



December 17, 2020

Hon. Christine Elliot Minister of Health of Ontario	Hon. Christian Dubé Minister of Health of Quebec
Dr. David Williams Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario	Dr. Horacio Arruda Director of Public Health for Quebec
Hon. Dorothy Shephard Minister of Health of New Brunswick	Hon. James Aylward Minister of Health and Wellness of Prince Edward Island
Dr. Jennifer Russell Chief Medical Officer of Health for New Brunswick	Dr. Heather Morrison Chief Public Health Officer of Prince Edward Island
Hon. Randy Delorey Minister of Health of Nova Scotia	Hon. Dr. John Haggie Minister of Health of Newfoundland and Labrador
Dr. Robert Strang Chief Medical Officer of Health for Nova Scotia	Dr. Janice Fitzgerald Chief Medical Health Officer of Newfoundland and Labrador
Hon. Adrian Dix Minister of Health of British Columbia	Hon. Cameron Friesen Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living
Dr. Bonnie Henry Chief Public Health Officer of British Columbia	Dr. Brent Roussin Chief Provincial Public Health Officer of Manitoba
Hon. Lorne Kusugak Minister of Health of Nunavut	Hon. Julie Green Minister of Health and Social Services of Northwest Territories
Dr. Michael Patterson Chief Public Health Officer of Nunavut	Dr. Kami Kandola Chief Public Health Officer of Northwest Territories
Hon. Pauline Frost Minister of Health of the Yukon	Hon. Patty Hajdu Minister of Health of Canada
Dr. Brendan Hanley Chief Medical Officer of Health for the Yukon	Dr. Theresa Tam Chief Public Health Officer of Canada

Re: Prioritization of Canadian Marine Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination and Rapid Testing

Dear Ministers and Chief Public Health Officers,

We are writing to you today as a coalition of marine industry labour unions representing workers in Canada’s domestic marine transportation system from coast to coast to coast, together with the Chamber of Marine Commerce, to seek prioritization in your respective jurisdictions for both rapid testing of asymptomatic domestic marine workers for COVID-19 and for vaccination as essential workers.

This would include crews on board Canadian domestic vessels, as well as marine pilots, commercial marine surveyors and ship repair specialists. This also includes port workers and stevedores engaged with loading and unloading vessels, federal inspectors who must board both



foreign and domestic vessels, and ship crews with the Canadian Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Navy.

Throughout the pandemic, Canadian marine workers have worked tirelessly to ensure that goods are still moving across the country and internationally, ensuring the delivery of vital cargoes people depend on such as home heating oil, gasoline, diesel fuel, road salt, grains for processing into food products and raw materials for manufacturing and in the case of the federal sector, keeping our maritime space safe and secure. All face potential exposure to COVID-19 through different transmission pathways.

Though most marine employers have put in place measures to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19, success rates are not 100% guaranteed. As such, we see the need for regular rapid testing of domestic marine workers to give them peace of mind when they return home to their families. In this vein, we are asking asymptomatic domestic marine workers to be included as priority workers for the new rapid COVID-19 tests as well as the planned roll out of vaccines. Their status can be confirmed through various measures including by Seafarer Identity Cards, Company/Union issued letters or for federal workers, their Coast Guard or Military identification.

We understand that the federal Guidance on the prioritization of initial doses of COVID-19 vaccine(s) references essential workers to be prioritized in a Phase 2 prioritization for vaccination. As marine workers are considered essential workers, we would ask that marine workers are recognized and prioritized in any type of phase 2 plan federally, provincially and territorially.

We are proud of the work we have accomplished throughout the pandemic and have seen Canada's marine sector rise to the occasion of working through these difficult times, and we thank you for considering our request.

We are available to discuss this matter further, and if you have questions please feel free to contact us at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Albert Batten

Atlantic Coast District Vice-President, International Longshoremen's Association (ILA)

Graeme Johnston

President, BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union (BCFMWU)



James Given
President, Seafarers' International Union of Canada (SIU)

John Hockey
National Representative, Unifor

Mark Boucher
President, Canadian Merchant Service Guild (CMG)

Martin Lapierre
President, CUPE 375

Rob Ashton
President, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada (ILWU)

CC:

The Honourable Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport
The Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National Defence
The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister of Labour
Dr. Caroline Quach-Thanh, Chair, National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)
Dr. Shelley Deeks, Vice-Chair, National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)
Dr. Stephen Lucas, Deputy Minister, Health Canada

Michael Keenan, Deputy Minister, Transport Canada
Julie Gascon, Director General, Marine Safety & Security, Transport Canada
Martin McKay, A/Associate Director General, Marine Safety & Security, Transport Canada
Mario Pelletier, Commissioner, Canadian Coast Guard

Bruce R. Burrows, President and CEO, Chamber of Marine Commerce (CMC)
Paul Topping, Director, Regulatory and Environmental Affairs, Chamber of Marine Commerce (CMC)