

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee yesterday, October 24, 2023 to clarify my testimony from December 8, 2022 regarding your study of the ArriveCan application. After over 32 years of public service including 10 years in the deputy minister ranks it was important for me to have an opportunity to explain myself.

However, I am writing today on a different matter, which is Mr Genius's motion of censure that was put forth during the second hour of the committee's proceedings.

When Mr. Curry reached out to me on LinkedIn stating that he had discovered a meeting on another matter with Botler AI that I attended with Mr. Firth, I was shocked for two reasons:

The first was the realization that in hindsight I should have asked the agency to verify my testimony after I testified last December. I have since done so, and yes my calendar on September 29, 2020 shows a virtual Teams meeting with 12 people, including myself. There were 7 public servants and 5 outside invitees: Ritika Dutt and Amir Morv from Botler, two legal advisors from INQ Data Law and Kristian Firth from GC Strategies. While I remember why Ms Dutt and Mr, Morv were briefing me, I still don't recall Mr Firth being there and certainly not him playing a role in the demonstration.

Fundamentally, I think it is unreasonable to expect me to remember all of the people who attended a virtual Teams meeting from 3 years ago while I was running the CBSA during an unprecedented time of complexity and as such I was happy for the committee to request all of my records, as they will show this was the one and only meeting I ever had that included Mr. Firth and that it had nothing to do with the ArriveCan App.

Again, I apologize for this error on my part and regret not having made this inquiry to CBSA and the resulting confusion. That said, I want to assure you that there was nothing deliberate about it and I would challenge anyone to find evidence that I knowingly made a false statement in this regard. As such the motion appears to be based on a presumption of guilt as opposed to the facts.

The second reason that I was shocked were the allegations of wrongdoing made by Mr Curry and Botler. Once again, when I asked the agency about this, the records the agency have given me clearly show that I was never advised of this before I retired. I don't know what Botler AI initially reported to Mr Utano in 2021, but Mr. Curry's reporting appears to suggest it was about not getting paid as opposed to the more serious allegations that were reported to the agency after I retired. The fact remains that it was never brought to my attention and the records the agency have provided me, and will produce to you as result of your request, will validate this.

I hope the committee will consider the above as they deliberate on Mr. Genius motion.

Sincerely,

John Ossowski