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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Oct. 21, 2005

The Editor  
National Post

As the minister responsible for aquaculture in British Columbia, I thought it was important to clarify a statement made in the Oct. 18 article “The latest border irritant – farmed salmon.”

The article says there are no rules in Canada requiring aquaculture firms to report any escapes to authorities immediately. This is certainly not the case in British Columbia.

When an escape occurs in our province, by law, farm operators must immediately initiate Escape Response Plans and notify the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands within 24 hours, and provide a written report within one week. The ministry will immediately launch an investigation and this will generally include site visits, a visit to company headquarters and interviews with farm workers. The ministry may take enforcement action as a result of these investigations.

In British Columbia, we are proud to have the most comprehensive escape prevention standards in the world.

Pat Bell  
Minister of Agriculture and Lands  
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