



December 1, 2020

Mr. Paul Cardegna  
Clerk of the Committee  
Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates  
House of Commons  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 131 Queen Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Cardegna,

On behalf of the responding Departments and Agencies, we are pleased to provide electronically, in both official languages, all records requested under the motion for production of papers adopted by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates on November 2, 2020:

*That, in the context of its study of the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a), the committee send for all briefing notes, memos and emails from senior officials, prepared for the Minister of Health, the President of the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Chief Medical Health Officer of Canada, and the Minister of Public Service and Procurement between 2010 and Monday, August 31, 2020, regarding the stockpiling, management, disposal and replenishment of medical equipment and supplies in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile; that the committee receive the information no later than Tuesday, December 1, 2020; that matters of Cabinet confidence and national security be excluded from the request; that any redactions to protect the privacy of Canadian citizens and permanent residents whose names and personal information may be included in the documents, as well as public servants who have been providing assistance on this matter, be made by the Office of the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel of the House of Commons and that these documents be posted on the committee's web page.*

The organizations' primary objective in this exercise is to disclose as much information as possible within the scope of the motion, and to further the committee's understanding of the approach taken regarding the stockpiling, management, disposal and replenishment of medical equipment and supplies in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) since 2010.

The Government of Canada is working closely with provinces and territories to procure the necessary health supplies to continue responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NESS was initially built on the assumption that provincial, territorial and local governments would be prepared for the most common emergencies. Accordingly, it was designed to provide health emergency assets when local and provincial and territorial resources were exhausted. With the unprecedented nature of the current pandemic, the NESS quickly

stepped into a much more active role in procurement. In light of the resurgence of COVID-19 this fall, the NESS has actively continued the bulk procurement of personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, which may be required by federal, provincial and territorial governments. In anticipation of a possible vaccine rollout in the new year, the NESS has already acquired and begun to position supplies such as millions of needles, syringes and alcohol swabs as well as freezers for vaccine storage across the country in preparation for the first vaccines.

As instructed by the Committee, matters of Cabinet Confidences and national security have been excluded. Please note that a very small number of redactions to protect personal information have been made in accordance with the *Privacy Act*. Redactions have also been made to protect information considered advice to Minister and commercially sensitive information. The designation "Chief Medical Health Officer of Canada" used in the motion has been interpreted to mean the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada (CPHO).

We trust that the Committee finds the attached material useful for their work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Iain Stewart". The signature is stylized with a large loop at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Iain Stewart  
President

Att'