

COR/2017/01513

APR 20 2017

Honourable Patricia Hajdu, MP  
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Hajdu:

I am writing regarding the current ice conditions off Newfoundland and Labrador and its impact on Newfoundland and Labrador's inshore fishing industry.

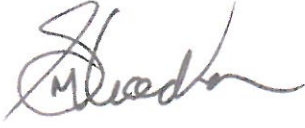
Snow crab and lobster fisheries in many areas of Newfoundland and Labrador open at various times throughout April and May. The ice conditions along the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador have delayed the start of these major inshore fisheries; and although some snow crab areas such as 3K, 3L, and 2J are currently open, hundreds of vessels are unable to harvest due to extreme ice conditions. With the potential to see such delays until at least mid-May, many inshore harvesters and plant workers will face financial hardships as their Employment Insurance (EI) benefits will have been exhausted by that time.

In previous years, the Federal Government has provided compensation to individuals whose fishing activities were impacted by severe ice conditions. In 1991, Fisheries and Ocean Canada received non-EI program funding to maintain income for harvesters and workers impacted by these circumstances. In 2007, the Federal Government provided an Ice Compensation Program for east coast commercial fishers, allowing participants to receive weekly compensation comparable to average EI payments.

I ask the Federal Government again to strongly consider compensating the impacted individuals by extending EI benefits or offering equivalent compensation. Harvesters and plant workers hindered by the delays to fishing activity will be left without a reliable source of income for the foreseeable future.

I look forward to your response on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Crocker', written in a cursive style.

**STEVE CROCKER, MHA**  
Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde  
Minister

c. Honourable Dwight Ball, Premier

Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, MP  
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

Honourable Dominic LeBlanc  
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Honourable Gerry Byrne  
Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour

Mr. Keith Sullivan, President, FFAW-Unifor