



MR. KIERON TESTART  
MLA, KAM LAKE

JUN 1 2018

**Oral Question 177-18(3) Knowledge Economy in the Northwest Territories**

Thank you for your questions on February 27, 2018, regarding what the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) is doing to advance the knowledge economy in the Northwest Territories (NWT). I have confirmed that plans are moving forward with the knowledge economy and I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with an update.

In its revised Mandate commitments (October 2017), the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) added supporting the knowledge economy as a priority. The following commitments were identified and are being implemented in efforts to develop and foster the knowledge economy:

- Completing the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link in order to help modernize the economy and enable growth in all economic sectors. (Department of Finance)
- Implementing the NWT Geological Survey Strategic Plan, including carrying out Slave Province geoscience studies, ensuring the availability of high quality geoscience knowledge to promote the successful exploration for and discovery of NWT mineral resources, and defining permafrost conditions that may impact future infrastructure development. (ITI)
- Implementing the Resources and Energy Development Information initiative to increase public awareness and understanding of NWT renewable and non-renewable mineral and energy resources and the means by which they can be developed in a responsible and sustainable manner. (ITI)
- In partnership with other organizations, supporting the creation of a central repository that supports knowledge dissemination, research, and best practices for northern farming conditions, and promoting innovative farm practices and northern based greenhouse and related technologies. (ITI)

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- Building upon the research vision developed in the GNWT Knowledge Agenda: Northern Research for Northern Priorities and other strategic instruments, to support the generation of knowledge (e.g. traditional and local knowledge and western science) and innovation to enhance decision-making and sustainable economic opportunities. (Environment and Natural Resources [ENR])
- Supporting the development and growth of post-secondary institutions and programs available in the NWT. (Education, Culture and Employment [ECE])
- Researching the feasibility of creating a Northern Centre of Excellence to promote and support research, innovation, and use of traditional Indigenous knowledge, and foster partnerships with universities, governments and other organizations. (ENR/ECE)

ITI also sits on the GNWT Knowledge Economy Assistant Deputy Minister Committee and has representatives on the GNWT Knowledge Economy Core Team to ensure that ITI is able to help drive support of the knowledge economy. Through these partnerships, the Department is helping set the stage for a future knowledge economy strategy, which will take into account Arctic science and innovation as well as Indigenous knowledge.

I agree with you that the potential of the NWT remains largely untapped and holds promise for the development of an innovative knowledge economy sector to further economic diversification. As these initiatives progress, the GNWT will continue to make a priority, the establishment of information and communications technology infrastructure, skill development and knowledge development and transfer, to advance the knowledge economy. While significant progress is being made in the NWT through these initiatives, the GNWT needs to identify what more it can do. Government's role in supporting the development of the knowledge economy is fundamental and ongoing.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. I trust this information addresses your questions.



Wally Schumann  
Minister  
Industry, Tourism and Investment

c. List Attached

Honourable Wally Schumann  
Minister, Infrastructure

Honourable Robert C. McLeod  
Minister, Finance

Mr. Tom Jensen  
Deputy Minister, ITI

Mr. Tim Mercer  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator