

Fog might prevent Salluit residents from voting

BY MARWA SIAM ABDOU, THE GAZETTE AUGUST 31, 2012



A view of Salluit on the Hudson strait in northern Quebec (File photo)

Photograph by: John Kenney, The Gazette

Temporary residents of a small community in Quebec's far north may not get to vote because of the weather.

People in the village of Salluit have been told the plane carrying their blank voting ballots could not land because of severe fog in the region.

James Walker, a Salluit-based teacher, said he was looking forward to voting and witnessed the failed attempt by the plane to land.

"I saw the plane trying to land from the air and then turn back around and fly again," said Walker.

Those affected are teachers, health care and construction workers living in the area who would have voted for candidates in their home ridings in southern Quebec.

Walker suggests the alternative and much-cheaper solution would be to let him and others interested in

voting do so by casting ballots in the local Ungava riding.

"The Raglan Mine community was able to hold a voting station in a private corporation during the federal election, some kind of accommodation should be made in our case too."

Walker explained that the expenses of flying an election team to Salluit can be saved if the votes could be transferred to a local voting station, adding that a round-trip from southern Quebec to Salluit is almost \$3200 and that repetitive attempts to fly the plane through the fog are both expensive and unguaranteed.

Denis Dion, spokesperson for the chief electoral office, said that the attempts to get the voting ballots will continue to be made until the votes from Salluit can be taken.

"We will continue to try to get their votes until next Tuesday," said Dion.

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