

From: Somerville, Todd
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 2:55 PM
To: XMAR-GRP, SF-Fishery-Officers
Cc: Berthier, Jacinta; Vincent, Patrick
Subject: Communication discipline / loyalty

Importance: High

To foster the resolution of the ongoing situation in St. Mary's Bay, the Minister is undertaking calls with a variety of stakeholders.

In some of these exchanges, comments such as "***fishery officers are telling us that they want to get out there and do their job, but the Minister is telling them not to***".

1. These comments are not factual. I, with the strong support of your Area Chiefs and the Chief of Enforcement Operation, have made the decision to not focus upon gear removal operations under the volatility of the current circumstances. My assessment is that there is too great an officer safety risk for too little of an actual enforcement outcome. I am not putting employees under my direction in harm's way in a reactionary and careless manner. This is my decision, supported as well by senior leadership, and I am the one accountable for it.
2. These comments are significantly detrimental to the Minister's attempts to peacefully resolve this situation, which further perpetuates the ongoing volatility and risk thereby further limiting our ability to get our work done.
3. Comments of this nature, if true, are insubordinate and reflect a disloyalty to your position as a public servant upon receipt of lawful, ethical direction. All opinions and input are valued, but need to be channeled appropriately to your supervisors. Once you've been heard, it is your duty to accept the direction that you've been given. Complain amongst yourselves, if you must, but to the public that we serve. Call me directly if you want a clearer explanation, but don't put words into our Minister's mouth.

I have no idea if there is any truth to how industry leaders are portraying fishery officer comments during dialogue with the Minister. It could all be part of the misinformation already circulating. However, I would respectfully – but forcefully - request all officers and staff to refrain from commenting upon the current situation and offering personal opinions to anyone outside of our organization. A misplaced utterance in a driveway or coffee shop can be leveraged against our department and undermine years of excellent work accomplished to address this situation thus far. We all have to think of the big picture beyond the crisis of the moment.

I am currently preparing my direction on our way forward and hopefully, some of the answers that some of you may be looking for will be in that document.

Take care and stay safe,

Todd

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