

The Honourable Lesa Semmler
Minister of Health and Social Services

Paramedic Contracts

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by the Member for Yellowknife North on February 6, 2026, regarding Paramedic Contracts.

The Member asked about terms of the Government of the Northwest Territories retainer contracts for paramedic teams supporting wildfire suppression efforts.

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority has a contract with Advanced Medical Solutions for the provision of 'as and when' paramedic services to support or supplement Community Health Centres and Emergency Room services during times of significant shortages in staffing that may result in a closure or reduction of a service. The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority uses the same contract for paramedics to be designated as standby Wildfire Response Team medics.

The Member asked how many paramedics were committed under those retainer contracts.

Two Medic positions, one Advanced Care Paramedic and one Primary Care Paramedic, were secured for the wildfire response, from May 1 through September 31 in both 2024 and 2025. The contractor fills these two positions on a rotational basis, averaging two-to-three-week rotations for each above-mentioned position.

The Member asked if the retainer contracts for paramedic teams include provisions allowing assignment of paramedics to other health-system duties when they were not required for wildfire support.

Medics on standby for fire response are stationed in units or health centres where there is a projected decrease in staffing levels to supplement core staffing levels. The team can also be placed in a facility close to an active fire to allow ease of redeployment.

The Member asked if the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority tracked the proportion of retained paramedic resources that were used during wildfire seasons, including the percentage of total contracted personnel-hours that were used for active service versus those retained but not deployed.

Deployments for each medic, including wildfire response, for example, community evacuation, are tracked. In 2025 the Wildfire Response Team medics were deployed to respond to Fort Providence between September 2 through to 28, resulting in an approximate 20% for the specific response, and 80% standby where they were used in either another Community Health Centre or Emergency Room location within the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority.

The Member asked if paramedic contracts for 2026 have been negotiated, and if so, are there any significant differences from previous years' contracts.

An extension of the current contract is in place and there are no significant differences. The contract will conclude on June 31, 2027, with the option for one additional year of extension.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.