

Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

NWT Days Evaluation

November 2013

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Introduction

Purpose of NWT Days

NWT Days in Ottawa, held January 30 to February 3, 2013, were part of the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) coordinated federal engagement activities.

The goal of NWT Days was to strengthen the GNWT's presence in the nation's capital.

Specific objectives were to:

1. Raise the profile of the NWT
2. Advance seven of the GNWT's key federal engagement priorities:
 - Devolution
 - Regulatory Improvement
 - Responsible Stewardship
 - Mackenzie Fibre Link
 - Hydro Initiatives
 - Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk portion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway
 - Sustainable Approach to Northern Housing
3. Promote the NWT's tourism potential

NWT Days delegation

The NWT Days delegation was led by Premier Robert R. McLeod and included all Cabinet Ministers, eight regular Members of the Legislative Assembly, leaders of four NWT Aboriginal governments, and ten representatives of industry. GNWT senior officials also participated in NWT Days.

NWT Days events

NWT Days activities included:

- Ten political meetings held between the Premier or GNWT Cabinet Ministers and their federal counterparts
- Ten stakeholder meetings (key House of Commons and Senate committees, and important public policy think tanks)
- Senior officials meetings held between GNWT Deputies Ministers and their federal counterparts
- The North Star Gala, designed to provide an opportunity for all members of the NWT delegation to connect with the federal policymaker community as well as the broader Ottawa public policy community

NWT Days also included a Spectacular NWT component, which was part of the Winterlude festival. Events highlighted the NWT's culture and tourism potential.

Spectacular NWT events included:

- The Spectacular NWT reception
- The NWT pavilion at the Ottawa Convention Centre, featuring:
 - Demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts, as well as diamond polishing
 - Northern performers
 - Interactive video displays with images and information about all regions of the NWT

Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine:

- If the goals and objectives of NWT Days were met
- If NWT Days and Spectacular NWT activities and/or events were effective
- How the GNWT can maintain the awareness and momentum built, if any, as a result of these events

This information will be used in planning potential future federal engagement activities.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation approach included interviews and surveys with the following members of the NWT Days delegation:

- Ministers
- Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)
- Aboriginal Government Leaders
- Industry Representatives

Similar interviews and surveys were also conducted with:

- Key Deputy Ministers

The survey questions were designed to assess these participants' perceptions and interpretation of the effectiveness of NWT Days and related activities.

The evaluation also includes:

- A cost summary of NWT Days
- A review of public participation in Spectacular NWT events
- A media scan and analysis

Since the Spectacular NWT brand is a separate government program, only the Spectacular NWT activities and events that took place during NWT Days are included in this evaluation.

The surveys were conducted from September 11-27, 2013 and included questions related to:

- The impact of the political, senior official and stakeholder meetings
- The impact of the events
- The personal impact on the delegates
- Suggestions for the future (“looking forward”)

All delegates were given the opportunity to complete the survey. A total of 26 surveys were completed (five Cabinet Ministers, seven Deputy Ministers and 14 other delegates). All responses are anonymous (attributed only to the type of survey: Cabinet, Deputy Minister or other delegate), and all comments are summarized (no direct quotations).

All percentages stated in this report are provided to illustrate the relative weights of overall responses. These percentages do not represent a scientific sample and should not be used for a year-over-year comparative analysis.

Program Costs

The final cost for the political events associated with NWT Days in Ottawa is approximately \$104,000.

This includes approximately \$62,000 for travel and accommodations for:

- Eight Members of the Legislative Assembly
- Six representatives of NWT Aboriginal governments and industry
- Four Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations staff

This also includes approximately \$35,000 to cover costs associated with meetings and events, including the North Star Gala, as well as \$7,000 for the design and printing of materials.

These costs were funded by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (DAAIR), through its existing budget. NWT Tourism also contributed approximately \$5,000 to cover the cost of some of the refreshments for the North Star Gala.

Costs for the Spectacular NWT component were approximately \$300,000 and included:

- Fees, travel and accommodation for 11 performers
- Promotion
- Exhibit design, construction and shipping
- Venue rental
- Partnership with Winterlude

NWT Tourism also spent \$50,000 in sponsorship for activities associated with Winterlude, which helped defray the costs above.

An additional cost of approximately \$180,000 is associated with large-scale displays, including the interactive technology used at the two evening galas and at the Winterlude venue. These are legacy assets that the GNWT is using to promote the NWT, and will continue to use in venues such as airports, visitors' centres and schools.

The costs associated with the Spectacular NWT component of NWT Days have been shared among GNWT departments and funded from within their existing budgets.

NWT Days Budget Summary

Purpose	Amount
Travel and accommodation for NWT Days Delegation; NWT Days political function costs	\$104,000
Spectacular NWT events	\$335,000
Legacy assets	\$180,000
Subtotal	\$619,000
Sponsorship (NWT Tourism provided \$50K in sponsorship, \$15K of which was used for travel)	- \$35,000
TOTAL	\$584,000

Impact of NWT Days

NWT Days were designed to raise the NWT's profile in the nation's capital, advance the GNWT's key federal priorities and promote the NWT's tourism potential. NWT Days delegates hold an overwhelmingly favourable view of NWT Days and related events in achieving these goals and objectives. In particular, survey participants indicated that the political and stakeholder meetings, the North Star Gala, the Spectacular NWT reception and the resulting media coverage, had the most impact on raising the profile of the NWT and on advancing the GNWT's priorities. Most participants indicated that a similar event should be held in the future, perhaps on an ongoing basis.

To ensure that any potential future NWT Days activities benefit from the experience of the 2013 delegation, survey respondents were asked to provide suggestions to improve any future events. Those suggestions are included throughout this report.

Political, senior official and stakeholder meetings

Building relationships and communicating both the GNWT's priorities and the NWT's potential as a whole was an important aspect of NWT Days. Meeting with key individuals and organizations, including federal politicians and senior officials, as well as important public policy think tanks, was essential in ensuring NWT Days had significant impact.

Overall, survey respondents indicated that the meetings were a worthwhile endeavour, particularly in accomplishing their intended purpose of communicating NWT Days objectives. Delegates were also asked if they felt the meetings had resulted in additional outcomes. Generally respondents indicated that the meetings were less effective at encouraging commitment to follow-up discussions or assistance.

A number of respondents commented that the meetings were not long enough to accomplish meaningful dialogue. Others commented that the effectiveness of individual meetings depended on factors such as the format and the chairperson. Going forward, NWT Days planners should consider changes to the structure of the meetings to address these issues.

Of all the NWT Days activities, respondents rated the **stakeholder meetings** as having the **most impact on advancing the GNWT's priorities**. Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers ranked the **political meetings** (including senior official meetings) as having the most impact (the other delegates did not actively participate in these meetings).

Political and stakeholder meetings also ranked highest in allowing the most **opportunity to network with federal counterparts and stakeholders**.

Of the delegates surveyed:

- The majority indicated that the format of the meetings was **“effective”** (54 percent) or **“very effective”** (21 percent) as an **opportunity for delegates to communicate the objectives of NWT Days.**
- All but one of the other delegates interviewed felt that the meetings were **“effective”** (67 percent) or **“very effective”** (25 percent) at giving them an **opportunity to voice their concerns, issues, or thoughts.**
- **57 percent** indicated that the meetings were **helpful in developing potential solutions to challenges.**

Sample comments

- *In most meetings, the stakeholders were already willing to assist, and didn't need to be encouraged. Seemed to be genuinely concerned about issues.*
- *Limited time meant the meetings were not as effective as they could have been. Next time, allow more time between meetings.*
- *The meetings were mainly about information sharing, and weren't really focused on agreeing to move forward on priorities.*

Political and senior official meetings

Meetings with federal politicians were essential in strengthening relationships and communicating the GNWT's priorities and vision for the future. Ten political meetings were held between GNWT Ministers and their federal counterparts. These included a meeting between the Premier and the Prime Minister, as well as a meeting between the Premier and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

All Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers interviewed indicated that the political meetings were either **“effective”** or **“very effective”** at **generating understanding of GNWT priorities among their federal counterparts.**

Again, the purpose of the political meetings was to advance the GNWT's key federal priorities and enhance positive relationships. Cabinet and Deputy Ministers were asked if the political meetings resulted in additional outcomes.

Overall, **50 percent** indicated that the meetings were either **“effective”** (42 percent) or **“very effective”** (8 percent) in encouraging federal counterparts to indicate a willingness to assist the GNWT in its priorities going forward. Likewise, **50 percent** indicated that the meetings were **“effective”** in encouraging federal counterparts to suggest or agree upon new approaches or activities to assist the GNWT in moving forward on its priorities. **Sixty-six percent** indicated that the meetings were **“effective”** in encouraging federal counterparts to plan or commit to follow-up meetings.

Stakeholder meetings

To communicate the GNWT's key federal priorities and assist in building relationships with groups that have an interest in the North and the GNWT's

priority areas, ten stakeholder meetings were held. These included key House of Commons and Senate Committees and important public policy think tanks. Each meeting was led by the Premier or a GNWT Minister, and all members of the NWT Days delegation were invited to attend. Delegates were enthusiastic about this opportunity, with many of the meetings drawing more than 20 NWT participants. Anecdotal information from the stakeholder groups indicates that much of the impact of NWT Days came from the members of the delegation, who fulfill a wide range of roles in the NWT, and who communicated similar priorities and concerns.

Eighty-three percent of respondents indicated that the stakeholder meetings were either **“very effective”** (26 percent) or **“effective”** (57 percent) at **generating understanding of GNWT priorities**. As with the political meetings, opinion was mixed on the effectiveness of stakeholder meetings to generate additional results, such as future commitments.

When delegates were asked if these meetings achieved these additional results, more than half indicated that the meetings were **“effective”** (52 percent) in encouraging stakeholders to indicate willingness to assist the GNWT in moving forward on its priorities. Forty-four percent felt that the meetings were **“not effective”** in encouraging stakeholders to suggest or agree upon new approaches or activities to assist the GNWT in moving forward on its priorities. Forty-four percent indicated the meetings were **“effective”** in encouraging stakeholders to plan or commit to follow-up meetings. Going forward, NWT Days planner may want to use a more comprehensive approach to follow-up activities to keep the GNWT’s priorities on the minds of federal counterparts and stakeholders.

Events

NWT Days included two evening receptions – the North Star Gala and the Spectacular NWT reception – which gave the entire delegation a further opportunity to connect with key partners and showcase the NWT. The Spectacular NWT pavilion, which was located at the Ottawa Convention Centre as part of the Winterlude Festival, promoted the NWT’s beauty and tourism potential to the general public.

The North Star Gala was very well attended by federal Ministers, senior federal officials, several ambassadors representing countries which could become key trade partners with the NWT, as well as influential representatives of industry and the Canadian public policy community. A short program of remarks by Premier McLeod and other dignitaries spoke to the aspirations and potential of the NWT, and set the tone for the evening. The Spectacular NWT Reception was held the following evening to promote to the NWT as a tourist destination, and was well-attended by representatives of the tourism industry. With sophisticated displays and polished presentations and performances, both events allowed the Northwest Territories to demonstrate that it is a modern northern jurisdiction that knows and respects its traditional heritage.

The receptions featured video displays of the NWT, northern artifacts, and northern entertainment, and were held in the same room at the Château Laurier to allow the GNWT to maximize efficiencies. The displays were then moved to the Ottawa Convention Centre as part of Winterlude, one of the largest and most prestigious winter festivals in Canada.

The North Star Gala, Spectacular NWT reception and Spectacular NWT pavilion were all viewed favourably by respondents. The majority indicated that these events were a good way to network with stakeholders and to raise the profile of the NWT. The Youth Ambassadors, who played a large role in the Spectacular NWT events and were also present at the North Star Gala, were also viewed favourably.

The **North Star Gala** was ranked as having the **highest impact on raising the profile of the NWT**. The Spectacular NWT reception, the pavilion and the Youth Ambassadors were ranked third, fourth and fifth, respectively (out of eight activities).

The North Star Gala and Spectacular NWT reception also ranked high with regard to making an impact on **advancing the GNWT's priorities** and allowing for the **most opportunities to network with federal counterparts and stakeholders**.

In terms of their impact on **tourism potential**, respondents indicated that the **Spectacular NWT pavilion** had the most impact, followed by the Spectacular NWT reception and the Youth Ambassadors, in that order.

North Star Gala

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the North Star Gala, with **92 percent** of respondents rating it as **“very effective”** (65 percent) or **“effective”** (27 percent) as an opportunity to **network with federal counterparts and stakeholders**.

Similarly, **96 percent** saw the gala as a **“very effective”** (77 percent) or **“effective”** (19 percent) way to **raise the profile of and/or showcase the NWT**.

Eighty percent of respondents indicated that the **Youth Ambassadors** were **“very effective”** (64 percent) or **“effective”** (16 percent) at **engaging attendees** at the gala.

Greatest impact on respondents

A few aspects of the gala stood out as having the most impact on the respondents. The most frequently mentioned examples were:

- The opportunity to network with high-level officials and First Nations leaders
- The venue, displays and presentations
- The Youth Ambassadors
- The speeches

Suggestions for improvement

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for building on the success of the North Star Gala at a potential future event. Suggestions included:

- Holding the event at a larger venue so it would feel less crowded
- Giving the Youth Ambassadors a greater role in the gala
- Doing more to showcase the unique qualities of the NWT and its cultures

Spectacular NWT reception

Response to the Spectacular NWT reception was also very positive among respondents. **Eighty-eight percent** indicated it was either “**effective**” (50 percent) or “**very effective**” (38 percent) as an opportunity to **network with tourism representatives and stakeholders**.

Ninety-six percent indicated that it was either “**very effective**” (56 percent) or “**effective**” (40 percent) at **raising the profile of and/or showcasing the NWT**.

Ninety-two percent of respondents felt that the reception was either “**very effective**” (60 percent) or “**effective**” (32 percent) at **showcasing the tourism potential in the NWT**.

As the Youth Ambassadors had a greater role in the Spectacular NWT reception than in the North Star Gala, even more respondents felt that they were effective at **engaging attendees at the reception**. **Eighty-eight percent** rated them as either “**very effective**” (52 percent) or “**effective**” (36 percent).

Greatest impact on respondents

The aspects of the Spectacular NWT reception that were perceived to have the greatest impact on respondents were:

- The venue and visuals
- The opportunity to network
- The performers
- The Youth Ambassadors

Suggestions for improvement

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for building on the success of the Spectacular NWT reception at a potential future event. Suggestions included:

- Doing more to include or promote NWT tourism operators (such as providing a way to contact them)
- Including more traditional foods or at least a greater focus on northern ingredients
- Using a northern host/emcee and possibly include more northern celebrities
- Using a larger venue
- Inviting more people (especially those without an existing connection to the North)

- Displaying NWT films
- Allowing more time between the North Star Gala and the Spectacular NWT reception to create a larger draw

Spectacular NWT pavilion at the Ottawa Convention Centre

The Spectacular NWT pavilion brought the Northwest Territories to the Winterlude festival through demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts, and diamond polishing, as well as interactive display screens that gave people the opportunity to access images and information about all regions of the NWT. Activities included an opening ceremony, emceed by Adam Beach of *Arctic Air*, and featuring a joint performance by NWT artists Leela Gilday, Pat Braden and Diga, as well as a demonstration of Arctic games by Youth Ambassadors.

Information on the Spectacular NWT pavilion was provided by the GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI), and NWT Tourism (NWTT). From February 1 to 3, the pavilion brought in **8,000 visitors** (40 percent of total Winterlude visitors during this period). Spectacular NWT events also generated **27 media pieces**, with a **total reach of close to 4 million people**.

Attendees gave a great deal of positive feedback, and the events encouraged people to think about the NWT as a reachable tourism destination.

ITI and NWTT noted that the Youth Ambassadors were not only very effective at connecting with the public through their performances, but also by answering questions about their home communities.

NWTT's pre-event promotion of the pavilion included: local French and English newspaper ads; advertising in Winterlude promotional material and on their website; 10,000 postcards circulated around Ottawa hotels, restaurants and festival sites; an ice sculpture at the main festival site promoting the venue; and groups of NWT uniformed street teams with husky puppies patrolling Ottawa and encouraging the public to visit the pavilion.

Select quotations from visitors

- *"Excellent display, hope you are back again soon."*
- *"I want to go North. This was awesome."*
- *"Thank you so much for this amazing event! We loved it very much and we are grateful for your effort!"*
- *"Very beautiful. Well detailed and welcoming."*

House of Commons Question Period

On January 30, the NWT Days delegation visited the House of Commons Question Period. The delegation received formal recognition from the Speaker, and two Members of Parliament took the opportunity to recognize NWT Days and discuss northern issues during statements made in the House.

Respondents viewed this visit as a positive activity, with **seventy-five percent** stating that the visit **raised the profile of the NWT and its potential**.

Impact on delegates

The survey asked delegates to reflect on their personal experiences during NWT Days. Overall, respondents indicated that their experiences were positive and useful.

Questions touched on:

- Developing and strengthening professional relationships with stakeholders and other members of the delegation
- The value of the aspects of NWT Days
- Highlights of NWT Days
- Satisfaction with preparatory information
- The value of the welcome dinner and breakfast briefings
- Suggestions for improvement

Professional relationships

The majority of respondents indicated that NWT Days was useful for developing or strengthening professional relationships.

- **76 percent** indicated that the trip was either **“effective”** (44 percent) or **“very effective”** (32 percent) at **developing or strengthening professional relationships with other members of the delegation**.
- **71 percent** rated NWT Days as either **“effective”** (50 percent) or **“very effective”** (21 percent) at **developing or strengthening relationships with stakeholders**.

Value of the aspects of NWT Days

Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers completed slightly different versions of the survey than non-Cabinet delegates, because they participated in political meetings.

Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers identified the following five aspects of NWT Days as having the greatest value for them (ranked the following from highest to lowest):

1. Political meetings
2. Stakeholder meetings
3. North Star Gala
4. Developing working relationships with other members of the delegation
5. Spectacular NWT Reception; developing working relationships with stakeholders (these two aspects were tied)

Non-Cabinet delegates identified the following five aspects of NWT Days as having the greatest value for them (ranked the following from highest to lowest):

1. Stakeholder meetings
2. North Star Gala
3. Breakfast briefings
4. Spectacular NWT Reception
5. Developing working relationships with other members of the delegation

Highlights of NWT Days

The most frequently-mentioned highlights were:

- Political and stakeholder meetings
- North Star Gala
- Spectacular NWT reception and pavilion
- Media coverage

Preparatory information

Overall, respondents felt that they had satisfactory preparatory information.

- **92 percent** indicated they had enough information on the **purpose of NWT Days**
- **80 percent** felt they had enough information on their **role in NWT Days**
- **92 percent** felt they had enough information on **travel logistics**

It is worth noting that there is a difference between Cabinet/Deputy Ministers and other respondents regarding the amount of information received about their roles. Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers were part of the decision-making process regarding NWT Days, while non-Cabinet delegates were not. While all Cabinet Ministers and 85 percent of Deputy Ministers stated that they had enough information, only 69 percent of other delegates indicated that they had enough information about their roles. A number of people also commented that there should be a more defined role for non-Cabinet delegates.

In any future NWT Days activities, these roles should be more clearly defined. More preparatory information, provided well in advance, should address this issue.

Welcome dinner and breakfast briefings

The majority of respondents indicated that the welcome dinner at the Métropolitain Brasserie and the breakfast briefings at the Château Laurier were helpful in both creating a team atmosphere and in providing information on upcoming activities.

- **95 percent** indicated that the welcome dinner was either “**helpful**” (63 percent) or “**very helpful**” (32 percent) at **making them feel a part of NWT Days**
- Only **55 percent** felt that the welcome dinner was “**helpful**” (33 percent) or “**very helpful**” (22 percent) at **providing information on upcoming activities**
- **96 percent** felt that the breakfast briefings were either “**helpful**” (63 percent) or “**very helpful**” (33 percent) at **making them feel a part of NWT Days**
- **84 percent** indicated that the breakfast briefings were either “**helpful**” (48 percent) or “**very helpful**” (36 percent) at **providing information on upcoming activities**

Suggestions for improvement

Overall, NWT Days delegates were extremely supportive of the initiative, and felt that activities were productive and well-organized. To ensure any gaps are identified so they can be taken into consideration when planning any future NWT Days activities, delegates were asked to note areas for improvement.

The most common suggestions for improvement of NWT Days overall include:

- Providing better definition of the roles of non-Cabinet delegates.
- Improving meetings by providing more time and structuring the formats for greater efficiency.
- Choosing larger/different venues for the North Star Gala, Spectacular NWT reception and welcome dinner.

Media

NWT Days garnered a significant amount of media attention. Respondents ranked the media coverage as **the second most important aspect in terms of raising the profile of the NWT** and the **third most important aspect in terms of advancing the GNWT’s priorities**.

The media coverage analyzed spans **46 individual reports in 24 media outlets**, from local to national media. Approximately **75 percent** of those reports were **positive or somewhat positive**. Only two reports took a slightly negative viewpoint of the federal government, but were neutral or positive toward the NWT. One report was balanced in tone, but offered both positive and negative points with regard to devolution.

Of the GNWT’s priorities, devolution received the most attention.

To ensure opportunities for media interviews are maximized, it was suggested that multiple members of the delegation act as spokespersons during NWT Days.

Looking forward

Survey participants were asked how the GNWT can continue to **strengthen its presence in Ottawa** and whether they have any recommendations for **maintaining the momentum created by NWT Days**. The responses to both questions were similar.

A high number of respondents feel that NWT Days (or similar) **events should be held again in the future**, although there are varying opinions on the frequency and scale of those events. Suggestions for frequency ranged from every year to every four years. In terms of scale, some respondents felt that only smaller events should be held in the future, while others felt that events should be held on a similar scale each time. The general trend among respondent suggestions, however, seemed to be that an event should be held annually, alternating between a smaller-scale event one year and a larger-scale event the next.

A number of respondents recognized that **the GNWT's office in Ottawa plays a valuable role in maintaining a presence in the nation's capital**. They suggested that the impact of the office could be increased by establishing a senior-level position to act as a liaison, to network and communicate with officials and stakeholders in Ottawa.

To maintain the momentum created by NWT Days, some respondents suggested that an effort should be made to **do more with the media** (for example, continuing to try to get media exposure, even after NWT Days events have ended), and that a concerted effort should be made to **follow up with federal counterparts and stakeholders**.

General comments

General comments tended to be positive, with many respondents commenting directly on the value of NWT Days. Several respondents mentioned the meetings, suggesting that some were more effective than others.

Sample comments

- *It exceeded expectations. It brought together the team and the MLAs seemed to really gel with the Cabinet Ministers. NWT Days created a team atmosphere even outside of Ottawa. The meetings (e.g. with the Prime Minister) were limited in what could be talked about, but everyone in Ottawa still knew the priorities of the delegation.*
- *NWT Days as a whole was good at creating a team atmosphere. The Ministers and MLAs got a significant amount of work accomplished in the Legislative Assembly after returning from the trip.*
- *Some meetings were better than others. Some were cut short. The meetings created connections, which create political capital for later.*
- *It was a good overall experience. The delegates enjoyed it and it should be done again.*

Summary of Assessed Benefits of NWT Days

NWT Days were intended to strengthen the GNWT's presence in the nation's capital by raising the profile of the NWT, advance seven of the GNWT's key federal engagement priorities, and promote the NWT's tourism potential. NWT Days delegates feel that these objectives were met.

Raising the NWT's profile among federal officials and stakeholders

Most survey respondents felt that the NWT's profile was raised through networking, meetings and media coverage. While a small number of respondents commented that they have not seen any subsequent results from NWT Days activities, one respondent noted that there has been engagement since NWT Days.

Increased cooperation within the NWT

Respondents ranked "developing working relationships with other members of the delegation" as the third most important aspect of NWT Days. One respondent commented that in the time since NWT Days, the Cabinet and other Members of the Legislative Assembly accomplished more as a team than usual. It was suggested that if this sense of collegiality were to continue, it could increase the level of cooperation and productivity both within the Legislative Assembly, as well as between the GNWT and Aboriginal and industry leaders.

Increased national awareness of GNWT priorities

The amount of media coverage during NWT Days gave national attention to at least some of the GNWT's priorities, particularly devolution, which was topical at the time NWT Days were held. Respondents recognized that the "bump" in coverage may have raised the overall profile of the NWT within the national public and should be achieved again next time, or more often.

Increased tourism

Survey respondents indicated that they believe the Spectacular NWT reception and pavilion were positive events that increased the profile of the NWT and its tourism potential. Given the number of guests that attended the Spectacular NWT reception and pavilion, and the number and reach of media pieces (see the "Spectacular NWT" section, above).

Additional Findings

The delegates surveyed overwhelmingly stated that NWT Days was a highly worthwhile initiative that succeeded in its goal of raising the NWT's profile in the nation's capital. Activities like meetings with federal politicians, senior officials and stakeholders were vital in communicating and advancing the GNWT's key priorities with decision-makers and opinion leaders. The North Star Gala, which was extremely well-attended by federal politicians, high-ranking federal officials and key stakeholders, provided an additional opportunity to connect with these audiences in a different context. A lasting impression was left in Ottawa through the combination of spectacular northern displays at the Château Laurier venue, and remarks from Premier Robert McLeod and other dignitaries communicating the NWT's aspirations and its commitment to achieving its goals.

Similarly, the Spectacular NWT reception provided an exceptional opportunity to connect with VIPs in the tourism and travel industry. Again, the stunning visuals at the venue, complemented by performances by northern entertainers and the Youth Ambassadors, showcased the beauty of NWT and the talent of its people. These were key in achieving the event's goal of promoting the NWT as a tourist destination. The Spectacular NWT pavilion at the Ottawa Convention Centre, which included the displays from the evening galas and northern performers, gave the general public a chance to experience the NWT, and was a highly popular component of the Winterlude Festival.

Much of the visual impact at the evening galas and the Spectacular NWT pavilion was made by large interactive displays. These units are a legacy investment that the GNWT is using to promote the Northwest Territories, and will continue to do so in future.

Media coverage was essential for developing and maintaining the "buzz" about NWT Days in Ottawa, and again, this was highly successful. Media interest in the political aspects of NWT Days was so high that future NWT Days plans should consider using multiple spokespersons to maximize opportunities. Media related to the Spectacular NWT pavilion was highly successful in raising the profile of the NWT as a tourist destination, and in drawing people to the NWT pavilion at Winterlude.

Based on respondent feedback, the GNWT may want to pursue another NWT Days (or similar event) in the future, and to do so on an ongoing basis. The frequency and scale of such an event will need to be determined by a number of factors, such as available funds, other events that provide an opportunity to promote NWT Days objectives, and how NWT Days activities best fit into a continually changing political landscape and public environment.