Meghan <MeghanMcCabe@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi, folks.

Another busy day, but wondering if the premier or minister will provide any comment/statement on new details surrounding the approval of the Redsea Riding application submitted by Yosief Tesfamicael, which has since been suspended of course ...

Thanks.
Brian

Brian Callahan

Reporter
VOCM News

T 709.726.5660 M 709.330.9117
bcallahan@stingray.com
St. John's, NL., Canada



From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:43 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

From: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 2:53 PM
To: Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

FYI.

From: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 2:46 PM
To: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Linda Swain <lswain@stingray.com>; Greg Smith <gsmith@stingray.com>
Subject: Fw: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

Hi, Tina.

Just following up on our brief phone chat.

Is one day the average or normal processing time for such an explanation?

Should the so-called cut-and-paste job from Uber's site have been picked up?

And you've said the licence was suspended after receiving new information. What information did you receive and who supplied it?

Thanks.
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St. John's, NL., Canada



From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:44 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: Media Headlines - Friday, February 23

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 10:17 AM
To: Bannister, Mike <mbannister@gov.nl.ca>; Bishop, Jean E <JeanBishop@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>; Connors, Kara <karaconnors@gov.nl.ca>; Duggan, Thomas <ThomasDuggan@gov.nl.ca>; Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Edwards, Shawn V <ShawnVEDwards@gov.nl.ca>; Healy, Mark <MarkHealy@gov.nl.ca>; Hoddinott, Fanny <FannyHoddinott@gov.nl.ca>; Jones, Scott <ScottJones@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>; Penney, Kelli <KelliPenney@gov.nl.ca>; Putt, Susan <SusanPutt@gov.nl.ca>; Roberts, Andrew <AndrewRoberts@gov.nl.ca>; Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>; White, Blair <BlairWhite@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Media Headlines - Friday, February 23

AllNewfoundlandLabrador.com

Braya Touts Big Future For Come By Chance

Braya announced Thursday that it has begun production of renewable diesel at the converted plant...

See attached for article reference and comment from Braya on safety and the workplace incident that occurred in 2022.

VOCM

41-Year-Old Man Charged with Impaired in CBS Hit and Run

Feb 23, 2024 | 7:00 AM

A man has been charged after a hit and run in Conception Bay South.

The incident happened around 7:30 yesterday evening on the main highway.

The RNC say they got a lot of help from the public in tracking down the driver a short distance from the scene.

The 41-year-old man, who was released, has been charged with impaired driving and hit and run.

Braya CEO Acknowledges Rough Road to Achieving Commercial Operation

Feb 23, 2024 | 6:36 AM

It's been a rough road, but Braya Renewable Fuels has achieved commercial operation.

The company has converted the old Come By Chance oil refinery to producing renewal diesel.

Work has been ongoing since Cresta Fund Management acquired majority ownership of the refinery from Silverpeak back in 2021 and rebranded as Braya.

Conversion operations hit a tragic setback with a flash fire in September of 2022 that claimed one worker's life and sent seven others to hospital, some with serious injuries.

CEO Todd O'Malley acknowledges, it's been tough getting to this stage.

"You know obviously we had a very difficult time for the refinery staff and their families around the...flash fire...but our job is to run the plant safely reliably and environmentally responsibly."

O'Malley says feedstock was fed into the system last week for the first time "...and ultimately we have produced on spec renewable diesel." He calls it a momentous day for the company and its hard-working employees.

The company expects initial production capacity of 18,000 barrels per day.

Study Highlights Shift in Consumer Habits to Find Grocery Discounts

Feb 23, 2024 | 5:36 AM

A new study out of Dalhousie University is highlighting changes in consumer habits and the lengths people will go to to get a discount on their groceries.

Public backlash recently forced Loblaw's to backtrack on its decision to cut its 50 per cent discount on items nearing expiry, to 30 per cent.

That controversy inspired the Agri-Food Analytics Lab to look into the concept of "food rescuing," which involves buying nearly-expired foods.

Sylvain Charlebois says some of the results shocked their team.

He says they found that 62 per cent of Canadians, or three out of every five people, switched grocery stores because they weren't finding good deals.

Charlebois says the frequency of visits to the grocery store has increased by 32 per cent in the last six years, because people are going more often to try to find deals.

CBC

Here's what human trafficking looks like in N.L., according to those who help fight it

10 cases have required police intervention in the last year, says Association for New Canadians

Alex Kennedy · CBC News · Posted: Feb 22, 2024 7:27 PM NST | Last Updated: February 22

On a day that intended to spread awareness of the crime of human trafficking, a team at the Association for New Canadians says it can come in many forms.

Feb. 22 is Human Trafficking Awareness Day, first observed in Canada in 2020. The ANC hosted a summit Thursday to highlight what human trafficking can look like in the province.

Monica Abdelkadar, the association's director of settlement and resettlement services, says human trafficking can be defined as any instance where someone is being coerced and exploited — such as newcomers who marry someone in the province and are prevented from leaving their home.

One kind of trafficking the ANC deals with provincially is labour exploitation, said Abdelkadar, including "people who have been forced to pay back recruitment fees or people who have lost all of their labour rights or their human rights in the process of migration."

Abdelkadar said it's hard to keep statistics on the number of cases of trafficking in the province — sometimes because people are afraid to speak about it — but said the association has dealt with 10 cases in the past year that have required police intervention.

The association launched the Support, Empower, Access project in 2019, after an influx of refugees to Newfoundland and Labrador shared their experiences of human trafficking, and works with communities across the province to educate service providers who work with newcomers.

Project head Geraldine Ankrah said much of the trafficking they've seen has been connected with the federal temporary foreign worker program.

She'd like to see changes to closed work permits, which tie people to a single employer and can put migrants in vulnerable positions.

She says there have been instances where migrants have been threatened with deportation by their employer.

"While we are not saying it's a bad program, there are some policies attached to it that make it easy for immigrants to be exploited," Ankrah said. "There must be more stringent measures, or more ways to monitor employers to make sure they're doing right by the immigrants. And treating them just how they would treat any other Canadian citizen or permanent resident."

Varka Kalaydzhieva, a visiting program director of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Toronto and the Collaborative Network to End Exploitation, held a role-playing workshop that aimed to teach people what migrant workers who came to Canada may experience.

"We want to outline and highlight the policies and the structural gaps that are making people vulnerable to be exploited," she said.

"It's not the workers, it's not who they are, it's not from where they're coming.... It's the way Canada creates their immigration and labour policies that [facilitates] the vulnerability of workers when they come to Canada."

Anyone who believes someone is being exploited or is a victim of human trafficking can call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-833-900-1010.

N.L. hastily approved ride-hailing application from man accused of sex crime
Yosief Tesfamicael's application was approved a day after he submitted it

Sarah Smellie · The Canadian Press · Posted: Feb 22, 2024 9:42 AM NST | Last Updated: February 22

An application submitted by a man accused of sexual assault to provide Newfoundland and Labrador's first ride-hailing operation was approved in just one day, according to emails obtained through access-to-information legislation.

The messages show the submission from Yosief Tesfamicael, owner of Redsea Riding, included an eight-page company policy that was heavily copied from Uber's website.

He wrote to the provincial government on Jan. 16 at 10:01 a.m. to say he'd submitted the application. By 1:16 p.m. the next day, he had been approved.

"Please note that you can start operations immediately," wrote Kristina Cull, deputy registrar of the motor registration division of the province's Digital Government Department. "Thank you and congratulations."

Six charges were filed against Tesfamicael in October, according to a case summary report from the province's Supreme Court last month. It says he has pleaded not guilty to the offences, which include sexual assault, sexual interference and unlawfully making sexually explicit material available to a child. The document says the case is set to go to trial later this year.

The accusations were first reported by St. John's news outlet VOXM after the province announced on Jan. 19 the awarding of the licence to Tesfamicael's company, and then days later suspended that licence citing "new information" about the company.

The Canadian Press spoke with Tesfamicael on Jan. 19 about his plans to bring an Uber-like service to the St. John's region, but he had no comment when contacted again after his licence suspension was announced, nor did he provide comment when reached Wednesday.

Provincial regulations require anyone applying for a licence to operate a "transportation network company" to prove they have obtained certified criminal record checks for all potential drivers.

The application form completed by Tesfamicael only asks that companies supply their procedures related to criminal checks, and that they provide confirmation "acceptable to the registrar" that they have done such checks.

Tesfamicael provides two assurances in emails that criminal checks were done on his drivers. In one message sent Jan. 16, after he submitted his application, he writes, "I confirm that all the drivers on my list, which I submitted today, have been confirmed with police clearance and abstract clearance."

In another, on the same day, he says he has on file in the company's office the drivers' licences, police clearances and drivers' abstracts. There is no indication in the documents provided by the government that those clearances, or proof they exist, was submitted to the government.

The Redsea policy he submitted tells drivers, "You can use the in-app emergency button to call authorities to get help if you need it. The app displays your location and trip details, so you can quickly share them with emergency services."

The exact same text appears on Uber's website.

The policy also says the company will "provide a removable Redsea sticker to be displayed on your vehicle whenever you're online. If the sticker is not properly displayed, or if it's not visible while you're driving with the Driver app (day or night), you could be issued a fine by local authorities." The same text appears on Uber's website, with the company names switched.

Redsea's policy includes a requirement regarding "Ontario vehicle insurance" and a discussion of the situation of drivers with addresses in Barrie, Ont., which are repeated on Uber's website.

The borrowing from Uber was first reported Wednesday by SaltWire, which also obtained the policy.

The information package provided about Redsea directs anyone looking for more information about the company to a website for Outsource Digital Projects, a marketing and web design firm based in Pakistan. The firm's website contains no information about Redsea.

The emails show Tesfamicael had been in contact with government officials since at least November to express his interest in applying for a ride-hailing licence.

Digital Government Minister Sarah Stoodley sent him a letter on Nov. 30, in response to an email asking about the status of legislation that would allow ride-hailing operations in the province.

"We are working toward a very aggressive timeline, with the intent to having these regulations implemented, and the licensing application available, early in the new year," Stoodley wrote.

The Newfoundland and Labrador government said last year that it intended to build a "provincial approach" to ride-hailing. It made new rules and began accepting licence applications in December.

Meet a crossing guard who's trying to make pedestrian safety less precarious

It can be a cold job, but that's not the primary concern for Craig Tarrant, who's been a crosswalk guard for seven years at Gander Elementary. As he tells the CBC's Troy Turner, many drivers are so ignorant of the surroundings, he fears there could be serious consequences.

NTV

Braya Renewable Fuels begins production on renewable fuel

Posted: February 23, 2024 7:46 am

— By Web Team

Braya Renewable Fuels has announced it has achieved commercial operations making the completion of the refinery conversion project.

The company is not beginning to provide reliable renewable fuel for the energy transition.

"We are incredibly grateful for all of the hard work and dedication of the Braya team that has allowed us to achieve commercial operations at the refinery," said Todd O'Malley, Braya's Chief Executive Officer.

Braya anticipates an initial production capacity of 18,000 barrels per day of renewable diesel, with plans to expand production capacity, add sustainable aviation fuel production capabilities and explore green hydrogen production.

RCMP warn of email scam involving individuals posing as officers

Posted: February 22, 2024 3:44 pm

— By Rosie Mullaley

The RCMP is warning residents in this province of a scam in which individuals are posing as officers.

Using email, the individuals claim to have a subpoena for the person they're contacting.

A victim recently reported receiving an email with an address ending in rcmp-grc.gc.outlook.com. The RCMP does not issue subpoenas via email and does not have an outlook.com email address.

Scam emails may contain links that are troublesome to the user if activated and the RCMP is advising users not to click in the links in these types of emails.

If anyone receives an email they believe is a scam, contact <https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm>.

The RCMP are also ask the public to discuss this type of scam with elders in their family and in the community.

Three drivers issued licence suspensions by RCMP NL after providing breath samples above provincial limit

Posted: February 22, 2024 2:48 pm

— By Web Team

Three drivers received licence suspensions on Feb. 21, by RCMP NL for having blood alcohol concentrations that were above the provincial limit.

Shortly after 7:00 p.m., Grand Falls-Windsor RCMP received a request for assistance from a Municipal Enforcement Officer who had stopped a vehicle on Toulette Drive in Grand Falls-Windsor and smelled alcohol on the driver. A RCMP officer attended the traffic stop and administered a roadside breath test. The driver, a 31-year-old man, provided a breath sample that was above the provincial limit but below the criminal threshold for impaired driving. The vehicle was seized and impounded.

At approximately 8:45 p.m., Bay Roberts RCMP received a report of a vehicle stuck in a snowbank on the Conception Bay Highway in Bay Roberts. Police attended, observed open alcohol inside the vehicle, and administered a roadside breath test. The driver, a 25-year-old man, provided a roadside breath sample that was above the provincial limit but below the criminal threshold for impaired driving. The vehicle was seized and impounded and the man was ticketed for having open alcohol.

Shortly after 10:30 p.m., Burin Peninsula RCMP stopped a speeding vehicle on Route 210 in Marystown. Police suspected that the driver, a 37-year-old man, may be impaired by alcohol. A roadside breath test was administered with a result that was above the provincial limit but below the criminal threshold for impaired driving. The vehicle was seized and impounded.

Trial postponed for man suspected of impaired driving causing injury

Posted: February 22, 2024 12:51 pm

— By Rosie Mullaley

A St. John's man charged with injuring his female passenger last summer by driving drunk and crashing his vehicle, has had his trial postponed.

Daniel Ozon appeared in provincial court today by telephone from Her Majesty's Penitentiary. His five-day trial was supposed to begin next week. However, with a change of lawyers, more time will be needed to allow his new counsel time to review the almost 1,000 pages of disclosure.

The case will be called again next month to set new trial dates. Judge Lois Skanes recommended lawyers speak to court administration to find available time.

The 38-year-old Ozon was reportedly driving an SUV that crashed on the Trans-Canada Highway in the east end of the capital city on June 26, 2023. Police said he ran off, but was found nearby.

A 26-year-old woman, who was the passenger in the vehicle, was sent to hospital with serious injuries.

Ozon faces charges that include dangerous driving causing injury, failing to remain at the scene of an accident resulting in bodily harm, impaired driving causing injury, along with breaches of court orders.

Ozon apologized to the judge, noting he had been out of commission for a while because he was in the hospital. He said he had developed an infection while in prison and “almost died” because it turned septic.

“It’s only now I’m coming around,” he told the judge.

CTV News

New survey shows growing number of Canadians are using AI despite fears

When it comes to the latest Artificial intelligence technology it really depends on who you ask.

Jayden Dedam is a student at New Brunswick Community College in Moncton and he says that he currently uses AI, specifically Chat GPT.

“I mostly use it for research. I think that it’s really helpful when you’re not really too sure on a certain subject, you get to learn a lot about it. It’s kind of like talking to a friend who knows a lot of things really,” he said.

Adding, “It is something that I’m very interested in especially because I am interested in software development as well, so it is something I want to look into.”

Results showed that 36 per cent of Canadians say AI is good for society, 25 per cent say it’s bad for society and 39 per cent of those surveyed didn’t know or preferred not to answer.

Reginald Hebert, a Moncton resident, doesn’t think it will have a positive role in today’s society.

“It’s got a lot of potential, there’s a lot of things that you could do with artificial intelligence that would make our lives better, safer, more peaceful, more healthier, manage hospitals better, manage government budgets better, actually invest the money where it might be better served in five years instead of the next election,” he said.

“All of these things could be done better with artificial intelligence as a tool, but it’s not going to be used as a tool, it’s going to be used for marketing implement, it’s going to be used for scammers, it’s going to be used for a variety of other things that will probably negate the potential benefits that artificial intelligence could give the human race.”

He says it’s a tool that’s been developed by really smart people, but that isn’t how he sees it being used down the line.

“Everything’s going to go a lot faster with AI. Things are going to get created. You’re going to be getting calls from someone that you think you know, telling you that they are somewhere that they need your help, but it’s not really them. You’re going to be seeing this more and more,” he said.

The recent survey from Leger points out that Canadians are conflicted when it comes to AI.

“I wasn’t around following public opinion trends, 40 odd years ago when the internet was bursting onto the scene, but I might say to myself that maybe some of our reactions aren’t that dis-similar to some degree,” said Andrew Enns, the executive vice-president for Leger.

Enns points to the fact that many people seem okay with AI elements that have been around longer like google thermostats, Alexa or facial recognition on a cell phone, but there are some reservations when it comes to things like artificial intelligence finding the perfect romantic match online.

Looking at the data, while the number of Canadians using AI has increased from 25 per cent to 30 per cent since last year, two-thirds of respondents still think the prospect of it in their lives is scary.

“The general lack of emotion, I think that’s where people really struggle,” said Enns.

“How can a program or a machine actually answer these things with that emotion and compassion and I think that’s something that we’re still getting out heads around as Canadians.”

According to the results, 75 per cent say AI tools lack the emotion and empathy required to make good decisions.

Like all technology, digital anthropologist Giles Crouch says artificial intelligence is a double-edged sword.

“People are starting to play with it a little bit more. They’re realizing that there are some good ways to use it,” he said.

“I’ve asked it to summarize some pretty complex issues and it usually does a pretty good job, but sometimes it has given me the wrong facts. If I didn’t have that subject matter expertise, I wouldn’t know that was an incorrect fact and I’d use it and that would be wrong.”

He says it can also help students and those in knowledge industries, but because it’s still in the very early days, people have to still be cautious and wary of it.

“It’s not until a revolutionary technology comes into the world that we can touch and that we can play with that we seem to understand it and see what the dangerous are and the opportunities,” he said.

Adding, “Sometimes the reason the technology comes into the world, isn’t the way that it ends up getting used, but the way that we react is usually through fear because we don’t understand how this technology works and we don’t understand how it’s going to impact our daily lives and that’s called culture.”

Crouch also points out that there could be a hiccup when it comes to artificial relationships.

“What we tend to do with technology is we anthropomorphize them, so we put human qualities onto technology. We call cars he and she, we name them, we’re doing that same thing with artificial intelligence and that’s dangerous because they’re machines,” he said.

"They don't have emotions. They don't have feelings. They don't have consciousness, they have no intelligence whatsoever, they're just predictive analytics. That's all they are."

While it is a newer system right now, Crouch says historically, culture has always found what works and what doesn't and has pushed back against what needs to be fixed, which he suspects will happen the exact same way with AI technology.

Other statistics that were found in the survey were that 81 per cent believe society will become too dependent on AI, 70 per cent say AI threatens human jobs and 60 per cent says the prospect of AI in our lives is scary.

Loblaw profits and sales continue growing as shoppers look for more deals

Loblaw Cos. Ltd. reported its fourth-quarter profit and sales rose compared with year ago. A man leaves a Loblaws store in Toronto on Thursday, May 3, 2018. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Nathan Denette
Loblaw Cos. Ltd. reported its fourth-quarter profit and sales rose compared with year ago.

Canada's largest grocer expects this year to be much like the last: customers continuing to seek discounts and deals, leading to more growth at the company's discount brands and banners, and higher profits.

"We expect our retail business to grow earnings faster than sales, and adjusted earning- per-share growth in the high single digits," Loblaw Cos. Ltd. chief financial officer Richard Dufresne said.

The company saw its earnings and sales rise in the fourth quarter of 2023 and for the full financial year, as its discount stores such as No Frills outperformed other banners.

Dufresne told a conference call to discuss the company's latest results that Loblaw is gaining market share in the discount segment and holding its own against its peers in the rest of the grocery market.

"We're very happy with what's happening with our market share performance, specifically discount. And so that tells us that our strategies are working," he said.

The company has been expanding its discount footprint across the country, opening eight more Maxi and No Frills locations in its fourth quarter. It plans to keep that growth going in 2024, having announced a \$2-billion capital investment plan earlier this week.

The expansion will result in more than 40 new discount stores, and also involves renovations, relocations and 140 new pharmacy care clinics — almost tripling its total pharmacy care footprint from the current 74.

"This is a new initiative. And we're actually quite thrilled with what it's doing for us," Dufresne said.

It was the first time that analysts on an earnings call heard from Per Bank, the new president and CEO of Loblaw. The European retail executive joined the company as former president Galen Weston stepped back from day-to-day operations, though Weston remains chairman of Loblaw and CEO of holding company George Weston Ltd.

Bank said he expects Canadians will continue to hunt for deals in three ways: responding more heavily to promotions; buying more house brands, especially No Name; and switching over to discount stores.

The company has carved out so-called hard discount stores Maxi and No Frills into a separate division, he said.

Loblaw said its investment plan will create more than 7,500 jobs in stores and in construction. The \$2.2 billion in gross capital investments will be partly offset by about \$400 million in proceeds from property sales, it said.

The company, which owns the Loblaws, Shoppers Drug Mart, No Frills, Real Canadian Superstore and T&T banners, has a network of 2,500 stores across the country.

Loblaw's results for the fourth quarter were better than expected, RBC Dominion Securities analyst Irene Nattel said in a note to clients.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, Loblaw said it earned a profit available to common shareholders of \$541 million or \$1.72 per diluted share for the quarter ended Dec. 30. The result compared with a profit of \$529 million or \$1.62 per diluted share in the last three months of 2022.

Revenue totalled \$14.53 billion, up from \$14.01 billion a year earlier.

On a same-store basis, food sales rose by 2.0 per cent, while drug sales increased 4.6 per cent, with front store sales growth of 1.7 per cent and pharmacy and health-care services sales growth of 8.0 per cent.

On an adjusted basis, Loblaw said it earned \$2 per share in its latest quarter compared with an adjusted profit of \$1.76 per share a year earlier.

Markets were expecting earnings per share of \$1.90 as of Feb. 21, according to financial data firm Refinitiv.

The latest results come as Loblaw faces pressure from politicians and Canadian shoppers regarding inflation and the cost of groceries.

The company recently had to walk back a decision to reduce its discount on food items nearing their sell-by date after the move drew intense scrutiny.

Loblaw is also being urged by politicians to sign on to the grocery code of conduct, which it and Walmart Canada have said could raise prices.

Global News

[ArriveCAN violated Canadians' rights, proposed class-action lawsuit alleges](#)

[Google pauses Gemini AI image generation of people after racial 'inaccuracies'](#)

[Grocers face uphill battle to regain customers' trust, experts say](#)

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR

Media Relations Manager

Digital Government and Service NL

709-729-4748

Follow us on Twitter @DGS_GovNL

From: Dutton, Sean
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 9:44 AM
To: ATIPP-DGSNL
Subject: FW: FOR APPROVAL - Media response

From: Stoodley, Sarah <SarahStoodley@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 11:22 AM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: FOR APPROVAL - Media response

Approved thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 23, 2024, at 11:19 AM, Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

MEDIA REQUEST INFORMATION

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Media:

Brian Callahan, Stingray, bcallahan@stingray.com
Juanita Mercer, The Telegram, Juanita.Mercer@thetelegra.com

Reporter's deadline:

Not specified

Context:

Follow up questions on the suspension of ride-sharing licence for Redsea Riding

Questions:

Is one day the average or normal processing time for such an explanation?

Should the so-called cut-and-paste job from Uber's site have been picked up?

You've said the licence was suspended after receiving new information. What information did you receive and who supplied it?

Suggested approach:

Statement

Suggested statement:

The service standard for all commercial motor registration transactions is two business days.

We would expect new market participants to meet or exceed industry standards.

The ride-share application in Newfoundland and Labrador is aligned with the process in place in other jurisdictions throughout the country.

New information was brought to the department's attention related to a serious legal matter involving the licensee. Upon discovering this information, we took decisive action and immediately suspended the licence.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information, we will not be providing further comment at this time.

Approved and in consultation:

Director of Communications
Assistant Deputy Minister
Deputy Minister
Minister Stoodley (pending)

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR
Media Relations Manager
Digital Government and Service NL
709-729-4748

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From: [Dalton, Krista](#)
To: [Sorensen, David](#); [Barfoot, Scott](#)
Cc: [Humber, Eric](#); [Sulley, Erin](#); [Reynolds, Jeremy](#); [Newhook, Tina](#)
Subject: RE: Some thoughts from me.
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 2:15:23 PM

Here's the revised statement with Jeremy's edit included, along with some additional text in red.

Please advise when we can send the response.

Thank you.

Suggested statement:

The service standard for all commercial motor registration transactions is two business days **from receipt of a completed application**. However, like anything, there may be occasions when officials can process applications faster, and others when it may take longer. There was nothing unusual about the processing time in reviewing the application from Redsea Riding.

The application met established criteria. Our policies are also very similar to those used in other jurisdictions.

Given the applicant's ongoing legal matters, it would not be appropriate to comment further.

From: Reynolds, Jeremy <JeremyReynolds@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 1:46 PM
To: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Sorensen, David <DavidSorensen@gov.nl.ca>; Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>; Humber, Eric <EricHumber@gov.nl.ca>; Barfoot, Scott <ScottBarfoot@gov.nl.ca>; Sulley, Erin <ErinSulley@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Some thoughts from me.

End it all with "to comment further." ?

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 23, 2024, at 1:41 PM, Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca> wrote:

Looping in JPS.

From: Sorensen, David <DavidSorensen@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 1:28 PM

To: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>; Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Barfoot, Scott <ScottBarfoot@gov.nl.ca>; Sulley, Erin <ErinSulley@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: Some thoughts from me.

This has been reviewed by the PO and the branch and some edits are included below.

Cheers
Dave

Media:

Brian Callahan, Stingray, bcallahan@stingray.com
Juanita Mercer, The Telegram, Juanita.Mercer@thetelegra.com

Reporter's deadline:

Not specified

Context:

Follow up questions on the suspension of ride-sharing licence for Redsea Riding

Questions:

Is one day the average or normal processing time for such an explanation?

Should the so-called cut-and-paste job from Uber's site have been picked up?

You've said the licence was suspended after receiving new information. What information did you receive and who supplied it?

Suggested approach:

Statement

Suggested statement:

The service standard for all commercial motor registration transactions is two business days. However, like anything, there may be occasions when officials can process applications faster, and others when it may take longer. There was nothing unusual about the processing time in reviewing the application from Redsea Riding.

The application met established criteria. Our policies are also very similar to those used in other jurisdictions.

Given the applicant's ongoing legal matters, it would not be appropriate to comment on the information was received.

From: [Dalton, Krista](#)
To: ["Brian Callahan"](#)
Cc: [Newhook, Tina](#)
Subject: RE: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 2:57:24 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Brian,

The Department of Digital Government and Service NL offers the following statement.

Should you use any of this information in a story, please attribute it to the department or Minister Stoodley, as spokesperson.

Thank you.

++++
++++

The service standard for all commercial motor registration transactions is two business days from receipt of a completed application. However, like anything, there may be occasions when officials can process applications faster, and others when it may take longer. There was nothing unusual about the processing time in reviewing the application from Redsea Riding.

The application met established criteria. Our policies are also very similar to those used in other jurisdictions.

Given the applicant's ongoing legal matters, it would not be appropriate to comment further.

From: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 6:11 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

Omg. I'm not fit.

Thanks, Krista ... and Tina!

Brian

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 3:03 PM
To: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>

Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: RE: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

Hi Brain, it was me you were speaking with.

We received your questions and will be in touch.

Thanks
Krista

Krista Dalton, BA, MPR
Media Relations Manager
Digital Government and Service NL
709-729-4748

Follow us on Twitter @DGS_GovNL

From: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 2:53 PM
To: Dutton, Sean <sdutton@gov.nl.ca>; Boland, Gail <Gailboland@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: FW: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

FYI.

From: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 2:46 PM
To: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Linda Swain <lswain@stingray.com>; Greg Smith <gsmith@stingray.com>
Subject: Fw: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

Hi, Tina.

Just following up on our brief phone chat.

Is one day the average or normal processing time for such an explanation?

Should the so-called cut-and-paste job from Uber's site have been picked up?

And you've said the licence was suspended after receiving new information. What information did you receive and who supplied it?

Thanks.

Brian

From: Brian Callahan <bcallahan@stingray.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 1:10 PM
To: McCabe, Meghan <MeghanMcCabe@gov.nl.ca>; Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Yosief Tesfamicael/Redsea Riding details

Hi, folks.

Another busy day, but wondering if the premier or minister will provide any comment/statement on new details surrounding the approval of the Redsea Riding application submitted by Yosief Tesfamicael, which has since been suspended of course ...

Thanks.

Brian

Brian Callahan

Reporter
VOCM News

T 709.726.5660 M 709.330.9117
bcallahan@stingray.com
St. John's, NL., Canada



From: [Dalton, Krista](#)
To: ["Juanita Mercer"](#)
Cc: [Newhook, Tina](#)
Subject: RE: Media request re: RedSea
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024 2:57:40 PM

Hi Juanita,

While we weren't able to accommodate your interview request, the Department of Digital Government and Service NL offers the following statement.

Should you use any of this information in a story, please attribute it to the department or Minister Stoodley, as spokesperson.

Thank you.

+++++

The service standard for all commercial motor registration transactions is two business days from receipt of a completed application. However, like anything, there may be occasions when officials can process applications faster, and others when it may take longer. There was nothing unusual about the processing time in reviewing the application from Redsea Riding.

The application met established criteria. Our policies are also very similar to those used in other jurisdictions.

Given the applicant's ongoing legal matters, it would not be appropriate to comment further.

From: Juanita Mercer <juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 4:11 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Media request re: RedSea

Krista,

I got in only one brief question that didn't actually address many of the issues. Comms cut it short because they wanted to focus on late Minister Bragg, understandably. I still have a list of unanswered questions that are best suited for Minister Stoodley anyhow.

Thank you!

Best,
Juanita

Juanita Mercer

Legislative Reporter
SaltWire

P. 709-364-2323 | M. 709-769-2038 | saltwire.com

36 Austin St. | St. John's, NL

Tune in to what matters.

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 4:07 PM
To: Juanita Mercer <juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: RE: Media request re: RedSea

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Hi again Juanita,

I understand you had the opportunity to speak with the Premier this afternoon.

If you need anything further, please let us know.

Thanks
Krista

From: Juanita Mercer <juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 3:14 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Re: Media request re: RedSea

Thank you!

Best,
Juanita

Juanita Mercer

Legislative Reporter
SaltWire

P. 709-364-2323 | M. 709-769-2038 | saltwire.com

36 Austin St. | St. John's, NL

Tune in to what matters.

From: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 3:12 PM
To: Juanita Mercer <juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com>
Cc: Newhook, Tina <TinaNewhook@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: RE: Media request re: RedSea

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Hi Juanita,

We received your inquiry and will be touch soon.

Krista

From: Juanita Mercer <juanita.mercer@thetelegram.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2024 3:08 PM
To: Dalton, Krista <KristaDalton@gov.nl.ca>
Subject: Media request re: RedSea

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Hi Krista,

I am wondering if Minister Stoodley is available anytime **tomorrow, Friday, Feb. 23rd** to discuss RedSea's quick approval, and whether any changes to the application approval process have been made since.

I am available **anytime except between 10:30 a.m. - noon.**

Thank you,
Juanita

Juanita Mercer

Legislative Reporter
SaltWire

P. 709-364-2323 | M. 709-769-2038 | saltwire.com

36 Austin St. | St. John's, NL

Tune in to what matters.

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