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98-001

GNWT remains optimistic about northern mineral industry

YELLOWKNIFE (January 7) -- The GNWT remains optimistic about the long-term economic future of the Northwest Territories, despite Echo Bay Mining Ltd.'s announcement yesterday that it plans to suspend operation of its Lupin Gold Mine.

"We have been advised by the Echo Bay that it plans to lay-off employees effective April 1, 1998, and we understand that some of these people are Northern residents," Premier Morin said. "While it is too early to say exactly what financial impact this will have on the North, I can guarantee that the Government will provide support services and programs for these people, as we have done with other employees affected by recent lay-offs at other northern mines."

Premier Morin said the Government is currently undertaking a review of the mineral industry in the Northwest Territories. Once that review is complete, the Government will work in partnership with private industry and other northern organizations to develop plans for long-term economic development in the North.

"Based on the fact many positive things are taking place in the oil and gas sector, and with all of the diamond exploration and development activity, overall we remain optimistic about the future of the resource industry, and the northern economy," he said.

"In the short-term, however, we need to find out more about the northern people that are being affected by the shutdown at the Lupin Mine, assess the skills that they have, and do what we can to help match them to opportunities that exist and that are coming on stream with other resource operations in the North."

The Government has been working over the past week with the City of Yellowknife, Yellowknife MLAs, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and the union representing Miramar employees to ensure employees affected by lay-offs from its Con Mine last week are aware of, and have access to, existing education, training and social programs.

Premier Morin said similar activities will be put in place for affected Lupin Mine employees.

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98-002

Group to Examine Ways to Protect Jobs at Miramar Con Mine

YELLOWKNIFE (January 9) - The GNWT is working with management and union representatives from Miramar, the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the City of Yellowknife, and the NWT Power Corporation to examine how to protect existing jobs, and potentially extend the life of the Miramar's Con Mine in Yellowknife.

Education, Culture and Employment Minister Charles Dent said today representatives of all parties met this week and agreed to work together to look at the range of possibilities.

Mr. Dent said the Government is also supporting efforts of recently laid-off employees and their families who own homes on the Con Mine Property. These families face eviction from mine property and wish to buy the land on which their homes are located.

"It makes good sense to have northerners stay in the North so they can benefit from future opportunities," Mr. Dent said. "For instance, BHP will be looking for many skilled workers in the coming months. Education, Culture and Employment will continue to work with all partners to support the workers affected by recent layoffs in the mining industry."

In December, working with its partners, the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) provided all affected employees with key contact information for assistance with social issues, professional career planning, employment opportunities and employment insurance benefits.

The department also coordinated a project to have laid-off employees fill out skills profiles. This was done in consultation with BHP and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC).

To date, 56 workers have filled out the skills profiles. ECE and HRDC staff have met with BHP to discuss employment opportunities for the affected Miramar employees and to give them the profiles for review. BHP will be hiring 26 new staff in April, and another 52 in June. ECE also developed a general information survey to determine the types of assistance the workers might need from the department.

The GNWT will continue to work closely with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) to provide a range of services, including offering space and equipment for meetings, scheduling a series of workshops on resume writing, career counseling and job search techniques, and organizing a special session for affected management staff aimed at providing information on employment insurance benefits.

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Echo Bay Mining Ltd. announced earlier this week that it is suspending operations at Lupin Mine, due to low gold prices. The Lupin Employment Strategy Committee will have its first meeting this week to determine how to address the impact of the layoffs.

ECE's Kitikmeot Region office will be providing support in a number of ways, such as administering skills profiles, providing career counseling, and providing space to HRDC staff who may be traveling to the Kitikmeot to assist the laid-off workers.

For more information, contact:

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JAN 26 1998

98-003

Finance Minister Presents NWT Budget for 1998-99

YELLOWKNIFE (January 22, 1998) -- Today the Honourable John Todd, Northwest Territories Minister of Finance, presented an historic budget. The financial plan for the 1998-99 fiscal year is the last budget of the Government of the Northwest Territories. In 1999 the territory becomes two, following the creation of Nunavut and the new Western Territory.

However, rather than look back, the budget focuses on the future. "The new policies and programs I am announcing today will help establish two strong and stable governments in Canada's North as we move into the new millennium," Mr. Todd stated.

For the second year in a row, the Finance Minister is planning for a small surplus budget and a reduction in the government's accumulated deficit. Revenues are expected to exceed spending by about \$2 million in 1998-99 and the government's accumulated deficit is forecast to be \$28 million by March 31, 1999, down from \$41 million in 1996-97.

The budget's initiatives focused on investment and job creation and on improving social conditions. "We know now that we must address the root cause of economic and social conditions if we are to improve life for our residents," said Mr. Todd.

He announced his intention to introduce two tax initiatives: the NWT Investment Tax Credit and the NWT Child Benefit. The first is intended to encourage northern investors to purchase shares in new or expanding northern businesses. The second will put more money into the hands of low income families across the NWT.

Investment in new public infrastructure will also be a priority. "If we are to successfully address many of the current economic and social conditions that prevent improvements in health, community well-being, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency, we must invest in areas such as housing, hospitals, health centres and roads."

The Finance Minister announced the government's intention to use "public-private partnerships" as a means to finance up to \$100 million in needed infrastructure in each of the next two years without increasing overall annual spending levels. He stated that housing was an area of critical need, noting that \$40 million to \$50 million would be directed to this sector in each of 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

The resource sector of the economy was highlighted. Diamonds, in particular, were cited for their job-creation potential. Mr. Todd stressed the need to stimulate more down-stream activity in the diamond industry -- key issues being the establishment of a sorting and valuation facility in the NWT and access by Northerners to a secure and affordable supply of rough diamonds.

.../2

Finance Minister Presents NWT Budget for 1998-99: Page 2

Greater control of the North's non-renewable resources is also a goal of the government, including a greater share of the revenues expected to flow to governments over the next 25 years from diamond mining.

Mr. Todd emphasized the need to start the two new territories off on the right financial footing. It is critical that both East and West work together to ensure that services to residents are not interrupted or reduced and that the business of government can continue without disruption. The assurance of adequate federal funding for the two territories is key. He expressed his confidence that adequate funding would be available and added, "Overall, the creation of two new territories should have a very positive economic impact on the North."

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Northwest Territories 1998-99 Budget Highlights

Fiscal Overview

- Results for 1996-97 and 1997-98 are both improved over previous estimates. The Government finished 1996-97 with a \$12 million annual deficit and expects to finish the 1997-98 fiscal year with a \$12 million annual surplus.
- The budget forecasts a small annual surplus of \$2.4 million for 1998-99. Total revenues are forecast to be \$1,163.0 million and expenditures to be \$1,160.6 million.
- The accumulated deficit is expected to fall to \$28 million by March 31, 1999, down from \$41 million in 1996-97.

Investment Tax Credit Program

- The budget announces the introduction of the Northwest Territories Investment Tax Credit Program.
- Under the program, investors will be able to choose from a menu of investment vehicles: labour-sponsored venture capital funds; employee/labour-sponsored venture capital funds; community endorsed venture capital funds; and private new common share sales.
- Eligible investors will receive a credit against Northwest Territories income tax payable, equal to up to 30 per cent, for a maximum of \$100,000 of eligible shares in any year. As well, northern investors may be eligible for RRSP tax deductions.
- All funds raised will be used to assist in financing the start-up or expansion of NWT businesses. The program allows for a maximum of \$1 million in credits to be granted in 1998, rising to \$5 million in the year 2000.

Job Creation

- Support for business development and job creation will receive a \$16 million infusion through the second year of the Northern Employment Strategy.
- Programs provided by the Departments of Education, Culture and Employment; Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; and Municipal and Community Affairs have had positive impacts on employment in NWT communities since the Northern Employment Strategy was introduced in June of last year.

Public Infrastructure and Housing

- The Government intends to increase its current \$140 million annual capital program by up to \$100 million in each of the next two years, in order to meet the NWT's acute need in the area of public infrastructure.
- This infrastructure will be financed by public/private partnerships. The increased investment will not only help address many of the territory's social needs and lay the foundation for future economic growth, but will also provide badly needed construction jobs in NWT communities over the next two years.
- Potential projects are currently being identified and will be brought forward to the Legislative Assembly in March.
- The budget announced the Accelerated Home Ownership Program Delivery which will help address the North's current housing shortfall.
- As part of its increased infrastructure investment, the Government intends to apply an additional \$40 million to \$50 million over the next two years to meet the immediate need for homeownership assistance.

NWT Child Benefit

- Effective July 1, 1998, the Government intends to introduce a Northwest Territories Child Benefit.
- As part of the National Child Benefit Program, the Government of the NWT will reinvest income support payments offset by the federal portion of the program, and will supplement this with \$2 million in additional funding.
- The NWT Child Benefit Program will provide a minimum annual benefit of \$330 per child to all families with net incomes less than \$20,921. Families with at least \$10,000 in earned income will receive \$605 per year for the first child, \$405 for the second child, and \$330 for each subsequent child.
- The benefit will be phased out as income increases, but all families with net income less than \$42,000 will receive some benefit.
- It is estimated that approximately 60 per cent of the children in the NWT will benefit from this program.

Increased Social Assistance

- The Income Support Food Allowance will be increased in 1998-99.
- The Government will make \$1 million available to adjust the rates paid for food within the Income Support Program and to ensure that communities are placed within the proper food cost zones.



98-004

**An era ends on a positive note:
The Government of the Northwest Territories
closes its books with a surplus budget**

YELLOWKNIFE (January 22) -- With the tabling of the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) final budget, the Honourable John Todd, Minister of Finance, today detailed a strategy to establish two strong and stable new governments in Canada's North in 1999, and to enhance both regions' long-term economic development. Fifteen months from now the territory will cease to exist, following the creation of Nunavut and a new Western Territory.

"This budget provides a blueprint for investment and growth in Canada's North in the new millennium," said Mr. Todd. "It sends a clear signal that, not only are we prudent fiscal managers; we recognize the importance of creating a climate conducive to doing business in a competitive economy."

For the second consecutive year, the Minister Todd is reporting a small surplus and a reduction in the government's accumulated deficit. Revenues are expected to exceed spending by about \$2 million in 1998-99 and the accumulated deficit is forecast to be \$28 million by March 31, 1999, down from \$41 million in 1996-97.

Minister Todd announced a series of initiatives aimed at supporting small and medium-sized businesses, "the engine of the new economy."

The NWT Investment Tax Credit will encourage Northern investors to purchase shares in new or expanding Northern businesses. Eligible investors will receive a credit against NWT income tax payable, equal to up to 30 per cent, to a maximum of \$100,000 of eligible shares in any year. Investors may enjoy a further tax benefit if their investment is made through an RRSP. If fully taken up, \$5 million in tax credits would generate some \$35 million in equity and debt financing for Northwest Territories companies by the year 2000.

The budget also identifies public infrastructure as a top priority. The GNWT will increase its public infrastructure investments and lever additional dollars through "public-private partnerships" up to \$100 million in each of the next two years for new housing, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure. It is anticipated that hundreds of jobs will be created in the construction industry, as well as the manufacturing and service sectors that serve it.

Minister Todd pointed to the Task Force on the Canadian Diamond Industry as the promise of even greater economic growth over the next quarter century. In partnership with the Government of Canada, the GNWT will explore opportunities for value-added industries to maximize the long-term benefits of diamond mining in the North and to create new jobs for Northerners.

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**An era ends on a positive note:
The Government of the Northwest Territories
closes its books with a surplus budget: Page 2**

The territorial government's priorities are to establish a sorting and valuation facility in the NWT and to assure access by Northerners to a secure and affordable supply of rough diamonds for production. The GNWT will also continue to lobby Ottawa for the devolution of minerals, oil and gas responsibilities and royalties to ensure a secure revenue base for the new governments so they can meet the needs of their fast-growing populations.

Noting that "we must address the current economic and social conditions that prevent improvements in health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency," Minister Todd unveiled a series of programs to address the challenges facing low-income families.

The Accelerated Home Ownership Program will help to address the serious housing shortage in the NWT, compounded by the withdrawal of federal funding for new social housing, by making home ownership more affordable.

Over the next two years, the territorial government is proposing to make \$40 - \$50 million available to the NWT Housing Corporation for both the Expanded Down Payment Assistance and Independent Housing Programs, to meet demands for home ownership assistance. The program could result in upwards of 1,000 new housing units being built by the turn of the century, freeing up social housing units for low-income families.

An estimated 60 per cent of NWT children will benefit from the new Northwest Territories Child Benefit, a \$2 million investment in children made possible by increased federal contributions under the National Child Benefit Program. The benefit will range from a minimum of \$330 per child in families with net incomes less than \$20,921 to a maximum of \$605 for the first child in families with at least \$10,000 in earned income. All families with less than \$42,000 in net income will receive some benefit.

Minister Todd expressed confidence that adequate financing arrangements will be reached with Ottawa under the Formula Financing Agreement. He noted that sufficient funding is essential to both create and operate two independent governments each with unique circumstances and needs emphasizing the need to start the new territories off on the right financial footing.

He reiterated the GNWT's position that services to residents, East and West, must not be interrupted nor reduced and that the business of government must continue without disruption through the transition period post-1999.

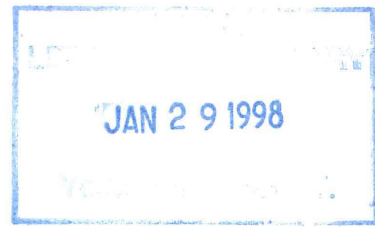
"The fiscal framework we table today will create the foundation on which to build two new viable, financially solvent territories," said Minister Todd. "It represents a fresh start for the new North in the next century."

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98-005

NWT Apprenticeship Week a First in Western Canada

YELLOWKNIFE (January 26, 1998) - The NWT's first annual Apprenticeship Week will take place February 2 to 6, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

Apprenticeship Week, the first ever in Western Canada, is designed to promote the importance of tradespeople, and their contribution to the economy of the Northwest Territories.

"While the trades play a role in every sector of our economy, the construction, mining, transportation and utilities sectors really depend on them. Industries which are highly dependent on trades make up as much as 34 per cent of our economy and are key elements to the NWT's economic success," Mr. Dent said. "By celebrating Apprenticeship Week, we are focusing our attention on these important men and women who have contributed so much to the growth of NWT."

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has planned a series of events to promote Apprenticeship Week. Apprenticeship Week will start with a Salute to Trades at the Legislative Assembly on February 2. Open houses at some of the department's regional Career Centres, as well as a contest for high school students sponsored by BHP Diamonds, are just some of the activities planned for the week.

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98-006

Health Minister Ng Announces Action Plan for Keewatin Region

YELLOWKNIFE (January 28, 1998) - Minister of Health and Social Services, Kelvin Ng, told Members of the Legislative Assembly today about his action plan for bringing stability to health and social service delivery in the Keewatin Region.

The four point plan includes:

- re-establishing front-line staffing levels, particularly for social workers and nurses;
- stabilizing General Practitioner services for the region, including discussions with the Northern Medical Unit (NMU) that will focus on the needs of Keewatin residents, and determining how the NMU could assist in this area;
- reviewing and supporting administrative processes; and
- recruiting a permanent Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Darrell Bower, a senior department official, is acting Chief Executive Officer of the Keewatin Regional Health Board. Mr. Bower is currently working in Rankin Inlet and is supported by a number of departmental staff to assist in key areas.

Percy Kabloona, the Acting Chair of the Keewatin Regional Health Board and Mr. Bower have held meetings and conference calls with communities to focus on the health and social concerns of the region. Visits are planned to every community in the region, and a committee will be struck with representatives from the Keewatin Inuit Association and each Hamlet to ensure on-going concerns are addressed.

Arrangements for discussion with the Northern Medical Unit in Manitoba are being finalized. These discussions will focus on the needs of Keewatin residents and determine how the Northern Medical Unit can assist.

.../2

Ng Announces Plan - page two

“I have full confidence that measures laid out today - once implemented in partnership with the Keewatin Regional Health Board, the Hamlet Councils representatives and the Keewatin Inuit Association - will fully restore the stability, credibility and confidence needed to sustain the health and social service system in the Keewatin Region,” says Mr. Ng.

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98-007

GNWT outlines collective bargaining position and pay equity budget

YELLOWKNIFE (February 2) -- Finance Minister John Todd today publicly presented the Government's position and budget -- including details on the proposed settlement for the pay equity issue -- for the collective bargaining talks set to begin today with the Union of Northern Workers (UNW).

Overall, the Government is budgeting \$40 million, and is taking a position that addresses working conditions, salary increases, retroactive provisions for pay equity and a new job evaluation system, Minister Todd said.

"The budget we are putting forward is in line with the Budget Address, and represents a fair and affordable proposal to arrive at a negotiated settlement," Minister Todd said at a news conference this afternoon.

On the specific issue of pay equity, the GNWT contends that with the end to mediation talks in January, the parties must now work diligently and in good faith through the collective bargaining process to avoid having a settlement imposed by an outside group, such as the Human Rights Tribunal.

"Our priority must be to protect jobs, ensure service levels are maintained, and keep our current fiscal course as a basis for growth and prosperity," Minister Todd said. "Waiting for the Tribunal to decide the matter for us compromises our common efforts. I strongly believe that through negotiations between the parties, we can resolve the issues without any major disruption to the public service, or to the services we offer the people of the North."

With the pending division of the Northwest Territories on April 1, 1999, the GNWT believes that a negotiated two-year collective agreement that respects the fiscal objectives of a balanced budget is important in ensuring a sound, and responsible beginning to the two new governments, Minister Todd said.

2/...

**GNWT outlines collective bargaining position
and pay equity budget: Page 2**

As well, the Government is committed to resolving the issue of pay equity after 10 years of dispute, and to setting the stage for the development of a bias-free job evaluation system.

The pay equity proposal the Government is putting forward is based on an extensive review by the Hay Group, a nationally respected organization in the area of job evaluation.

The Hay Job Evaluation System provides the framework to ensure that employees are paid the same for performing "equal work of equal value." To that end, the bias-free approach to job evaluation assesses existing jobs on the following: know how; problem-solving; accountability; and working conditions.

Using this system, the GNWT maintains there is a common reference for both parties to determine a financial settlement on retroactivity that is equitable, and that conforms to the GNWT's capacity to pay.

Minister Todd said \$40 million is all this Government, and hence the people of the Northwest Territories, can afford to reallocate without causing severe service disruption and further down-sizing. He added the GNWT is very open to negotiating how this money is applied to the various issues at negotiations.

"We believe this offer to be reasonable in that it represents three per cent of overall Government spending, and 10 per cent of the current annual costs of the public service," he said.

Minister Todd said he hopes the UNW will consult with and present a negotiated settlement to its members that reflects and supports the efforts of all Government employees and the people of the Northwest Territories in their collective efforts to date to eliminate the deficit.

"I encourage the UNW to seize this opportunity to solve the pay equity issue through negotiations in the North and by Northerners," he said. "This is a unique opportunity to settle other outstanding labour-related issues, and build a partnership to protect jobs and create a working environment in the public service that can and will result in better services to the people of the Northwest Territories, after years of restraint."

Negotiations between the GNWT and UNW are scheduled to run to February 6.

For more information, contact:

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Financial Management Services Board
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SUMMARY OF GOVERNMENT'S POSITION

- The Government is committed to pay equity.
- The GNWT has a valid system for determining job value, past and future.
- The GNWT has established a significant budget of \$40 million to achieve a settlement.
- The GNWT wants an affordable agreement made in the North by Northerners. It does not want to put the future of NWT residents in the hands of a Southern Human Rights Tribunal.
- The GNWT wants to get money in the hands of employees now.
- The GNWT wants to avoid further reductions and downsizing.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROPOSAL of GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Presented to
THE UNION OF NORTHERN WORKERS
Monday, February 2, 1998

The purpose of this document is to outline the collective bargaining framework and guiding principles of the Government of the Northwest Territories:

- **The Government values its employees.** The government desires to reach a collective agreement which acknowledges both the past and current service of employees and which facilitates a smooth and fair transition into two new public services. It is proposed that the agreement will span a 2 year term, in keeping with the past practice.
- **The overall settlement is affordable and fair to both the Government and the Employees.** A substantial budget has been allocated for wage and benefit increases for all employee groups which represents the maximum the Government can afford without making massive cuts to programs and jobs. The budget is \$40,000,000 and it represents 3% of overall government spending and a 10% increase to the current cost of the public service.
- **The Government is committed to the principle of pay equity.** A pay plan that is supported by the Hay Job Evaluation System (the Hay System) is proposed for implementation. The Hay System has been used in the GNWT to evaluate senior management jobs for the past 20 years. It is recognized internationally and has been used by other public employers for pay equity purposes, (including the Government of Manitoba). A pay plan that is supported by the Hay Job Evaluation System is proposed.
- **The Government believes that Northern workers will be well-served if the pay equity complaint is resolved through negotiations in the North by Northerners.** The payment of back wages for entitled employees is proposed. The Hay System was used to compare wages for employees in female dominated jobs with employees in male dominated jobs and to calculate the proposed payments in the Pay Equity Payment Schedule.
- **The Government is responsive to other employment equity issues unique to the North.** Changes to the Northern Allowance schedule are proposed to address perceived inequities by employees who believe they have limited options for reducing their cost of living in the smaller and more remote communities. Also proposed is a flexible arrangement where employees in continuous operations benefit from mandatory leave days that are currently available to other employees.

Highlights in the Chronology of the Pay Equity Issue in the Northwest Territories

1970's-80's

- The notion of Pay Equity and gender equality in the workplace became a prominent issue in labour relations.

1982

- Adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms occurred.
- A first complaint was made to the CHRC on the issue of pay equity in the federal public service

1987

- UNW brought up the Pay Equity Issue in collective bargaining.
- The GNWT proposed that a Task Force team investigate the issue. The investigation would be done with the cooperation of both parties.
- No deal was reached on the issue of Pay Equity in the collective agreement and therefore Pay Equity did not get included into the agreement.

1989

- The UNW included the Pay Equity Issue in its demands again.
- The GNWT and the UNW agreed to establish the JEPS (Joint Equal Pay Study) to be composed of one UNW representative, one GNWT representative, and an independent chairperson.
- PSAC (Public Service Alliance of Canada) filed a complaint with the CHRC (Canadian Human Rights Commission) on behalf of the Union alleging that the GNWT discriminated in classification and pay of female public service workers when compared with male public service workers contrary to sections 7 (discrimination in employment), 10 (discriminatory practice or policy), and 11 (equal wages for equal work) of the CHRA (Canadian Human Rights Act).
- The objective of the JEPS was to prepare an unbiased job evaluation system and gather accurate information on a sample of jobs so that the parties could determine whether or not the GNWT provided equal pay for work of equal value in accordance with section 11 of the CHRA. The work of the JEPS carried on to 1992.

1992

- A report by CHRC investigators dealing with a wage gap analysis based on the JEPS was issued to the parties without their authorization or request.
- The GNWT presented a proposal on a pay equity plan to the UNW. Negotiations continued into 1993.

1993

- The Union rejected the proposed pay equity plan and delivered a counter proposal that would cost the GNWT roughly \$71 million dollars. The GNWT made a final offer of \$10.3 million in adjustments and another \$10 million to implement a new gender neutral job evaluation system. The negotiations were unsuccessful as the parties were roughly 50 million dollars apart.
- The GNWT questioned the endorsement by the CHRC of the Wage Gap Analysis recommendations. The CHRC offered the services of a conciliator. The GNWT challenged the CHRC on the basis of jurisdiction.
- GNWT applied to the Federal Court for a judicial review of the CHRC's jurisdiction on the grounds that the CHRC lacked jurisdiction under section 63 of the Canadian Human Rights Act and that there was bias on the part of the investigators because of their involvement with PSAC.

1996

- The Federal Court ruled that the CHRC had jurisdiction to investigate the claim under section 63 of the Act but that there was a reasonable apprehension of bias since one investigator was a member of PSAC. Consequently, the court nullified the CHRC decision to appoint a conciliator but recognized the jurisdictional of the CHRA. All parties appealed to the Federal Court of Appeal.

1997

- The Federal Court of Appeal decision upheld the jurisdiction verdict and overturned the bias verdict. The GNWT requested leave to the Supreme Court of Canada in order to appeal. This leave was denied.
- The CHRC notified the GNWT that it had decided to appoint a Human Rights Tribunal to investigate various aspects of the complaint.
- The parties agreed to try and reach a negotiated settlement through mediation.
- Mediation process began in the autumn.

ESTIMATE OF WAGE GAP

Hay Gender Neutral Job Evaluation System

Adjustments for 1989-98

(Based on 1,950 Hours Per Year)

CLASS	Sample Title	1997/98	1996/97	1995/96	1994/95	1993/94	1992/93	1991/92	1990/91	1989/90	Total
1013	Tax Auditor					\$2,720					\$2,720
1015	Auditor	\$1,857		\$3,437	\$3,218						\$8,512
1032	Court Reporter	\$117	\$44	\$2,325	\$1,887	\$1,697	\$1,594	\$1,623	\$1,726	\$2,106	\$13,119
1033	Chief Court Reporter	\$468	\$380	\$2,559	\$2,150	\$1,974	\$1,828	\$1,843	\$1,974	\$2,252	\$15,429
1101	Finance & Admin Officer	\$146	\$59	\$2,340	\$1,901	\$1,711	\$1,594	\$1,638	\$1,740		\$11,130
1102	Finance Officer	\$468				\$1,974	\$1,828				\$4,271
1201	Library Assistant			\$1,141	\$527	\$293	\$380	\$497	\$453	\$1,272	\$4,563
1202	Administration Clerk			\$1,360	\$761	\$541	\$600	\$702	\$687	\$1,433	\$6,084
1203	Finance Clerk			\$1,580	\$1,009	\$790	\$819	\$907	\$907	\$1,580	\$7,590
1204	Compensation Administrator			\$1,755	\$1,214	\$1,009	\$995	\$1,082	\$1,112	\$1,711	\$8,877
1205	Payroll Officer			\$2,179	\$1,711	\$1,506	\$1,433	\$1,477	\$1,565	\$2,004	\$11,876
1301	Finance and Admin Officer	\$146	\$73	\$2,340	\$1,901	\$1,711	\$1,609	\$1,638			\$9,419
1302	Student Services Officer		\$176								\$176
1401	Purchasing Officer			\$1,521	\$951						\$2,472
1605	Caribou Biologist				\$2,837						\$2,837
1701	School Secretary			\$1,389	\$790	\$570	\$629	\$717	\$717	\$1,448	\$6,260
1702	Secretary			\$1,419	\$834	\$614	\$658	\$761	\$761	\$1,477	\$6,523
1703	Regional Secretary			\$1,565	\$995	\$790	\$804	\$892	\$907	\$1,580	\$7,532

ESTIMATE OF WAGE GAP

Hay Gender Neutral Job Evaluation System
Adjustments for 1989-98
(Based on 1,950 Hours Per Year)

CLASS	Sample Title	1997/98	1996/97	1995/96	1994/95	1993/94	1992/93	1991/92	1990/91	1989/90	Total
3011	Manager, Visitor Services	\$614	\$527	\$2,662	\$2,267	\$2,091	\$1,931				\$10,091
3022	Time Loss Adjudicator	\$497	\$410	\$2,574	\$2,179	\$2,004	\$1,857	\$1,872	\$2,004		\$13,397
3023	Time Loss Adjudicator	\$995	\$892	\$2,896	\$2,559	\$2,399					\$9,740
3031	Assessor	\$497	\$410	\$2,574	\$2,179	\$2,004	\$1,857	\$1,872	\$2,004	\$2,267	\$15,663
3032	Senior Assessor	\$965	\$863								\$1,828
3034	Assessment Supervisor					\$2,808	\$2,545	\$2,501	\$2,720		\$10,574
3042	Municipal Works Officer		\$322								\$322
3101	Library Technician			\$2,179		\$1,506	\$1,433	\$1,477	\$1,565	\$2,004	\$10,164
3102	Wildlife Technician					\$2,194					\$2,194
3103	Community Justice Spec.	\$834								\$2,413	\$3,247
3201	Home Support Worker			\$1,433	\$848	\$629	\$673	\$761	\$761	\$1,477	\$6,581
3202	Income Support Worker				\$995		\$804				\$1,799
3203	School Community Coun			\$2,208	\$1,740	\$1,550	\$1,463	\$1,506	\$1,594	\$2,018	\$12,080
3204	Social Worker	\$512	\$424	\$2,589	\$2,179	\$2,004	\$1,857	\$1,872	\$2,004	\$2,267	\$15,707
3205	Classification Officer						\$2,077				\$2,077
3206	Supervisor, Social Prog.	\$1,155	\$1,053	\$2,998						\$2,545	\$7,751

ESTIMATE OF WAGE GAP

Hay Gender Neutral Job Evaluation System

Adjustments for 1989-98

(Based on 1,950 Hours Per Year)

CLASS	Sample Title	1997/98	1996/97	1995/96	1994/95	1993/94	1992/93	1991/92	1990/91	1989/90	Total
3207	Area Supervisor		\$790	\$2,823	\$2,472	\$2,311	\$2,121	\$2,106	\$2,267	\$2,428	\$17,316
3211	Attendant			\$1,024	\$395	\$176	\$263	\$380	\$336	\$1,185	\$3,759
3214	Residence Life Manager	\$219	\$146	\$2,399	\$1,960	\$1,770	\$1,667	\$1,697		\$2,150	\$12,007
3216	Clinical Therapist									\$2,150	\$2,150
3301	Classroom Assistant			\$1,667	\$1,112	\$892	\$907	\$980	\$1,009	\$1,638	\$8,205
3401	Interpreter Aid			\$1,141	\$527	\$307			\$468	\$1,272	\$3,715
3402	Assistant Interpreter						\$1,726	\$1,740	\$1,857		\$5,324
3403	Translator	\$307	\$219	\$2,457	\$2,033					\$2,179	\$7,196
3404	Reviser	\$263	\$176		\$1,989	\$1,814	\$1,682	\$1,711	\$1,828	\$2,165	\$11,627
3602	Communications Coord.			\$1,989	\$1,477		\$1,229				\$4,695
3603	Public Affairs Officer						\$2,121				\$2,121
3604	Policy Advisor Comm.		\$1,887	\$3,539		\$3,218					\$8,643
3701	Director, Extension Prog.		\$1,974		\$3,422	\$3,291					\$8,687
3801	Land Officer	\$731									\$731
4201	Systems Technician		\$29								\$29
4401	Resource Centre Techn.			\$2,121	\$1,638	\$1,448	\$1,375	\$1,419	\$1,492	\$1,960	\$11,451

ESTIMATE OF WAGE GAP

Hay Gender Neutral Job Evaluation System

Adjustments for 1989-98

(Based on 1,950 Hours Per Year)

CLASS	Sample Title	1997/98	1996/97	1995/96	1994/95	1993/94	1992/93	1991/92	1990/91	1989/90	Total
4503	Operations Supervisor					\$2,018	\$1,872	\$1,887	\$2,018	\$2,282	\$10,077
4511	Data Entry Clerk			\$1,214	\$600	\$380	\$453	\$556	\$527	\$1,316	\$5,046
4512	Data Control Clerk					\$410	\$483	\$585	\$570	\$1,346	\$3,393
4513	Technical Specialist			\$1,931	\$1,419	\$1,214	\$1,170	\$1,243	\$1,287		\$8,263
5213	Cook				\$1,536						\$1,536
6101	Community Health Nurse		\$102	\$2,369	\$1,931	\$1,740	\$1,623	\$1,653	\$1,770		\$11,188
6102	Homecare Nurse	\$190	\$117	\$2,369	\$1,931	\$1,740	\$1,638	\$1,667	\$1,770	\$2,135	\$13,557
6103	Community Health Nurse	\$673	\$570	\$2,691	\$2,311	\$2,135	\$1,974	\$1,974	\$2,121		\$14,450
6104	Nurse in Charge	\$731	\$644	\$2,735	\$2,355	\$2,194	\$2,018	\$2,018	\$2,165	\$2,369	\$17,228
6105	Nurse in Charge	\$863	\$761	\$2,808	\$2,457	\$2,296	\$2,106	\$2,091	\$2,252	\$2,428	\$18,062
6107	Nursing Inservice Instruct	\$1,053	\$936	\$2,925	\$2,603	\$2,442	\$2,238	\$2,223		\$2,501	\$16,921
6201	General Duty Nurse	\$205	\$117	\$2,384	\$1,945	\$1,755	\$1,638	\$1,667	\$1,784	\$2,135	\$13,631
6202	Head Nurse	\$176	\$88	\$2,355	\$1,916	\$1,726	\$1,623	\$1,653	\$1,755	\$2,121	\$13,411
6301	Clerk Interpreter			\$1,141	\$527	\$307	\$395	\$497	\$468	\$1,272	\$4,607
6303	Activity Aide			\$1,243	\$644	\$410	\$483	\$585	\$570		\$3,934
6304	Community Health Rep.			\$1,726	\$1,185	\$965	\$965	\$1,038	\$1,068	\$1,682	\$8,629
6305	Manager, Health Records				\$1,682	\$1,492	\$1,419	\$1,463	\$1,536		\$7,590

ESTIMATE OF WAGE GAP

Hay Gender Neutral Job Evaluation System

Adjustments for 1989-98

(Based on 1,950 Hours Per Year)

CLASS	Sample Title	1997/98	1996/97	1995/96	1994/95	1993/94	1992/93	1991/92	1990/91	1989/90	Total
6401	Certified Nursing Assist.			\$1,974	\$1,477	\$1,272	\$1,229	\$1,287	\$1,346	\$1,857	\$10,442
6501	Physiotherapist	\$395									\$395
6502	Physiotherapist		\$278	\$2,486	\$2,062	\$1,887	\$1,755	\$1,770	\$1,887		\$12,124
6511	Pharmacist					\$1,989					\$1,989
6512	Director – Pharmacy	\$1,024	\$921	\$2,910							\$4,856
6522	Regional Nutritionist	\$263	\$176	\$2,428	\$1,989	\$1,814	\$1,682				\$8,351
6523	Regional Nutritionist	\$263	\$176	\$2,428	\$1,989	\$1,814	\$1,682	\$1,711	\$1,828		\$11,890
6532	Audiologist	\$278	\$205	\$2,428	\$2,004						\$4,914
6601	Laboratory Technologist			\$2,135	\$1,667	\$1,463	\$1,389	\$1,448	\$1,521		\$9,623
6602	Dental Therapist					\$1,272	\$1,229	\$1,287	\$1,346	\$1,857	\$6,991



98-008

National Accord Signed to Improve Environmental Protection

YELLOWKNIFE (February 2, 1998) - The Northwest Territories' Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, joined with Environment Ministers across Canada - with the exception of Quebec - to sign the Canada-Wildlife Accord on Environmental Harmonization last week in St. John's, Newfoundland. Federal, provincial and territorial Environment Ministers were attending a meeting of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME).

The purpose of the Accord is to improve environmental protection across Canada through better cooperation between governments. The Accord is a framework for a common vision, objectives and principles to govern the partnerships between jurisdictions, while ensuring they still retain their existing legislative authorities.

Mr. Kakfwi says the Accord is a move in the right direction. "The people and economy of the NWT have a strong dependency on the environment. We are impacted by activity in other parts of Canada and around the world. The more cooperation we have between governments, the more opportunity we have to protect ourselves and our environment."

In addition to the Accord, three sub-agreements were also signed. They focus on environmental assessment, inspection activities and development of Canada-wide standards in areas such as air, water and soil quality. Further sub-agreements are planned in the areas of enforcement, environmental monitoring and reporting, research and development, and environmental emergencies.

Extensive consultation on all components of the Harmonization Accord were a key element leading up to the final agreement. Mr. Kakfwi was pleased that the Accord and sub-agreements recognize the process negotiated through land claims and will continue to do so in the future.

At the conclusion of the meeting in St. John's, the chairmanship of CCME was turned over to Mr. Kakfwi and the Northwest Territories. "Throughout my term as Chair of the Ministers' Council, I look forward to the opportunity of introducing my fellow Ministers to the North and our unique environmental challenges."

The first meeting of Ministers to be held in the NWT is planned for June.

For further information, contact:

Joseph Handley
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
(867) 920-8691

Guide to the Canada-wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization

Introduction

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) is a unique intergovernmental council whose members are the thirteen ministers of the environment for the federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada. Working as equal partners in an area of shared jurisdiction, the ministers come together at the CCME table to meet the three objectives set out in 1991 in the CCME by-laws:

- to establish and maintain an intergovernmental forum for discussion and joint action on environmental issues of national, international and global concerns;
- to harmonize environmental legislation, policies, procedures and programs; and
- to develop nationally consistent environmental objectives, standards and scientific databases and complementary strategies, accords and agreements.

In 1993, CCME members agreed their top priority over the next several years should be to harmonize environmental programs and policies. Whereas the focus of CCME work had been on individual areas of environmental protection - such as water quality guidelines, codes of practice for underground storage tanks, or principles for cleaning up contaminated sites - the harmonization initiative would aim to build a more effective and efficient system of environmental management in which the actions of all governments would be complementary.

Environmental management is an area of shared constitutional authority. The goal of the harmonization initiative, therefore, is to find better and more efficient ways of cooperating in fulfilling governments' role as environmental stewards. Negotiations on harmonization under CCME have taken place between federal, provincial, and territorial governments, with the intent of achieving concrete environmental results through effective cooperation and collaboration.

The Accord

The Canada-wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization is the framework agreement that establishes the common vision, objectives and principles that will govern the partnership between jurisdictions, and the development and implementation of sub-agreements.

The Accord envisions governments working in partnership to achieve the highest level environmental quality for all Canadians, and defines the partnership that will be established to address issues of Canada-wide interest. In particular:

- all governments agree to a number of fundamental principles, including the polluter pays principle, the precautionary principle and a recognition that pollution prevention is the preferred approach to environmental protection.
- all governments retain their legislative authorities.

- the features of sub-agreements to be developed under the Accord are defined, including a one-window approach; the notion of roles being assumed by the government best situated to take them on; accountability through regular public reporting of measurable obligations and results; and a commitment to develop alternative plans if obligations are not met.

Most importantly, the Accord reflects the willingness of governments to come together as partners, and their commitment to meet their legal obligations for environmental protection. Governments are free to introduce more stringent environmental measures if circumstances call for them; if a consensus is not achieved in any given area, governments are free to act within their existing authorities, and all governments may continue to take action consistent with existing emergency response agreements. In this way, the Accord seeks to achieve a useful balance, as governments take advantage of the potential for cooperation, efficiency and consistency without affecting their legitimate authority to protect and manage the environment.

The Accord and sub-agreements do not affect Aboriginal or treaty rights, which are constitutionally protected. Rather, it indicates that cooperative approaches with Aboriginal peoples and their structures of governance will be required for a comprehensive and effective environmental management regime.

The Accord also contains a number of administrative clauses, including provision for a government to withdraw on six months' notice, and for the Accord to be reviewed after five years.

Sub-agreements

The Accord provides for sub-agreements to be developed in areas of environmental management that would benefit from Canada-wide coordinated action. A workplan attached to the Accord outlines the likely areas where sub-agreements will be pursued. Currently, three sub-agreements have been developed, dealing with environmental inspections, environmental standards, and environmental assessment.

Canada-wide Environmental Inspections Sub-agreement

The goal of the inspections sub-agreement is improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness through one-window delivery of environmental inspection activities. The sub-agreement focuses on situations where federal, provincial, and territorial governments all have the ability to take action. In these instances, inspection activities will be decided upon by the government best situated to carry them out, and the sub-agreement contains a number of criteria to determine which government that may be.

In practical terms, a federal inspector might verify compliance with federal, provincial, and territorial environmental regulations in the case of a facility on federal lands; similarly, a provincial or territorial inspector might inspect against provincial, territorial, and federal laws in the course of a visit to an industrial facility. This split of responsibilities will be established between the relevant governments in subsequent negotiations. Arrangements may vary by jurisdiction since each environment department has its own operating structure.

Bilateral or multilateral implementation agreements would set out the detail of these arrangements, as well as any additional requirements such as the coordination of training development of consistent procedures, and establishment of compatible databases.

Governments also agree to the need for regular information sharing, including timely notification of suspected violations. Such information will be useful in developing a future subagreement on enforcement.

Canada-wide Environmental Standards Sub-agreement

The aim of the standards sub-agreement is to encourage governments to work together on key issues requiring standards Canada-wide. The focus of the sub-agreement is an ambient standards, so that all Canadians can expect a common high degree of environmental quality. It also anticipates standards for products and discharge limits, where such standards represent the best strategy for achieving the environmental goal.

The document facilitates joint agreement on key priorities requiring standards, and encourages complementary workplans to achieve those standards, based on the unique responsibilities and legislation of each government. In other words, it envisions governments doing what makes sense for each of them to do so that they collectively solve the problem and meet the agreed upon ambient standard. For example, the federal government is likely better positioned to address the import/export or manufacturing of specific products or substances, whereas provincial and territorial governments are likely better positioned to address industrial discharges. This approach represent responsible cooperation towards a common goal, rather than delegation of authority.

The process includes opportunities for public input in determining priorities, setting the standards, and developing implementation plans. As well, jurisdictions will report to the public on progress.

Like current CCME environmental guidelines, Canada-wide standards will be based on sound science and the evaluation of risk to human health and the environment. However, governments will be more accountable for meeting the standards and there will be enhanced opportunity for public input. Measures developed to attain agreed upon standards will recognize environmental and socio-economic considerations.

The CCME Policy for the Management of Toxic Substances has been developed in parallel with the sub-agreement and is compatible with it. In practical terms, Canada-wide standards may be developed and implemented for a number of substances identified under the policy.

Sub-agreement on Environmental Assessment

The environmental assessment sub-agreement concerns the effective use of environmental assessment where two or more governments are required by law to assess the same proposed project. In such cases, a single assessment and review process would take place, which would be designed to meet the requirements of all the governments involved. An anticipated result is greater predictability and fewer delays in the process.

Governments would agree to base their decisions on the information generated by the one process. The review would take place under the lead of one government, but necessarily involve the collaboration of the other government. Each government would retain its authority to issue or refuse permits, and to approve or disallow the project, but it would agree to do so on the basis of the results of the agreed and coordinated process. There is no transfer of legal obligations or decision-making between governments involved; rather the sub-agreement provides a framework for collaboration and promotes predictability in how an assessment proceeds.

The coordinated process would provide for public participation in a manner consistent with the policies and legislation of each government involved in the assessment. For example, where the federal assessment process was triggered under the sub-agreement, participant funding would be provided consistent with the provisions of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

Bilateral agreements between provincial or territorial governments and the federal government will be required in order to translate the general framework of the sub-agreement into a specific operating plan, based on the legislation of the particular jurisdictions.

The sub-agreement does not apply where environmental assessment processes have been established as part of Aboriginal land claim or self-government agreements.

Looking Ahead

Harmonization of environmental management is an ongoing objective of CCME. The Council of Ministers has set out a workplan for developing additional sub-agreements under the Accord, including ones on monitoring, environmental emergencies, and research and development.

The task of implementing the sub-agreements already endorsed by the Council of Ministers now begins, and offers governments an opportunity to put into practice this cooperative approach to environmental management. It will also allow governments to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach and, if necessary, make adjustments based on what has been achieved. Most importantly, the work under these sub-agreements, such as that on Canada-wide environmental standards, will provide concrete solutions to identified issues of Canada-wide significance.



98-009

Interim Executive Director Appointed

YELLOWKNIFE (February 6) - Acting Chair of the Keewatin Regional Health and Social Services Board, Percy Kabloona, announced today that Chris Keeley has been appointed as interim Executive Director.

Mr. Keeley has held several senior positions with the Government of the Northwest Territories, including appointments as Regional Superintendent of Personnel and of the Financial Management Board Secretariat in the Keewatin Region. A former resident of Rankin Inlet, Mr. Keeley has a strong background in strategic planning and human resource and financial management.

"Mr. Keeley will provide us with knowledge and experience that will help us move quickly to address the concerns that Keewatin residents have about their health and social services system," said Mr. Kabloona. "As a former Keewatin resident, Mr. Keeley already understands the region and its need."

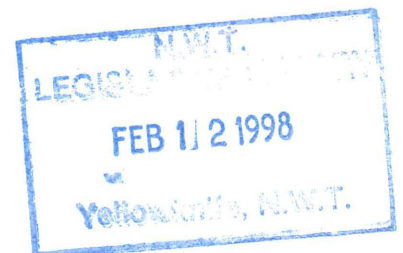
Health and Social Services Minister Kelvin Ng says the appointment of an interim Executive Director is a key step in restoring the stability of the Keewatin Regional Health Board.

"Our department will continue to work with Mr. Keeley, the board and other Keewatin stakeholders to ensure that the concerns of Keewatin residents are addressed," he said.

Mr. Keeley's appointment will be effective February 9. He is expected to hold the position of interim Executive Director for approximately four months, until a permanent Executive Director can be recruited by the board.

For more information, contact:

Catherine Praamsma
Assistant Deputy Minister
Health and Social Services
(867) 873-7737





98-010

Keewatin Regional Health and Social Service Board and Department of Health and Social Services Sign Letter Of Intent

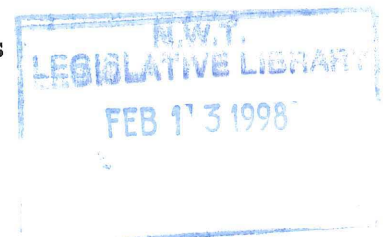
RANKIN INLET (February 11, 1998) -- The Keewatin Regional Health and Social Service Board (KRHSSB) and the Department of Health and Social Services have formalized an agreement to bring stability to health and social service delivery in the Keewatin region.

The KRHSSB and the Department signed a Letter of Intent last week which sets out the assistance the Department will provide to the Board. This follows a request by the KRHSSB for help addressing certain issues that impact the effective and efficient delivery of health and social services.

The Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Kelvin Ng, signed the letter on behalf of the Department and Percy Kabloona, Acting Chairperson signed on behalf of the Health Board.

Within the letter, the Department commits to the following:

1. Initiating and assisting in the recruitment of a permanent Executive Director for the KRHSSB, including participation in the interview process.
2. Developing recruitment and retention strategies for staff, in particular nurses and social workers.
3. Developing and implementing a mechanism to facilitate community input and communication as well as a public relations plan.
4. Reviewing the organizational structure of the KRHSSB to ensure the following four fundamentals are addressed: responsibility, accountability, authority and daily functions.
5. Investigating the potential to re-establish a contractual relationship with the Northern Medical Unit of the University of Manitoba which reflects a primary care model and stabilizes the supply of physician services.



Letter of Intent - page two

6. Managing the:
- a) Arviat health centre capital project; and
 - b) Rankin Inlet multi-level health care facility capital project.
7. Providing temporary administrative expertise to support KRHSSB staff as required.

On January 28, the Department and the KRHSSB announced a four-part plan to restore stability to health and social services in the Keewatin region. The Letter of Intent is a formal agreement on the Department's responsibilities under that plan. The Letter of Intent will remain in place until the Department and the KRHSSB are satisfied that a permanent chairperson and Executive Director are in place and prepared to take over the responsibilities of the KRHSSB.

For further information, contact:

Joan Irwin
Executive Assistant
Health & Social Services
(867) 669-2314

Chris Keeley
A/Executive Director
Keewatin Regional Health and Social Service
Board
(867) 645-2171



98-011

Heritage Activities Planned Across NWT

YELLOWKNIFE (February 11, 1998) - A variety of activities will be carried out across the NWT to mark Heritage Day on February 16, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

"Our ties to our culture and heritage are strong here in the North," Mr. Dent says. "These ties give us a sense of identity and community, and help to give us confidence in our future. Heritage Day is an excellent opportunity to celebrate our vast and beautiful land, to reaffirm values ideals and aspirations that are important to our identity."

The Heritage Canada Foundation has chosen as its theme this year the 100th anniversary of the Yukon Territory's entry into Confederation. In the NWT, most local organizations have selected themes and activities which are appropriate to their communities.

In Iqaluit, the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum is planning a week-long demonstration of Inuit games, and will exhibit a heritage careers display prepared by Education, Culture and Employment staff. In Baker Lake, the Inuit Heritage Centre is assisting community elders in recording traditional songs, which will be compile on a compact disc for use by the community.

The Norman Wells Historical Centre will celebrate Heritage Day by presenting films from the National Film Board to local school groups on February 16. The Northern Life Museum in Fort Smith has planned week-long series of traditional craft demonstrations, organized by the Youth Environmental Corps project.

The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife has scheduled an "Amazing Sundays" event for February 15 which focuses on the controversial Arctic explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson. Activities include a "live history" performance by well-known author and actor Jamie Bastedo, a showing of the National Film Board movie "Stefansson, The Arctic Prophet," a tour of the Stefansson artifacts in the North Gallery and dog sled rides on Frame Lake.

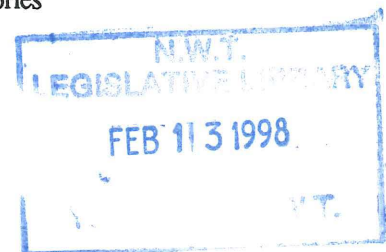
Although the Northern Heritage Centre is normally closed to the public on Mondays, the doors will be open February 16 from 10:30 to 5 p.m. to encourage participation in Heritage Day events. Special activities begin at 1 p.m. and include a "heritage film festival" as well as Heritage Day crafts and quizzes in the Discovery Gallery. All are welcome.

Every year, the Heritage Canada Foundation proclaims the third Monday of February as Heritage Day.

For more information, contact:

Charles Arnold
Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 873-7551

Office of the Press Secretary • Government of the Northwest Territories
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98-012

Baffin employee killed while working to open highway

YELLOWKNIFE (February 16) -- A 15-year employee of the Department of Transportation, Aiyow Qavavauq, was killed Sunday while working with heavy equipment to open the road between Nanisivik and Arctic Bay.

Ron Williams, Deputy Minister of Transportation, said the accident occurred at about 7:30 p.m. EST on Sunday, while Mr. Qavavauq, 53, and another Transportation employee were working with a loader and a D6 Cat to plow snow and open the road.

Specific details on the accident are not available at this time, and the incident is under investigation, Mr. Williams said.

The Honourable Jim Antoine, Minister of Transportation, expressed deep condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of Mr. Qavavauq.

"Our thoughts are with Mr. Qavavauq's family and friends at this time, and we will do all we can to assist them during this tragic time," he said.

MLA for High Arctic Levi Barnabas also extended his condolences to the family, and to the communities of Arctic Bay and Nanisivik.

He said Mr. Qavavauq was a well-known member of the Arctic Bay and Nanisivik communities, and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

For more information, contact:

Val Mellesmoen
Press Secretary
(867) 669-2302
Fax: (867) 873-0169
E-Mail: val_mellesmoen@gov.nt.ca



98-013

Premier acknowledges receipt of conflict complaint

YELLOWKNIFE (February 16) -- The Premier of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Don Morin, today acknowledged the receipt of the Conflict of Interest complaint filed against him earlier today by the MLA from Hay River, Jane Groenewegen.

Premier Morin said he will not make any statements on this matter as there is a clear process outlined in the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* for dealing with complaints, and it would be inappropriate to make a comment that may infringe on the matter.

Premier Morin added he looks forward to a prompt and fair resolution of this matter, and said he will cooperate fully in this process to ensure that the matter is resolved quickly, and in the best interest .

For more information, contact:

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98-014

Todd says a negotiated resolution to pay equity in best interest of all

YELLOWKNIFE (February 19) -- Finance Minister John Todd said today that the GNWT decided to break the silence about pay equity in order to provide factual information that would help resolve the issue once and for all.

The GNWT's silence about pay equity has "resulted in a decade of speculation, misleading statements and apprehension about the pay equity complaint and the implications it may have for the GNWT, its employees and the people of the Northwest Territories," Mr. Todd said. "Our best hope for a negotiated solution is to put aside the emotions and rhetoric, and concentrate on the facts and on finding reasonable solutions."

Mr. Todd said he believes that the GNWT, the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and the people of the Northwest Territories have the following common interests that may help guide the parties towards achieving a negotiated agreement:

- Everyone would like to see men and women paid the same for doing work of equal value;
- Everyone would like to see a negotiated solution;
- No one would like this issue to drag on for another 10 years;
- No one wants to solve one inequity by creating greater inequities for other residents.

Mr. Todd said now that the Courts have ruled that the pay equity complaint falls under the Canadian Human Rights Act, and now that the new Hay Job Evaluation System has shown that pay inequities exist, neither the GNWT nor the UNW can sign off a collective agreement with rates of pay not based on a bias-free job evaluation system.

"I am hopeful and optimistic that a negotiated solution to pay equity will be achieved by the April 1, 1998 deadline that the parties have set for themselves," Mr. Todd said.

For more information, contact:

Lew Voytilla
Secretary
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 873-7211



98-015

GNWT supports partnership approach to new resource development in the North

YELLOWKNIFE (February 19) -- The GNWT will strongly support environmentally responsible resource development projects that result a fair share of training, jobs, business and revenues for Northerners, Premier Don Morin said today.

"These resources represent our greatest potential for economic development and the jobs and revenues that we need to become more self-reliant -- both for today and for future generations," Premier Morin said in a statement in the Legislative Assembly. "We must welcome the investment and expertise of oil, mining and exploration companies who want to work in partnership with us and to share in the benefits.

"We look forward to working with BHP Diamonds and future diamond producers to ensure that Northerners share the many benefits from the discovery and mining of NWT diamonds," he said.

However, Premier Morin said first, we must ensure: that our land and environment are protected; that some of the jobs and business opportunities from construction and operation of this mine come to Northerners; that the North gets its fair share of the taxes and royalties; and that the North has opportunities to participate in the value added industries that are fed by this resource.

"There are some people who would say we are asking too much," Premier Morin said. "But I say -- we can accept nothing less."

Premier Morin said the GNWT has considered adding new taxes to these mines, but would prefer to work with the federal government to achieve a fairer share of current taxes and royalties, and to work with industry to achieve benefits through value-added opportunities.

As well, to ensure Northern value-added opportunities are created with the new diamond industry, the GNWT is participating in a federal-territorial task force, which Premier Morin said he hopes will shape future Canadian policies on the diamond industry.

"We have consistently taken the position that Government Diamond Valuation should take place in a Northern community, off the mine site," he said. "In doing this, we recognize that BHP Diamonds may incur a small incremental cost. However, Government Valuation occurs off-site in every other major diamond-mining jurisdiction, so the Northwest Territories and Canada have every right to expect the same thing here."

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**GNWT supports partnership approach
to new resource development in the North: Page 2**

Premier Morin added that BHP is on record as saying that it would prefer to sell diamonds in the North, provided they get a fair price and normal commercial terms.

“Our wish is to work directly with them to achieve that objective, and make a small fraction of the raw resource available for Northern use,” Premier Morin said. “The supply of rough diamonds will be used to assist the development of value-added diamond industries in the Northwest Territories.”

A small, but direct involvement by the GNWT in the diamond industry will also provide us with valuable inside information on diamond markets -- information we need to protect the interests of the North, Premier Morin said.

For more information, contact: **Andrew Gamble**
Secretary to Cabinet
(867) 873-7100



98-016

GNWT extends moratorium on rent scale increases

YELLOWKNIFE (February 19) -- The Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, the Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, today announced there will be no further changes to social housing rents prior to division. This will allow the GNWT to better integrate its social housing and income support programs.

Rent scale increases were originally scheduled over a three-year period starting in 1995. However, in 1997, Cabinet decided to defer the third-year increases to examine the impact of rent scale changes and to identify options for integrating the Social Housing Rent Scale with Income Support Programs.

Further increases to social housing rents are now being deferred to allow additional time to better integrate the social housing and income support programs, Mr. Arlooktoo said.

"We have determined it will take at least nine months to analyze these issues and develop a framework for integrating these two vital social programs," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "So we felt it was important to continue a moratorium on the rent scale increases for another year."

"It is important that we provide basic recommendations to the new governments so the social safety net is meeting the needs of Northerners," said the Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. "Taking the time now to better integrate the programs will help both Nunavut and the western Territory start off with strong social programs."

The review process of the two programs identified a number of other opportunities to integrate the two programs, including:

- Developing an appeal process to look at cases where rent increases may be causing true hardships for families;
- Establishing a consistent cost of living indicator, which can be used in both social housing rent scale calculations and in the income support program;
- Developing consistent definition of income between the two programs;
- And developing a process where social housing construction and maintenance can be used as one of the income support programs productive choices.

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GNWT extends moratorium on rent scale increases: Page 2

“I believe this Government’s decision to defer further rent increases until this vital work is completed demonstrates that we have heard what communities, tenants and Members of the Legislative Assembly have been saying, Mr. Arlooktoo said. “That is that housing and income support programs need to work hand in hand in order to better benefit our citizens.”

For more information, contact:

Dave Murray
President
NWT Housing Corporation
(867) 873-7853



98-017

Premier Morin says Manitoba Trade Mission will net positive results

YELLOWKNIFE (February 19) -- Premier Don Morin said the trade mission to four communities in the Northwest Territories by government officials and business people from the province of Manitoba will net good results for business and people in both Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.

The Manitoba Trade Mission to the Northwest Territories was prompted by an invitation by Premier Morin to the Manitoba's Minister of Rural Development, Len Derkach, when the two attended a northern economic development meeting in Prince George in October 1997.

"I am very pleased that Mr. Derkach followed up on my invitation to him to visit the Northwest Territories to learn first hand how Northerners do business," Premier Morin said. "The fact he made the time, along with Manitoba's Northern Affairs Minister David Newman, and 20 business representatives and government officials, shows their commitment to economic development in Canada's North."

Economic development is a one of the GNWT's top priorities, and therefore ventures such as the Manitoba Trade Mission, that bring potential investment, expertise, partnership arrangements and employment opportunities for Northerners are an excellent way to promote the benefits of investing and in the North.

"The federal government spends millions of dollars each year on activities like Team Canada aimed at attracting foreign investment," said Premier Morin. "While those are important and worthy activities, I think it is even more important to have trade missions within Canada between the provinces and territories."

The GNWT is particularly interested in working with neighbours, such as Manitoba, in developing win-win approaches, he said.

The visit to Yellowknife is the last stop of the delegation's four-day trip to the Northwest Territories, which also included visits to the Keewatin communities of Arviat, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake.

Earlier today members of the GNWT Cabinet met with Mr. Derkach and Mr. Newman to discuss areas of mutual concern and opportunity.

"We had a good meeting, and a good discussion on a variety of topics, but in particular, northern economic development," Premier Morin said. "We really appreciate Manitoba's support and interest in northern economic development and issues such as devolution, which are important to achieving a strong, independent territorial economy."

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**Premier Morin says visit by Manitoba Trade Mission
will net positive results: Page 2**

Overall, Premier Morin said he looks forward to continuing to work with Manitoba on these and other issues, especially leading up to the 1998 Western Premier's Conference, which is being held in Yellowknife July 2 to 4.

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98-018

Lennie Wins Poster Contest in NWT

YELLOWKNIFE (February 19) - The poster Ashley Lennie drew for Emergency Preparedness Week last May has been selected as a winning entry to an NWT drawing contest.

During "Emergency Preparedness Week" last May 5-11, provinces and territories invited students from Grades 4-6 to participate in a national drawing contest.

Miss Lennie, a Grade 6 student from Moose Kerr School in Aklavik, drew a poster showing a disaster or emergency that could occur in the region. The drawing was part of the 1997 theme of "Know the Risks in Your Community". There were 60 entries submitted from schools across the NWT.

There are winning entries from each province and territory and a national winner from Saskatchewan was selected.

Emergency Preparedness Canada will be inviting Miss Lennie to Ottawa during Emergency Preparedness Week May 4-10 to celebrate the formal unveiling of the national winner's drawing.

For more information, please contact:

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98-019

Federal budget should have positive impact on education in the North

YELLOWKNIFE (February 26) - The federal budget contains a number of initiatives that could benefit Northern students, the Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, said today.

"I am encouraged by many of the provisions of the federal budget," Mr. Dent said. "We will, of course, need more detailed information on these initiatives and a better understanding of how they will be implemented, but the general direction of the budget is very positive. I am very happy with the high priority given to education initiatives in the budget."

Mr. Dent said the *Canadian Opportunities Strategy* includes a number of potential benefits for Northerners, and in particular for post-secondary students: the Millennium Scholarship Foundation will provide scholarships for low and middle income post-secondary students; the Canada Study Grants program will provide new funding for students in financial need with children or other dependents; and to help graduates manage their debt load, there are provisions for tax relief for interest payments on student loans.

Other announcements in the budget will also assist Northerners in accessing post-secondary education, Mr. Dent said.

For example, there are opportunities for working Canadians to withdraw, tax-free, \$10,000 per year from their registered retirement savings plan for life-long learning. The extension of the education tax credit and child care expense deductions for part-time students will help Northerners.

As well, through the Canada Education Savings Grant, Northern families will be provided with stronger incentives to save for their children's future education.

"The NWT has opted out of the Canada Student Loans program and instead receives a payment to support the NWT Student Financial Assistance Program," Mr. Dent said. "However, the Federal government has recognized this fact and will be working with us to ensure that benefits for Northern students result from these initiatives."

Mr. Dent said the Support for Youth Employment components is also "good for Northern youth, and good for Northern business." To encourage employers to hire young Northerners, the *Hiring Young Canadian Program* will give employers an employment insurance holiday for new youth hired. The *Youth at Risk* program subsidy to employers hiring youth who have not yet finished high school will increase from a maximum of \$5,000 to \$10,000. The *Youth Internship Program* has potential to benefit Inuit and on-reserve youth by providing more internships that were provided in previous years.

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**Federal budget should have positive impact
on education in the North: Page 2**

“These program are similar to existing GNWT progrms aimed at youth employment,” Mr. Dent said. “It will be easy to fit these initiatives in with what we are already doing to boost youth employment.”

Finally, Mr. Dent said that increased funding for School/INET, the Community Access Program, and the Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education should also benefit the North.

For more information, contact:

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Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 920-6240



98-020

Morin says no more layoffs

YELLOWKNIFE (March 3) -- Premier Don Morin today announced there will be no more GNWT staff layoffs for the remainder of the current Government's term.

"I am pleased to announce that for the remainder of its term, this Government plans no more layoffs, either due to division or to department consolidations," Premier Morin said in a statement to the Legislative Assembly. "We will also continue to try to find alternatives for those who have already been given notice."

Premier Morin said the GNWT needs its workforce now more than ever before -- both in the east and the west -- as we face the challenges ahead.

"We know the future western government will have to be smaller," he said. "With the creation of Nunavut, we may need to look at rationalizing some organizational structures. But as much as possible, we plan to do this through on-going staff turnover, reassignment and voluntary separation."

Premier Morin also recognized the hard work and dedication of all GNWT employees over the past several years.

"In the last few years, we have faced unprecedented change and challenge," he said. "With cuts to federal transfers, we have had no choice but to downsize, consolidate departments and reduce wages and benefits. We have decentralized and privatized some functions, and transferred others to communities and boards. At the same time we have piled more work on fewer staff.

"Yet through all of the change and uncertainty, we are surrounded by loyal, dedicated and hard-working staff. People who have and will continue to implement these tough policies, and to make the changes work."

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Canada



News Release

February 27, 1998
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canada and Northwest Territories Sign Labour Market Development Agreement

YELLOWKNIFE, NWT – The Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Secretary of State for Children and Youth, on behalf of the Honourable Pierre S. Pettigrew, Minister of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and the Honourable Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), today signed the Canada-Northwest Territories Labour Market Development Agreement.

This significant agreement, scheduled for implementation on April 1, 1998, or a mutually agreed date thereafter, will enable the Northwest Territories (NWT) to assume an expanded role in the design and delivery of labour market development programs and services for unemployed Canadians in the NWT. Given the complex issues involved, ECE and HRDC have agreed that the actual implementation would be subject to a process that ensures an orderly transition and no interruption of service to the public.

“I am very pleased to be signing this important agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories,” said Secretary of State Ethel Blondin-Andrew. “This is a good example of how the Government of Canada is working in partnership with provinces and territories and various stakeholders towards achieving a common goal – helping unemployed Canadians find and keep work. Unemployed women and men in the NWT will benefit from our collective efforts to provide more effective and efficient programs and services.”

“This milestone agreement enables us to move forward with policies and programs tailored to meet the needs of the NWT labour market,” said Minister Dent. “Our goal is to equip Canadians in the NWT with the skills and opportunities they need to be competitive in today’s and tomorrow’s economy.”

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Today's agreement demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to withdraw from labour market training and to establish new partnerships with the provinces and territories for labour market development. These commitments were made in the February 1996 Speech from the Throne and in the Labour Market Development Proposal made to the provinces and territories in May 1996.

This recognizes that the Government of the NWT is well positioned to design and deliver programs and services that respond to the needs of unemployed Canadians in the North.

Under the agreement, ECE will assume responsibility for the design and delivery of a range of labour market development programs, referred to as "active employment measures" in Part II of the *Employment Insurance (EI) Act*. ECE will also deliver specific functions of the National Employment Service, such as employment counselling and job placement services.

HRDC and ECE recognize that as a result of this agreement there can be improved labour market programming for clients and service quality improvements. Where possible, they will provide programs and services at common locations. ECE will operate a network of Canada-Northwest Territories Service Centres where clients can access federal EI benefits and territorial labour market programs and services.

The Government of Canada, through HRDC, will continue to provide EI income support and labour market services that are national in scope, such as access to national labour market information.

During the first four years of the agreement, the Government of Canada will contribute approximately \$19 million from the EI Account to the Government of the NWT for employment programs and services. Additional funds, \$1.79 million annually, will be provided as a contribution for salary and administration costs.

Accountability and measurable results are key components of the Canada-NWT Labour Market Development Agreement. During 1998/99, it is expected that at least 409 EI clients will return to employment or self-employment after being referred to territorial programs and services, creating approximately \$3.6 million in savings to the EI Account.

In the agreement, a specific clause is included to acknowledge the creation of the Nunavut Territory on April 1, 1999. Subsequently, the May 1996 proposal will be extended to the government of Nunavut. At that time, and upon agreement, resources will be allocated between the western and eastern territories.

The Canada-Northwest Territories Labour Market Development Agreement is the eleventh agreement to be signed by the Government of Canada and a provincial or territorial government since December, 1996. Other agreements have been signed with Alberta, New Brunswick, Quebec, Newfoundland, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Yukon and Saskatchewan. Each agreement is unique and reflects individual labour market circumstances and priorities.

Attached backgrounders:

1. Labour Market Development Agreements
2. The Canada-Northwest Territories Labour Market Development Agreement: Highlights
3. Program and Service Delivery in the Northwest Territories
4. Human Resources

For more information:

Additional information is available through the Internet at: <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca>

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Backgrounder #1

Labour Market Development Agreements

Helping unemployed Canadians find and keep work is a top priority for the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories (NWT). Both governments are involved in labour market activities, working to improve employability and promote economic growth.

On May 30, 1996, the Government of Canada made a Labour Market Development Proposal to provinces and territories, offering them responsibility for the design and delivery of active employment benefits and measures funded by the Employment Insurance (EI) Account. The offer responded to long-standing concerns expressed by provinces and territories regarding their desire for a greater role in the area of labour market development and to commitments made by Prime Minister Chrétien in November 1995, to withdraw from the purchase of labour market training.

Labour market development agreements have been signed with ten provinces and territories (Alberta, New Brunswick, Quebec, Newfoundland, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Yukon and Saskatchewan). The agreements vary in terms of the responsibilities provinces and territories are assuming. Some will assume full responsibility, while others will implement partnership and co-operative management models with HRDC. Whatever the choice, these agreements focus on achieving results. They will help get unemployed Canadians find and keep work, foster increased efficiencies, and strengthen federal-provincial/territorial partnerships across the country.

Formal negotiations between Canada and the NWT on a Labour Market Development Agreement began in October 1996 and the agreement was signed on February 27, 1998. The agreement is scheduled for implementation on April 1, 1998, or a mutually agreed date thereafter. However, because of complex issues involved, Education, Culture and Employment and HRDC have agreed that the actual implementation date would be subject to a transition process. This will ensure an orderly transition with no interruption of service to the public.

Backgrounder #2

The Canada-Northwest Territories

Labour Market Development Agreement

HIGHLIGHTS

Territorial Labour Market Programs and Services: The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) will implement the Labour Market Development Agreement with the Government of Canada enabling the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) to assume an expanded role in the design and delivery of labour market programs and services.

ECE will assume responsibility for the design and delivery of a range of labour market development programs, referred to as “active labour market measures” in Part II of the *Employment Insurance (EI) Act*. ECE will also assume delivery of some National Employment Service (NES) functions from the department of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), including employment counselling, needs assessment and job placement services.

These labour market programs and services will be funded through the EI Account.

Government of Canada Funding: Each year, the GNWT will receive stable funding through the EI Account from the Government of Canada for employment programs and services. Over the next four years, funding will be as follows:

Year	Funding
1998-1999	\$4.418 M
* 1999-2000	\$4.893 M
* 2000-2001	a minimum of \$4.893 M
* 2001-2002	a minimum of \$4.893 M

In addition, the Government of Canada will provide a maximum contribution of \$1.79 M each year for salary and administration costs.

* With the creation of the territory of Nunavut on April 1, 1999, and upon agreement, resources will be allocated between the eastern and western territories.

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Expected Results: Both governments have agreed to establish targets jointly in advance of each year. Results for the programs and services covered in this agreement will be measured against these targets.

In 1998/99, the agreement's expected results are, at least a minimum of:

- 65 per cent of clients who participate in the Northwest Territories benefits and measures to be active EI claimants (approximately 1,177).
- 409 EI clients to return to employment or self-employment, after being referred to Northwest Territories programs and services.
- \$3.6 million in savings to the EI Account.

Eligibility for Territorial Programs and Services: Eligibility guidelines for EI clients will not change. Unemployed NWT residents currently collecting EI benefits or those who have received them at any time in the past three years will be eligible for territorial programs and services. Clients who are re-entering the labour force and who have collected parental or maternity benefits during the last five years will also be eligible. Clients will not have to meet a minimum territorial residency requirement to be eligible.

Delivery Arrangements: Where possible, HRDC and ECE will work together to provide programs and services at common locations. ECE will operate a network of Canada-Northwest Territories Service Centres where clients can access federal EI benefits and territorial labour market programs and services.

Transfer of Employees: Additional funds, \$1.79 million dollars annually, will be provided as a contribution for salary and administration costs. Affected employees will be treated fairly and equitably and will receive a job offer from ECE, which exceeds federal Workforce Adjustment Directive requirements of a reasonable job offer.

Duration: The Canada-NWT Labour Market Development Agreement will remain in place for an indefinite period, as long as results are being achieved. The Government of Canada will extend the May 30, 1996 proposal to the new territory of Nunavut. New arrangements will be negotiated with its' government. At that time, and upon agreement, resources will be allocated between the eastern and western territories.

Service in Official Languages: In areas of significant demand, access to territorial employment programs and services in both of Canada's official languages will be available. The NWT will consult with representatives of the Francophone community when establishing the availability of access to these territorial programs and services.

The NWT will also consult with representatives of the official Aboriginal languages when establishing the availability of assistance to territorial programs and services.

Other Provisions: The agreement also contains provisions for:

- results-based program evaluation;
- accountability;
- client service during the transition phase of this agreement;
- information and data sharing;
- maintaining EI program integrity;
- amendments to the agreement; and
- public recognition of the financial assistance provided by the Government of Canada.

Transition Committee: HRDC and ECE will establish a Transition Committee to create an implementation plan for the transfer of resources and responsibilities. The two governments are committed to an orderly transition and ensuring that service to the public is not interrupted.

Backgrounder #3

Program and Service Delivery in the Northwest Territories

Programs

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) will implement the new Labour Market Development Agreement. This new agreement enables the NWT to assume an expanded role in the design and delivery of labour market programs and services in the NWT.

Programs and services will deliver concrete results for clients, be flexible to meet the needs of unemployed Canadians who live in the NWT and help them to find and keep work.

ECE will assume full responsibility for the design, management and delivery of a range of labour market development programs, referred to as “active labour market measures” in Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*.

ECE will also assume delivery of the following National Employment Service (NES) functions from the Department of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC):

- i) services that determine the level of employment support that clients require to secure work (referred to as service needs determination);
- ii) employment counselling; and
- iii) job placement services.

HRDC and ECE will collaborate in gathering, producing and disseminating labour market information.

HRDC will continue to provide income support directly to unemployed Canadians through its Employment Insurance (EI) Program. It will also retain responsibility for labour market services that are national in scope, such as interprovincial/territorial worker mobility and a national labour market information system.

Service Delivery

This agreement is a result of the recognition by the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories that there can be improved labour programming for clients and service quality improvements. The federal and territorial governments will work together to provide programs and services at common locations where possible.

ECE will operate a network of Canada-Northwest Territories Service Centres where clients can access federal EI benefits and territorial labour market programs and services. These locations include Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, Inuvik, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Hay River.

In Norman Wells, Igloolik, Cambridge Bay and Fort Smith provisions will be made for access to HRDC's continuing programs.

Service Delivery Arrangements

The level of service to EI clients will be improved by the implementation of this agreement.

There will be no interruption of service during the transition process. Federal programs and services will continue to be delivered through Human Resource Centres of Canada or community-based services until the new federal-territorial agreement is in place.

In areas of significant demand, ECE will provide access to territorial employment programs and services in both of Canada's official languages.

Canada-Northwest Territories Service Centres will be accessible to persons with disabilities.



Backgrounder #4

Human Resources

Employees affected by this agreement will be treated fairly and equitably. Affected employees will receive a job offer from the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE), which exceeds the federal Workforce Adjustment Directive requirements of a reasonable job offer.

Staff who transfer will have a three year job guarantee and salary, benefits, and pension packages that are comparable to those they received as HRDC employees.

Annex 6 of the Canada-Northwest Territories Labour Market Development Agreement, the Employee Transfer Agreement, provides the framework for HRDC employees to transfer to ECE. Employees will be provided with information and support throughout the transition period.



98-021

Five Northerners Appointed To The NWT Arts Council

YELLOWKNIFE (March 12) - Five northerners have been appointed to the NWT Arts Council, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

"The Arts Council plays an important role in nurturing NWT artists, who, in turn, broaden our perspective of life in the North," Mr. Dent says. "I would like to thank these five northern artists for joining the council, and look forward to their contributions in the coming months."

The members of the NWT Arts Council are:

- Helen Webster (Iqaluit) - Ms. Webster has extensive experience in Inuit Art through her business interests -- she deals with carvers and artists on a daily basis, and markets and promotes Inuit Art in the South. She has also worked with artists, including those from several different countries, in conjunction with local and international art projects and exhibits. Ms. Webster works with watercolours and does pottery.
- William Noah (Baker Lake) - Mr. Noah has experience in many of the visual arts, including printmaking, making soapstone cuts, stencil cutting and silkscreen printing. He has worked in a government craft shop, collaborated with professional curators, and has travelled to promote Inuit art. He is currently working with pencil drawings, oil paintings, watercolours and some personal photographic drawings.
- Elisabeth Hadlari (Cambridge Bay) - Ms. Hadlari is the coordinator of the Jewellery and Metalwork Diploma Program at Nunavut Arctic College in Cambridge Bay. She teaches a number of courses, including drawing, design, art history and communications. She has experience as a photographer, communicator, school teacher and adult educator.
- Sonny MacDonald (Fort Smith) - Mr. MacDonald has been involved with arts and crafts for the past thirty-five years. A well-known carver, he works in wood, bone, antler, horn, ivory and stone, as well as ice and snow. He frequently participates in art shows, and has exhibited his work across Canada, the United States and overseas. Mr. MacDonald also teaches courses in carving.
- Vicki Tompkins (Yellowknife) - A noted visual artist, Ms. Tompkins holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in arts education, which included studies in drama. Her work in

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Five Appointed - page two

watercolour and oil paint, and in three dimensional sculpture, has been exhibited in a number of individual showings. She has been extensively involved in arts organizations, resulting in contacts with artists in all disciplines in the NWT. This is Ms. Tompkins's third term on the NWT Arts Council.

The terms for the members from the Eastern Arctic will expire on March 31, 1999, to coincide with the creation of two territories. The terms for the members from the Western Arctic will expire on January 31, 2000.

The NWT Arts Council was created in 1985. It makes recommendations to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on financial awards to people working in all fields of the creative arts, and on issues and policies associated with the arts and artists. Members are selected for their expertise in the arts, and represent the regions of the NWT.

For more information, please contact:

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(867) 873-7551



98-022

Northwest Territories and World Wildlife Fund Canada Embark on Joint Wolf Project

YELLOWKNIFE (March 16) -- The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and World Wildlife Fund Canada (WWF) are jointly planning increased research on wolves in the Northwest Territories to ensure their long term conservation. The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, announced today that both groups are pleased to be working co-operatively on an issue that is of importance to both.

"As organizations with a commitment to the environment, both World Wildlife Fund Canada and the GNWT are interested in northern wildlife and how it is managed," said Mr. Kakfwi. "We welcome joint initiatives such as this. Sharing costs as well as results ultimately benefits both groups and the environment."

Mr. Monte Hummel, President of World Wildlife Fund Canada, feels the co-operative effort will yield very timely information. "Our organization strongly supports aboriginal rights to earn a living from the land, and we have a history of working with local residents to sustain wildlife populations. That is our shared goal for wolves, as it is for other northern species."

Research projects will likely focus on wolf genetics and wolf population ecology. There are three types of wolves in the NWT - boreal or timber, tundra and arctic. Although recent media attention has focussed on the harvesting of boreal and tundra wolves, the populations of most concern are the wolves on the high arctic islands. Arctic wolves depend on Peary caribou as their primary prey species.

The Peary caribou population in some areas has declined in recent years and this decline in their prey base may have put the arctic wolf population at risk. Genetic research will provide key information about these arctic wolf populations. Existing NWT wolf research and population monitoring programs will also be enhanced.

The joint initiative follows in the wake of recent publicity regarding wolf harvesting in the NWT. Mr. Kakfwi continues to stress that responsible wildlife management in the NWT is and always has been priority of the GNWT and co-management boards established under land claim agreements.

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Joint Wolf Project - page two

"With limited employment options in many of our small communities, access to wildlife for food and as a means of making a living is often essential," said Mr. Kakfwi. "We manage our wildlife to achieve a number of objectives - to provide a means for people to live, to do our part in sustaining world wildlife populations, and especially to ensure that our children and grandchildren will have healthy wildlife populations of all species, to harvest and value."

"However, we also recognize the concern about harvesting methods used in the NWT. The Government of the NWT is committed to the humane treatment of wildlife and has worked hard to ensure that methods for harvesting fur bearers meet humane standards. It is illegal to harass wildlife in the NWT and offenders are subject to charges."

Mr. Kakfwi indicated that he is open to discussing hunting practices with Aboriginal communities.

World Wildlife Fund Canada and GNWT representatives plan to begin meeting soon to get the projects underway.

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98-023

New Arctic Sports Training Resources Launched

YELLOWKNIFE (March 16) - A new Arctic Sports Training manual and video was officially released at the Opening Ceremonies of the Arctic Sports Competition by Municipal and Community Affairs Minister Manitok Thompson today.

The manual and video aids in the training of coaches and athletes in Arctic Sports and places the cultural tradition of Inuit Games within the framework of modern sport.

Ms. Thompson joined Patrick Tagoona, President of the NWT Arctic Sports Association; John Bales, President of the Coaching Association of Canada; and Abe Theil, President of Sport North, to make the announcement.

"As we look to the future of the next Arctic Winter Games, our wish is that the new training manual and video will help advance the skills of coaches and athletes from all circumpolar countries", said Ms. Thompson.

The resources package was developed in partnership with:

- NWT Arctic Sports Association
- Sport North Federation, Governments of the Northwest Territories, Yukon Territory, Alberta and Canada
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
- Coaching Association of Canada, and
- Arctic Winter Games International Committee

Ms. Thompson says she is "proud to be a contributing partner in the development of new training resources for Arctic Sports." The resources package will be distributed to other provinces, territories and nations of the circumpolar region.

As part of its Coaching Development Strategy, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is planning to produce similar manuals and videos for Dene Games, Inuit Wrestling, Snowshoeing and Dog Mushing sports.

For more information, contact:

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Municipal and Community Affairs
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98-024

Kivalliq Leaders support transfer initiative concept

YELLOWKNIFE (March 17) -- Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs Maniok Thompson said today she is pleased that Kivalliq Leaders are offering their support for the Keewatin Pilot Project.

The Keewatin Pilot Project is a GNWT community empowerment project aimed at transferring ownership, maintenance and operation of capital infrastructure to community governments in the Keewatin region. Capital infrastructure includes public facilities such as airports, garages, warehouses, public housing, government offices and vehicles.

At a recent meeting in Rankin Inlet, the Kivalliq Leaders voiced their support for the pilot project, and passed a resolution asking the GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to continue to provide them with more information before a final decision is made to develop a proposal for review by the GNWT Cabinet and Nunavut's Interim Commissioner's Office.

To assist in that process, a steering committee comprised of GNWT officials, Senior Administrative Officers and community leaders has been established to help guide the development of the project.

"The concept behind the initiative is to empower communities with the responsibility of planning and managing their own infrastructure and capital decisions," said Minister Thompson. "Capital and infrastructure transfers support a more comprehensive approach to Community Development, which can then be linked with programs and services that have already been transferred to the community level."

For example, a community may have a five-year capital plan that does not allow for more classrooms in its school, but there may be a need for additional space. With more direct control over its capital, if the community decides that an expansion of its school is a priority, it can shift capital budget plans from another area to meet those needs.

"That is what this is all about -- more collaboration, planning, and flexibility at the community level, where the decision-makers can make decisions and direct funds to what is best for their community," Minister Thompson said.

As the Minister of the lead department on the GNWT community empowerment initiative, Minister Thompson has been working closely with Kivalliq Leaders since they first asked the GNWT to consider infrastructure transfers in November of 1996.

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Kivalliq Leaders support transfer initiative concept: Page 2

“This concept is very interesting and could provide communities with more flexibility and say in how we develop our communities,” Mayor of Arviat Peter Kriqaliluk said. “We need to look at different options and ways of doing business to meet the needs of our growing communities.”

Johnny Ningeongan, Mayor of Coral Harbour said: “I see the Keewatin Infrastructure Pilot Project as holding potential to ensure that smaller communities become more involved in running our communities and to realize some of the benefits for the creation of Nunavut. The mayors of smaller communities are facing significant social and economic challenges, and we need all the help we can get to ensure healthier communities.”

Minister Thompson said she is very pleased to see progress being made, that there is a positive working relationship with the leaders and the communities.

“I am very proud we are able to work toward achieving the aspirations of the Kivalliq Leaders and in doing so, empower them to make their own decisions,” said Minister Thompson. “The Keewatin Infrastructure Pilot Project is a significant initiative for the GNWT, and while it is still at a concept stage, I am encouraged by the fact that the Kivalliq mayors are saying we are the right track, and that they are asking for more information.”

Minister Thompson added the GNWT is committed to ensuring that the grass roots leaderships and communities have as much input and information as possible, so they can make an informed decision on whether they want to proceed with the initiative.

“This is not a top down process, and we are not telling communities what to do,” she said. “We are simply giving information and options for communities to consider in deciding what is the best way for them to have more say and have more control in serving their people today and in future generations.”

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98-025

GNWT and NWT Power Corporation Partner to Develop Heat Opportunities

Yellowknife (March 17) - The Department of Public Works and Services and the NWT Power Corporation have been working since 1997 to develop concepts and systems to capture the residual heat from power generating stations and use it to heat buildings.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding signed yesterday, the NWT Government and the NWT Power Corporation will cooperate in identifying opportunities to develop new systems which can be economically beneficial to both parties. In the coming months, community power plants and government and commercial buildings across the NWT will be analysed to identify potential project opportunities.

Set up as commercial businesses, the projects will create new revenues for the Power Corporation from the sale of the heat. Over time, this may slightly offset overall community electrical rates, while direct customers may save as much as 30 per cent in heating costs over as many years.

"The savings will be in the millions of dollars in long term heating costs. It's a good program, at a time when public infrastructure funding is getting tighter," said Minister of Public Works and Services Jim Antoine.

Leon Cournoyea, President and CEO of the Power Corporation, said the Corporation will be encouraging local development groups and government agencies to participate in the ownership and management of the systems on a business basis. Where no local involvement is available, the Corporation would own and manage the systems.

A commercial operation involving the Gwich'in Development Corporation and the NWT Power Corporation is already in operation in Fort McPherson, where a \$1 million system heats six buildings including a school, arena and water treatment plant.

"Customers are guaranteed a ten per cent start-up advantage over running their own boilers," said Mr. Cournoyea. "As the cost of the system is paid down, that advantage will increase. Extra funds would go toward the overall cost of electricity in that community. Local electricity rates will not increase because of these systems.

.../2

GNWT and NWT Power Corporation Partner to Develop Heat Opportunities: Page 2

The Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation Charles Dent says he is especially pleased with the environmental benefits that will result from handling and burning less fuel.

“These kinds of partnerships are the wave of the future and a positive step towards responsible energy management,” he adds.

Residual heating systems can reduce fuel consumption by several thousands of barrels of fuel every year. Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced, along with hazards of transporting and storing fuel.

For example, in Fort McPherson, the system has reduced the community’s annual heating fuel consumption by twelve per cent. Carbon dioxide emissions have been cut by 132,000 kilograms, and sulphur dioxide, the main cause of acid rain, by almost 15,000 kilograms.

As many as thirty communities, especially those where power plants are already located close to large buildings, could be candidates for new systems. Another eight existing systems will be assessed for upgrading. The Corporation will have a territory-wide survey ready for further evaluation by the fall of 1998.

Public Works and Services and the NWT Power Corporation will work with community planners and developers on a community-by-community basis. Local governments will be consulted on the construction of each system before commitments are made.

For more information:

Ken Lovely
Deputy Minister
Public Works and Services
(867) 873-7619

Leon Cournoyea
President and CEO
NWT Power Corporation
(867) 874 5200 (Hay River)
(867) 669-3390 (Yellowknife)

The MOU document is available on request.



98-026

Symposium On Culture-Based Education To Be Held

YELLOWKNIFE (March 18) -- "Strength from Culture," a symposium on culture-based education, will be held in Yellowknife April 1 and 2, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, announced today.

"When people learn, they do so within the context of their culture, heritage and language," says Mr. Dent. "Research shows that students who attend schools based on local culture and language achieve at higher levels, and have increased self esteem and self-confidence."

"The link between culture and success in school and the workplace is so strong that first objective in Education, Culture and Employment's strategic plan is to improve support to communities to achieve their culture, heritage and language goals," Mr. Dent adds.

The symposium will include a plenary session featuring keynote speaker Oscar Kawagley. Dr. Kawagley is a Yupiaq educator who teaches at the University of Alaska's School of Education. A resident of the Yupiaq area of southwestern Alaska in his early years, Dr. Kawagley is dedicated to finding a way of teaching science that respects both traditional worldviews and the sciences of the modern world. His speech will address the topic of why culture-based education is important.

A panel discussion will further explore the topic and look at the issues of loss of culture identity, assimilation, and survival. Workshops will be held in which participants will examine the issues raised by the keynote speaker and other presenters.

One of the goals of the symposium is to determine how Education, Culture and Employment can support the NWT's Teaching and Learning Centres in their work to develop materials that promote aboriginal language and culture in schools. Each Divisional Education Council receives funding for a Teaching and Learning Centre.

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Symposium On Culture-Based Education To Be Held: Page 2

People attending the symposium will include: Elders; staff of the Teaching and Learning Centres; members of the Dene Subject Advisory Committee and the Inuktitut Subject Advisory Committee; instructors in the Teacher Education Program; Divisional Education Council administrators; staff of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; individuals from Aboriginal and federal organizations; Members of the Legislative Assembly.

For more information, contact: Pauline Gordon
Assistant Deputy Minister
Educational Development
Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 920-8061



98-027

Taloyoak Student Wins Great Ticket Counter Contest

YELLOWKNIFE (March 20) - Andy Poodlat, a Grade 10 student at Netsili School in Taloyoak, has won the Great Ticket Counter contest, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

The contest was sponsored by BHP Diamonds Inc., as part of the celebrations around NWT's first annual Apprenticeship Week in February.

It was open to all students enrolled in Grades 7 to 12 in the Northwest Territories. Contest ballots included a list of trades, and students were asked to choose which ones would be needed to get BHP's Ekati diamond mine up and running. More than 500 ballots were received in one week period allotted for the contest.

Andy Poodlat has won an all-expense paid visit to the BHP Ekati mine site, north of Yellowknife. Andy entered the contest to see what jobs might be of interest to him in the mining industry. He intends to become a mechanic upon finishing school.

"The contest was intended to show students the range of skilled trades available in the NWT and to encourage them to consider becoming an apprentice," said Mr. Dent. "I am pleased that Andy will have the opportunity to visit NWT's first diamond mine. I hope he finds the valuable in planning his career and making decisions about his future."

For more information, contact:

David Gilday
Director
Career Development Division
Education, Culture and Employment
Phone: 867-873-7146



98-028

Rattray Appointed Deputy Minister of Public Works & Services

YELLOWKNIFE (March 20) - Premier Don Morin has appointed a new Deputy Minister for the Department of Public Works & Services.

Bruce Rattray, currently the Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation, will assume the position effective March 23. He replaces Ken Lovely who is retiring from the position and the public service at the end of the month.

Mr. Rattray joined the territorial government in 1982 as Assistant Regional Engineer for the Department of Public Works in Inuvik. In 1984, he moved to Yellowknife where he worked as District Superintendent for six years, before moving onto the position of Director of Accommodation Services for the department. In 1991, Mr. Rattray was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations for the Department of Transportation.

Premier Morin extends best wishes to Mr. Lovely on his retirement after a 28-year career with the territorial government.

"Ken's career with the territorial government began in the late 1960's. Since then, he has shown tremendous commitment to his work and deserves our thanks and appreciation," said Premier Morin.

For more information, contact:

Sue Enge
Office of the Press Secretary
(867) 669-2304



98-029

New Roads Initiative

YELLOWKNIFE (March 23) - The Government of the Northwest Territories is launching an aggressive new roads initiative that will help pave the way toward future economic gains in the NWT.

Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, along with Finance Minister John Todd have identified \$2 million to prepare the socio-economic, environmental and pre-engineering investigation of four new roads in the North. The four new road projects are:

- Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor
- Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension
- Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Highway 3 Reconstruction - Rae to Yellowknife

“Transportation infrastructure is critical to the future of both Nunavut and the Western Territory. These four roads will have the greatest impact and economic benefit in the short term,” says Mr. Antoine.

“The work being done on these projects will allow the government to fully assess the benefits as well as address the environmental implications they may have. As well, aboriginal groups and other key players will be thoroughly involved,” Mr. Antoine adds.

Mr. Todd says taking these projects to their next stage will provide the information to make informed decisions about project benefits and financing.

“Investing in these projects must be cost effective and yield future economic gains. To ensure this occurs, we plan to involve industry from the start,” says Mr. Todd. “The information gained upon completion of this stage will be instrumental in attracting partners in the construction phase.”

For more information, contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Transportation
920-3460

Lew Voytilla
Secretary to Financial Management Board
873-7211



98-030

GNWT Supports Boundary Change of Tuktut Nogait Park

YELLOWKNIFE (March 26) - Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development announced today that the Government of the Northwest Territories supports the request from the Inuvialuit to review the Tuktut Nogait Agreement. For the review to go ahead, all six signatories must agree. They are the GNWT, Parks Canada, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Paulatuk Community Corporation, the Paulatak Hunters and Trappers Committee and the Inuvialuit Game Council.

The Inuvialuit are requesting to review the boundaries of the park because recent data have demonstrated significant mineral potential in a small area within the proposed boundaries of the park. Because opportunities for employment and economic development are limited in the Inuvialuit settlement region, the Inuvialuit do not wish to foreclose on this opportunity without an assessment of the risks and benefits.

Mr. Kakfwi consulted with the signatories as well as with communities, land settlement authorities and others concerned with the protection of the Bluenose Caribou herd calving grounds.

Mr. Kakfwi says "Our government will support a resource development proposal when its overall economic, social and environmental implications are judged to result in net benefits to the people of the NWT. With regard to our concern for the Bluenose Caribou herd, the Inuvialuit have assured us that protection of the Arctic wildlife and the environment are important and that any exploration, development or production proposals are subject to the assessment processes established under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement."

For further information, contact:

Stephen Kakfwi
Minister
Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development
(867) 669-2366



98-031

Devolution of Resources Critical to Success of Northern Economy

YELLOWKNIFE (March 30) - The Government of the Northwest Territories must work towards the devolution of natural resources from the federal government if the economy and its residents are to benefit, say members of the Premier's Panel on the Economy and Employment who met in Yellowknife, March 27 -28.

As an interim step, the Northern Affairs program in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development should relocate its office to the North.

Panel members also support the territorial government's efforts for a value added industry which would result from the development of diamonds in the North. Value added opportunities include the sorting, marketing and selling of rough, gem cutting, gem polishing, jewelry-making and industrial applications of diamonds.

These are two of several major recommendations the Panel put forward to the Premier for consideration as economic policies and initiatives are developed to stimulate the northern economy.

Agenda items included business implications of division, mining in the NWT, housing programs and import substitution possibilities.

Premier Don Morin says businesses in the communities are in touch with the economic reality of the North.

"These discussions are important to this government because they give us a good reality check," he said. "Without question, we are going through considerable change both nationally and territorially. Faced with the challenges of change, I am confident this group will make significant contributions to economic development in the NWT.

In the discussion of housing programs, panel members expressed a need for the NWT Housing Corporation to provide more design options for home owners under its independent housing program, broaden the eligibility to include higher or lower income earners, and ensure Housing Authorities are empowered to help meet community-specific needs, where this does not conflict with established businesses.

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Premier's Panel - page two

It also recommended the housing policy of the territorial government be reviewed to meet a range of immediate community needs that range from social housing requirements to attracting and retaining professional staff.

In the discussion of how businesses will be effected by division, panel members recommended the government as well as business and non-profit organizations take a look at how the creation of two new territories presents economic opportunities.

"The historical significance of this event can be celebrated and marked by northern businesses, governments at the local, regional or territorial level and other organizations if plans begin now," said Sandra Jacque, a member of the panel from Fort Smith.

Panel members also recommended the territorial government refocus its efforts to stimulate the tourism industry through various marketing initiatives and a gathering of more information about the industry.

The Premier's Panel of the Economy and Employment meet two or three times a year. Panel members include business representatives from across the Northwest Territories.

For more information, contact: **Sue Enge**
Office of the Press Secretary
(867) 669-2304

or

Sandra Jacque
Panel Member
(867) 872-2774



98-032

Premier Announces Plan to Create New Economic Development Strategy

YELLOWKNIFE (March 31) - Premier Don Morin announced today the intent to create a new comprehensive economic development to fulfill a key objective of improving the northern economy.

"This initiative will seize the opportunity presented by the federal government's budget announcement that they intend to work with this government to create a modern economic development strategy for the North," said Premier Morin. "By taking this early initiative, we hope to have our homework done so that we can be proactive in shaping discussions with the federal government."

Because this initiative spans all facets of the territorial government's operations, Premier Morin has appointed Finance Minister John Todd as the lead Minister in charge of developing the strategy.

"It is clear Premier Morin is moving quickly in a comprehensive and strategic way, to put the territorial government's economic development resources to their best use," said Mr. Todd. "I look forward to working with my Cabinet colleagues and the Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly to make sure this strategy moves forward in a coordinated manner and in a way that makes the best fiscal sense for this government and the people of the Northwest Territories."

It is anticipated that a preliminary schedule and framework outlining the strategy will be available for discussion at the next session of the Legislative Assembly.

For further information, contact:

**Andrew Gamble
Secretary to Cabinet
(867) 873-7100**



98-033

Finance Minister Announces Public-Private Partnership Projects for 1998/99

YELLOWKNIFE (March 31) - Finance Minister John Todd has unveiled the list of projects that will be undertaken by the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1998/99 using the Public-Private Partnerships (P3) approach.

At the 21st Annual General Meeting of the NWT Construction Association today, the following projects were announced:

NWT Housing Corporation

- Energy conversion measures in public housing units

Department of Education, Culture and Employment

- Weledah Elementary School - Yellowknife
- Aurora College Campus - Inuvik
- Married Students' Residence - Fort Smith
- Arctic College Residence - Kitikmeot

Municipal and Community Affairs

- Water Supply Improvements - Fort McPherson

Department of Health and Social Services

- Inuvik Hospital
- Iqaluit Hospital
- Regional Health Complex - Cambridge Bay
- Regional Health Complex - Rankin Inlet
- Health Centre - Arviat

Department of Justice

- Young Offenders Facility

Mr. Todd called upon industry to take up the challenge and work cooperatively with the territorial government to put new capital infrastructure in place, noting that "Partnerships with industry are essential if creative solutions, both on the technical side, and more importantly on the financial side, are to be achieved."

.../2

P-3 Projects - page two

“We will be seeking partnerships with businesses who have a strong commitment to the North and are prepared to invest real equity for a reasonable return on investment,” added Mr. Todd.

As a next step in the process, the territorial government is hosting a workshop on Public-Private Partnerships on April 8, 1998. Invitations to this workshop have been distributed to a number of key agencies, including the NWT Aboriginal Summit, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the NWT Association of Municipalities and the NWT Construction Association.

Mr. Todd also indicated the government’s intention to strike a P3 Advisory Committee to ensure transparency and private-sector input as the process unfolds.

For more information, contact: Lew Voytilla
Secretary to the Financial Management Board
(867) 873-7211

Premier Morin Creates Economic Opportunity for Northern Business

YELLOWKNIFE (April 2, 1998) - The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the Government of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) have signed an agreement, which will lead to the construction of a village in the City of Yakutsk. Premier Don Morin and the President of the Sakha Republic, Russian Federation, the Honourable Mikhail Nikolayev, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the project last week.

Northern contractors will be selected by the GNWT to develop 150 detached homes and related infrastructure such as streets and water and sewage systems. The homes will be built using Canadian technology and will be based on existing Arctic designs - proven northern technology developed over the last 30 years by the NWT Housing Corporation. Sakha Republic and Northwest Territories (NWT) materials and labour will be used wherever possible.

"Economic growth is critical to the long term fiscal health of the NWT," Premier Morin said. "Partnerships such as this stimulate economic growth by providing employment and economic opportunities for NWT businesses and residents."

The GNWT will identify options for financing the project and will negotiate a final financing arrangement with the Sakha government. Once adequate financing arrangements are concluded, attempts will be made to ship materials via the Mackenzie River - the shortest transportation link between Canada and the Sakha Republic.

"We are hoping to open up a whole new market for northern contractors," the Premier said. "The Sakha Republic needs thousands of homes and related infrastructure, and I am confident that we can meet that demand by using NWT suppliers and contractors."

This agreement follows the February 27 to March 13, 1998 trade mission to Russia by Housing Minister Goo Arlooktoo where these projects were discussed and preliminary agreements signed.

For more information, contact:

Joseph L. Handley
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
(867) 920-8691

or

Dave Murray, President
NWT Housing Corporation
(867) 873-7853



98-035

Report on the Costs of Creating the New Western Territory

YELLOWKNIFE (April 14) – The Minister Responsible for Western Transition Charles Dent released a new report today which outlines the projected transitional costs of creating the new Western Territory. The report is a supplement to the Government of the Northwest Territories' Transition Action Plan that was released last fall.

“The report identifies the transition funding necessary for the creation of the new Western Territory,” said Mr. Dent. “We look to the federal government to provide the funding needed to adequately resource the transition.”

The report anticipates costs arising from governance reform, changes to the administration, and the implementation of a strategy to develop a more representative public service.

“We are not just looking at the immediate future, but are trying to set the stage for what will happen further down the road – like the cost for developing a new Western Constitution,” explained Mr. Dent. “Although it may take some time before we incur these costs, they will result from the creation of the new Western Territory and the federal government has an obligation to pay them.”

An important component of the report is the Human Resource Planning and Development Strategy. This Strategy details a plan to create a public service for the government in the new Western Territory that is both effective and representative of the public it serves.

“Building workforce capacity and achieving equity employment in the public service are a critical part of planning for the future of the West,” said Mr. Dent.

Copies of the report can be obtained from the Office of the Press Secretary at (867) 669-2304 in the Legislative Assembly Building, 2nd Floor.

For more information, contact: Lew Voytilla
Secretary to the Financial Management Board
(867) 873-7211

or

Karen Bergman-Illnik
Executive Assistant to Hon. Charles Dent
(867) 669-2310



98-036

Premier Leads Trade Mission to Greenland

YELLOWKNIFE (April 17) - Premier Don Morin is leading a trade mission to Nuuk, Greenland on April 20 to explore business opportunities and develop greater trade, economic ties and relations.

Twelve business representatives from across the Northwest Territories are participating in the four day trip. They represent a range of different business interests from arctic environmental engineering to marine transportation, tourism, mining, cultural services, manufacturing and marketing of country foods.

"I am very pleased to be participating in this economic venture," said Premier Morin. "This trip represents a revitalization of an earlier exchange which began in 1989 when Greenland's Premier Jonathan Motzfeldt was involved."

On April 22, both Premiers will sign a Statement of Intent on Cooperation. This statement will confirm a commitment to work towards future bilateral relations in the areas of trade, economic development and intergovernmental cooperation.

"We hope to detail how businesses and governments can work together in the areas of mining, oil and gas exploration and transportation; commercial and residential construction, communications, transportation, business services and wildlife co-management," said Premier Morin.

The NWT business delegates hope to make as many contracts or joint ventures agreements as possible.

"The expertise and knowledge of our northern entrepreneurs can be shared with our circumpolar neighbours because there are similar geographical, climate, distance and cost of living conditions and challenges," said Premier Morin.

While in Nuuk, the Premier will meet with Cabinet of the Greenland Home Rule Government and Sisimuit Trade Council.

For further information, contact: Susan Enge
Acting Press Secretary
(867) 669-2304



98-037

Premier welcomes INAC study to move jobs north

YELLOWKNIFE (April 21, 1998) -- Premier Don Morin is pleased that the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs has identified positions that could be relocated the Northwest Territories.

Up to 140 positions could be moved from Ottawa to Yellowknife. They are in the areas that directly affect the NWT.

“The Government of the Northwest Territories has been pressing the federal government on this issue for a long time.” It is important that federal services intended for the NWT be administered in the north. “Moving these positions closer to the people they serve will benefit everyone and help pave the way for the devolution of the programs,” Mr. Morin said.

Mr. Morin says he appreciates that the relocation will be a major undertaking for the federal government and that it needs careful planning.

“I am sure that any concerns can be dealt with and I encourage the department of Indian and Northern Affairs to go ahead with this move,” Mr. Morin said. “In the long-run, it will lead to a closer working relationship between the federal employees and the people they serve.”

For more information, please contact: Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Dept. of the Executive
(867) 669-2302



98-038

NWT and Greenland agree to cooperate on trade development

NUUK (April 22, 1998) -- Premier Don Morin has signed a Statement of Intent on Cooperation with the Greenland Home Rule Government which will lead to stronger economic ties between Greenland and the Northwest Territories.

“This Statement of Intent is an important step towards a stronger trade relationship with Greenland,” Mr. Morin said. “Both governments recognize that Greenland and the NWT have a great deal in common and have much to offer each other.”

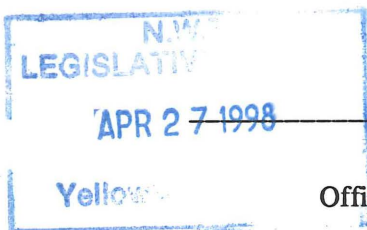
The agreement was signed today in Nuuk, where Mr. Morin is leading a trade mission to explore business opportunities and develop greater trade, economic ties and relations between the NWT and Greenland.

The agreement sets out the two government’s intent to develop a Memorandum of Understanding which would detail future relations between them. This Memorandum of Understanding will focus on facilitating cooperation in the areas of:

- Mining exploration and development
- Oil and gas exploration and development
- Construction
- Housing
- Communications
- Tourism
- Transportation systems
- Business services
- Wildlife co-management
- Education
- Culture

Mr. Morin is joined on the trade mission by twelve NWT business representatives, including Alain Carriere, Vice-President of the NWT Chamber of Commerce.

.../2



NWT and Greenland agree to cooperate on trade development: Page 2

“We are very pleased with the productive meetings we have had with our counterparts in Greenland,” Mr. Carriere said. “Qikiqtaaluk Corporation of the Baffin region and Nuna Oil of Greenland are considering pooling some of their interests to create a new junior mineral exploration company. Also, representatives of the construction sector met with the Municipality of Nuuk’s town planning and lands departments and with the Greenland Home Rule Government to advance construction opportunities. This looks very promising for the NWT.”

The Premier said he was greatly encouraged by the success of the trade mission so far.

“The business community in the NWT has expertise and knowledge that is well-suited to the needs of Greenland,” Mr. Morin said. “We look forward to a long and productive relationship between the NWT and the people here.”

For more information, please contact: Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Dept. of the Executive
(867) 669-2302



98-039

Rennie Lake Wolf Harvest Update

YELLOWKNIFE (April 22, 1998) -- The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED), announced today that this year's wolf harvest from the Rennie Lake area, north of the Saskatchewan border, has concluded.

"The Rennie Lake harvest, which was carried out by Aboriginal hunters from northern Saskatchewan, was only slightly higher than historical harvest levels," said Mr. Kakfwi. "Although records are not yet complete, we estimate the total wolf harvest from that area was approximately 635 animals."

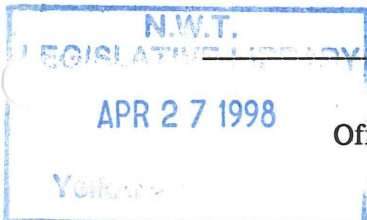
The past winter has been unusual for wolves in this area. Unlike most wolf populations, where packs maintain a year-round territory, tundra wolves in the Northwest Territories (NWT) often follow barren-ground caribou herds as they migrate to their winter ranges. This year, two very large caribou herds, the Bathurst and Beverly herds, spent part of the winter together in the Rennie Lake area, which is typically only used by the Beverly herd. As a result, the number and density of wolves in the area was much higher than usual.

The harvest in the Rennie Lake area has increased awareness about wolves across the country and raised a number of questions about the status of wolves in Canada. To answer some of the questions about NWT wolves, the Government of the Northwest Territories is pleased to be working with other groups, including World Wildlife Fund Canada and Environment Canada, to expand wolf research and monitoring capacity.

Fuel will be cached over the summer in preparation for increased wolf monitoring flights next season and RWED biologists are working with other wolf specialists to address the most important information needs for wolf management. In addition, genetic material is being collected to help define wolf populations.

RWED has contacted harvesters to strengthen an ongoing cooperative approach to assessing and managing wolf harvesting. "We are very proud of the co-management mechanisms, such as the Beverly-Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board, used in the NWT for addressing management issues," said Mr. Kakfwi. "Other countries have studied our co-management system as a model for managing their wildlife."

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Rennie Lake Wolf Harvest Update: Page 2

Mr. Kakfwi also announced that initial planning is underway for a workshop that will bring together biologists, managers and users from the NWT and affected northern provinces. "This workshop will give us an opportunity to review wolf research, management, legislation and harvesting methods, including the use of snowmobiles for hunting. We all have the same goal with respect to wolves -- to ensure that harvesting is sustainable and humane." The workshop will take place prior to the harvesting season next winter.

Recent media attention has focused on wolves in the southern portion of the NWT because of increased harvests in the area this year. However, the populations of most concern are the wolves on the high arctic islands. These populations may be at risk because of a decline in their primary prey species, the Peary caribou. Therefore, it is likely that much of the increased research on wolves will focus on these animals.

"Wildlife harvesting is an essential part of life in the NWT," said Mr. Kakfwi. "Responsible wildlife management is and always has been a priority of the GNWT and the co-management boards established under land claims agreements. We will continue to manage our wildlife resources to ensure they stay healthy for many, many generations to come.

For more information, please contact:

Judy Langford
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Tel: (867) 669-2302
Fax: (867) 873-0169

or

Doug Stewart
Wildlife and Fisheries
Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development
Tel: (867) 920-8064
Fax: (867) 873-0293



98-040

Increase to Senior Citizen's Home Repair Program

YELLOWKNIFE (April 22, 1998) - The NWT Housing Corporation Minister Goo Arlooktoo announced today that the amount of financial assistance available to NWT seniors in core housing need to repair their homes has been increased.

By increasing the assistance level available through the Senior Citizen's Home Repair Program the NWT Housing Corporation hopes to encourage seniors to stay in their own homes longer.

The program has been amended to raise the maximum level of financial assistance from \$7,500 plus freight costs to \$15,000 plus freight costs.

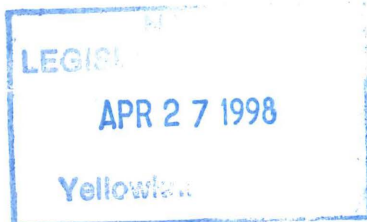
"It has been many years since the assistance level has been increased and it was time to update the program to ensure the program continues to assist seniors," said Minister Arlooktoo. "I believe the increase reflects GNWT's commitment to ensure seniors have the support they need."

Seniors who own and occupy their own home are eligible for financial assistance under the Senior Citizen's Home Repair Program. The program provides the financial assistance in the form of a once in a lifetime grant. The program is designed to repair the senior's home in order to improve their living conditions.

The program is available to people 60 years-of-age and older and who have resided in the Northwest Territories for at least five consecutive years before applying to the program.

For more information, contact:

Doug Johnson
Public Affairs Coordinator
NWT Housing Corporation
(867) 873-7854





98-041

GNWT and BHP reach agreement on value-added activities

YELLOWKNIFE (April 29) - The Government of the Northwest Territories and BHP Diamonds Inc. have reached agreement on a diamond sorting and valuation facility and other value-added activities.

The understanding was reached following discussions between Premier Don Morin and James Rothwell, President of BHP Diamonds Inc. BHP has already made commitments on environmental protection, northern jobs and business opportunities in construction and operation of the mine. These final commitments meet the government's objectives in ensuring the north captures some of the value-added opportunities resulting from the BHP mine.

"The government's two final objectives have been met," Mr. Morin said. "BHP has agreed to build a sorting and valuation facility in a northern community. They have also agreed to facilitate the sale of rough diamonds for manufacturing in the north."

The Government of the Northwest Territories will suspend its plans to become directly involved in marketing rough diamonds. The Government and BHP will work together to identify and support potential northern manufacturers.

"BHP has agreed to make the rough diamonds available to the private sector," Mr. Morin said. It is up to government and manufacturers to invest in infrastructure and training to make this new industry viable."

The Government of the Northwest Territories has agreed that there will be no new taxation or other demands on the project. Mr. Morin said the government intends to pursue a greater share of existing revenues with the federal government.

For more information, please contact: Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Dept. of the Executive
(867) 669-2302



98-042

Seven Northerners Receive Literacy Recognition Award

YELLOWKNIFE (April 30, 1998) - Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, is recognizing seven northerners for their contributions to literacy in the Northwest Territories.

Daisy Dialla of Pangnirtung, Violet Twyee of Rankin Inlet, Marja Van Nieuwenhuyzen of Inuvik, Pat Hardisty and Andy Norwegian of Fort Simpson, Marilyn Barnes of Hay River and Madeleine Fontan of Yellowknife, will all receive the Minister's Literacy Recognition Award. The annual award honours people who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to improving their personal level of literacy or who have worked to promote and foster literacy within their community.

"Literacy is an issue that requires the attention and support of all northerners," Mr. Dent says. "I am impressed by the level of commitment shown by those who have worked to improve their reading and writing skills, as well as the dedication of those who help others improve their literacy skills."

Daisy Dialla of Pangnirtung has taught Inuktitut at Attagoyuk School for more than twenty years. She has shown great commitment to her work and, because of the lack of Inuktitut resources, she has spent many hours developing her own materials. Unfortunately, the 1997 fire at the school destroyed years of her work and she has had to start again from scratch.

The cultural programs in Pangnirtung have benefited from Ms. Dialla's guidance and leadership in organizing activities for camps and other outdoor excursions. She is also a resource for enhancing classroom programs related to Inuit culture.

Violet Twyee of Rankin Inlet will receive an award for being an example of life-long learning in action. A respected elder in Rankin Inlet, Ms. Twyee is a learner in her second year of the Learning in the Workplace Program, where she is involved in both the Inuktitut and English parts of the program. Besides attending school, she also works at the high school residence as supervisor and cook's helper.

Ms. Twyee learned most of her skills in English and Inuktitut when she was a young girl in Sunday school. Since that time she has wanted the opportunity to upgrade her skills in both languages. Because of her commitment to her goal, which is to become a Inuktitut literacy instructor at Maani Ulujuk Illiniarvik, she puts in additional hours on her own. She is a dedicated learner and an excellent role model for community residents of all ages.

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Seven Northerners Receive Literacy Recognition Award: Page 2

Marja Van Nieuwenhuyzen of Inuvik is a well-known community advocate for literacy. Currently the Executive Director of the NWT Training Centre, she has been responsible for adult basic education and pre-employment programs which have been successful largely as a result of her dedication and commitment to her work and students.

Ms. Van Nieuwenhuyzen is an active member of the Beaufort Delta Training Committee, whose membership recognizes her knowledge and expertise in the area of literacy. Over the years she has also volunteered for organizations that provide support to students, including the Family Counselling Centre, the Inuvik Alcohol Committee, the NWT Native Women's Association, and the Inuvik Day Care Centre.

Understanding that literacy is not a "stand alone" issue, Ms. Van Nieuwenhuyzen has promoted training in related areas such as life skills, pre-employment, arts and crafts, and aboriginal languages. Former students hold her in high regard for helping them develop the self-confidence, self esteem and academic levels needed to reach their goals.

Pat Hardisty of Fort Simpson is a single mother of two children. Four years ago she set out to further her education so that she could be a drug and alcohol counsellor. She has completed the Aurora College 110 and 120 adult basic education levels and is currently completing English 130.

Ms. Hardisty was elected to the NWT Literacy Council in 1997 as the first Deh Cho regional representative. She is currently working with the Literacy Council to organize a local workshop which will set direction for future literacy activities in Fort Simpson. The Literacy Council has selected Pat to be the NWT representative on the Movement for Canadian Literacy Learners' Committee. She has become an outspoken advocate for literacy nationally, as well as locally, proving that people can reach their goals through hard work and determination.

Andy Norwegian of Fort Simpson works as an aboriginal language specialist. During his career he has been a teacher at Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson, where he has been instrumental in promoting and teaching the Slavey language. Mr. Norwegian is currently serving as the coordinator of the Deh Cho Teaching and Learning Centre, where he has worked extensively over the years on a noun and verb dictionary in Slavey. He has also been part of the team that has developed Slavey 15 and 25, an approved language course for secondary school students, as well as being part of a team working on the Dene Kede curriculum. He has also been instrumental in creating Slavey publications for the schools.

Regular visits to the Deh Cho schools have allowed Mr. Norwegian to assist teachers and aboriginal language instructors in developing and delivering language programs for students. He also evaluates secondary students who choose to challenge for aboriginal language credits. Mr. Norwegian is a dedicated educator who has played a key role in the promotion of the Slavey language in the Deh Cho.

.../3

Seven Northerners Receive Literacy Recognition Award: Page 3

Marilyn Barnes of Hay River is the head librarian of the NWT Centennial Library, where she has developed the library as a learning resource centre that supports all the schools in the community. Her weekly preschool learning programs at the library are recognized as being of the highest standard and an excellent start to a young child's schooling.

Ms. Barnes also conducts many special activities at the library to encourage more residents to come in and discover what is available. Her initiative and hard work goes far beyond the requirements of her job, and as a result, she has contributed substantially to the level of literacy in Hay River.

Madeleine Fontan of Yellowknife has taught in the French immersion program with the Yellowknife Education District Number One for twelve years and is currently teaching at William McDonald School. She is known for her great energy, demand for excellence, her passion for French language and culture, and above all for her love of the students. These are all qualities Ms. Fontan communicates to the students of Yellowknife.

For more information, please contact: Dan Daniels
Director, Colleges & Continuing Education
Education, Culture and Employment
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98-043

Arlooktoo Urges Swift Passage of Bill C-39

OTTAWA (April 30, 1998) -- Deputy Premier Goo Arlooktoo has urged the federal government pass Bill C-39, An Act to Amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act 1867, as quickly as possible. Mr. Arlooktoo addressed the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, which is reviewing the bill, on Wednesday.

Bill C-39 contains amendments to the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act 1867 to ensure a smooth transition to the new territory of Nunavut. The amendments fall into three broad categories: those to allow the election of the first Nunavut Legislative Assembly in time for April 1, 1999; those intended to ensure the continuity of government services during the transition period; and those that provide representation for the people of Nunavut in the House of Commons and the Senate.

"April 1, 1999 is only 336 days from today," Mr. Arlooktoo told the committee. "The tasks in this transition period are enormous. To proceed, we need to know the legal environment in which we are operating. For example, the GNWT must enact several pieces of legislation needed for division purposes within the next year. Our drafters need to know the federal law upon which we are exercising our jurisdictional authority. Another example is the need for clear statutory authority in order to organize the first Nunavut election. An orderly election requires months of preparation, involving hiring and training of returning officers, enumeration and so on."

The standing committee plans to complete its review of Bill C-39 by next Wednesday. It then reports back to the House of Commons and submits the bill for third reading. If the Bill is passed by the House of Commons, it will go to the Senate for final approval, after which it becomes law.

For more information, please contact: Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Department of the Executive
Tel: (867) 669-2302



98-044

Dept. of Transportation Recommends Changes to Reduce Impaired Driving

YELLOWKNIFE (May 7, 1998) The Department of Transportation is recommending changes to the territorial Motor Vehicles Act to reduce the number of people drinking and driving in the North. Before submitting a legislative proposal to Cabinet, Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine wants to know what the public thinks of the proposed changes, and the department's new approach to this very serious problem.

The NWT has one of the highest impaired driving rates in Canada. An average of 500 drivers are charged each year. Approximately three people are killed and 62 people injured in alcohol-related crashes each year.

NWT residents will be asked their opinion through a number of public meetings, surveys and other events, such as a live phone-in show on TVNC. Discussion will be based on a report prepared by the department. It is called "A Strategy to Reduce Impaired Driving in the Northwest Territories." The report recommends changes in legislation, enforcement, education, community programs and treatment.

Key changes include:

- Increased periods of licence suspension for convicted impaired drivers
- Immediate 30-day suspension for drivers caught with over .04 blood alcohol content
- Immediate seizure of vehicles driven by a person whose licence has been suspended
- Introduction of a graduated licensing system. New drivers will not be allowed to have any alcohol in their blood when driving
- Introduction of public awareness, education, enforcement and treatment programs

The dates and locations of public meetings will be announced soon. Public opinion surveys will be distributed to Motor Vehicle Agencies in each community.

For more information, contact: **Richard MacDonald**
Director of Motor Vehicles
Department of Transportation
(867) 873-8915

THE HONOURABLE JIM ANTOINE
MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION
PRESS CONFERENCE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY - PUBLIC FORUM
THURSDAY MAY 7, 1998
1:30 P.M.

IMPAIRED DRIVING PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

We are all aware of the effect that alcohol has on all aspects of our society. We are all aware of stories in each of our communities where the use of alcohol led to tragedy and sadness, affecting individual lives and families. While the Government can be proud of many of its alcohol-related programs, it is clear that the problem is still immense.

In the Transportation sector, we are concerned with the users of our roads. The safety and well being of our citizens and road users is foremost in the development of our programs. Every year on our highways the misuse of alcohol results in unacceptable levels of death and injury, whether it involves driving a car, a snowmachine or an ATV. Every year innocent victims, including children, form part of the accident statistics where drinking and driving is involved.

And the statistics are discouraging. In the Northwest Territories:

- Drinking and driving plays a major role in about 35% of all fatal accidents and 15% of accidents involving injury.

- An average of 3 persons are killed in alcohol related crashes each year. In 1996 the number was 10.
- An average of 62 persons are injured in alcohol related crashes each year.
- About 500 persons are charged with impaired driving each year (2 1/2 times the Canadian Average).
- Right now the department believes there are at least 500 drivers on our roads who have had 3 or more impaired driving suspensions and over 1500 with 2 or more suspensions.

I feel this situation can be improved. Enforcement alone does not make a difference. Legislation, enforcement, public awareness initiatives, and treatment are all needed as part of an integrated approach which deals with general prevention, detection, and those who are repeat offenders.. The scope of the problem crosses several departments including Justice, Education, and, Health and Social Services.

As you may know, several provinces have taken some very tough approaches towards the drinking and driving problem in recent years, including lifetime suspensions for repeat offenders, immediate 30 day road-side suspensions, vehicle impoundment and zero tolerance for new drivers. Some of these steps may be suitable for the Northwest Territories while others may not.

Before I bring concrete proposals forward to this government, I believe consultation with the public is essential to determine how people feel on these issues and to allow them to participate in the solutions. Over the next few months the Department of Transportation will seek people's opinions through meetings, surveys, radio and television programming.

I believe a clear message will be sent back to me that drinking and driving cannot and should not be tolerated.



98-045

GNWT, BHP Meeting Socio-Economic Agreement Commitments

YELLOWKNIFE (May 7, 1998) -- Officials from the Government of the Northwest Territories and BHP are travelling to five point-of-hire communities to talk about the BHP Socio-Economic Agreement and hear comments from the communities. They have already been to Wha Ti and Rae and plan to visit Rae Lakes, Snare Lake and Kugluktuk next week.

Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, says he is satisfied that BHP is meeting and, in some cases, exceeding its commitments under the agreement. "This socio-economic agreement is a new model for the North. It is a partnership that will last many years and all parties involved intend to continue to work together so that residents receive benefits from resource development in the North."

The BHP Socio-Economic Agreement was signed in October 1996. It is a framework to ensure training, employment and business opportunities are made available to northern residents, that the wellness of affected communities and peoples are protected, and that any adverse social impacts are minimized.

Statistics in BHP's second Annual Report on Northern and Aboriginal Employment show that during the 1997 construction phase of Ekati Mine northern residents made up 40 per cent of its total workforce hours. Aboriginal residents made up 18 per cent of its total workforce hours during the same period. These figures surpass the BHP commitment under the agreement, which is 33 per cent and 14.5 per cent, respectively.

BHP is also committed to buying 28 per cent of all goods and services from northern businesses during the construction phase. The BHP Annual Report on Local Purchases for 1997 shows it or its agent, H.A. Simons, bought 52 per cent of construction goods and services from northern companies. Over 23 per cent of all 1997 purchases were from Aboriginal businesses. These purchases are worth over \$171 million.

The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development will continue to monitor and report progress of the BHP Diamonds Project in fulfilling its commitments.

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Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development
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98-046

GNWT welcomes decision on diamond valuation facility

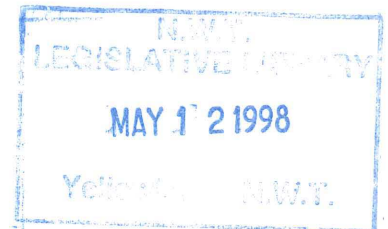
YELLOWKNIFE (May 8, 1998) -- The Government of the Northwest Territories welcomes BHP Diamonds Inc's announcement that it will build a diamond valuation facility in Yellowknife. BHP will built the facility on land at the airport. The government and the company recently came to an agreement that the facility would be built in a northern community.

"We were very pleased when BHP agreed to build this sorting and valuation facility in the NWT," said Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development Stephen Kakfwi. "Now that the company has selected a community that meets its needs, we look forward to the facility being built and employing northern people. We respect that BHP made this decision based on its requirements, including security considerations."

Mr. Kakfwi acknowledges that other communities may be disappointed that they were not chosen to host the facility. However, he is confident that BHP will continue to do business with a variety of northern companies.

"BHP's annual report on northern hiring and purchasing shows the company exceeds its targets last year," Mr. Kakfwi said. "There continue to be opportunities for northern businesses and communities to work with BHP and share the benefits of this project."

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98-047

New Information Network Will Provide Information About Career Development, Job Opportunities

YELLOWKNIFE (May 11) - Northerners will soon have better access to information about career development, education and job opportunities in the NWT, thanks to a newly-formed information network.

The network, called Northwest Territories WorkInfoNet (North WIN), was created through the co-operation of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Aurora College, Human Resources Development Canada, and Canada WorkInfoNet. North WIN will create a web site to present information about the job market from a variety of organizations. The web site is scheduled to be launched this summer.

"This web site will give people looking for work, and employers looking for workers with specific skills, a one-stop resource for finding the information they need," says Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

North WIN is a territorial extension of the Canada WorkInfoNet, a network of partners in all provinces and territories who have worked together to develop and maintain an information network for Canadians to find out about work and learning opportunities. The Northwest Territories has participated in the Canada WorkInfoNet, and promoted the service through schools and career centres. Although CanWIN does an excellent job at delivering national information, North WIN will deal with issues specific to the Northwest Territories.

A one-and-a-half day conference was recently held in Yellowknife to discuss the type of information northerners need to plan their careers, get the education and training they need, and to find jobs. Participants also discussed the type of information about the job market that is already available, and where more information is needed. Participants included several government departments, the NWT Literacy Council, the Native Women's Association, the Youth Volunteer Corps, and many other organizations.

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98-048

GNWT Statement on Collective Bargaining

YELLOWKNIFE (May 11) -- On May 8, 1998 the GNWT tabled a final settlement offer at collective bargaining. Finance Minister John Todd said the parties were at an impasse over the pay equity issue. To break the impasse, the GNWT tabled a final settlement offer and invited the UNW to present it to employees for a vote so that they could decide for themselves whether to accept or reject it.

Mr. Todd said he believes the package is fair. Some of the highlights include:

- 2% to a 31% wage increase in the first year;
- 2 % wage increase in the second year;
- Up to 5% annually in performance increments or bonus;
- \$421 to \$4,096 in Northern Allowance increases for employees outside Yellowknife;
\$500 additional lump sum Northern Allowance amount in each year for all employees;
- \$790 to \$33,199 in retroactive pay equity payments;
Five mandatory leave days for continuous employees on the same basis as non-continuous employees;
- School year hours of work for dental therapists;
- Many other significant improvements in benefits, rights and protections for employees such as shift premium increases for shift workers, a study on how to improve child care and a proactive prevention strategy to deal with workplace conflict issues.

Mr. Todd said that it is unfortunate that the UNW has refused to work with the GNWT and its employees to implement the Hay Job Evaluation System. He said that managers and employees are actively engaged in this project and that the UNW has stayed on the outside looking in. He said that the UNW has been given ample opportunity to become a contributory participant in the Job Evaluation Project:

- On Feb. 3, 1997, the UNW President was given notice in person of the GNWT's intention to implement the Hay job evaluation system at collective bargaining.
- On March 4 and 5, 1997, the UNW President, along with some executive and staff members, was given a two day training session on the Hay job evaluation system.

- On Aug. 8, 1997 employees were informed about the new job evaluation system and asked to participate in an employee opinion survey. The UNW was consulted on the process and participated in documenting the results.
- On February 3, 1998 the GNWT tabled its opening proposal for implementing the new job evaluation system and settling pay equity at collective bargaining.
- On March 8, 1998 the UNW Bargaining Committee signed an agreement to do a joint review of the job evaluation results to satisfy itself that the point ratings were bias free. The UNW Bargaining Committee did not honour the agreement. They did not show up for the review.

Mr. Todd said that the GNWT will not sign an agreement that renews rates of pay that are known to be discriminatory. It would be irresponsible for the GNWT to sign a collective agreement which gives the UNW the opportunity to then sue the GNWT for more money because there is a pay equity problem.

Mr. Todd said that the debate over pay equity has gone on for too long. He said it is time for the parties to resolve their differences and look to the future.

“The people affected by the impasse are employees,” Mr. Todd said. “It is now the UNW’s responsibility to take the package out to employees. It is up to employees to let the UNW know if this is what they want.”

For more information, contact: Herb Hunt
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(867) 920-8900



98-049

Rosie Oolooyuk Appointed to Chair Keewatin Regional Health and Social Services Board

YELLOWKNIFE (May 12) -- Minister of Health and Social Services Kelvin Ng is pleased to announce the appointment of Rosie Oolooyuk as chair of the Keewatin Regional Health and Social Services Board. The appointment takes effect immediately.

Mr. Ng extends his sincere thanks and appreciation to Percy Kabloona and Chris Keeley for their important contributions over the past months. Percy Kabloona has been the Interim Chairperson since January, during a difficult time for the board. Chris Keeley has been the acting Executive Director since February. "Percy and Chris agreed to take on challenging roles during a critical period for the board" Mr. Ng said. "They have reestablished the board's relationship with the Northern Medical Unit, strengthened the lines of communications with the residents of the region, and enhanced the board's working relationship with the Kivalliq Inuit Association."

"Rosie has been dealing with health issues for some time now. In fact, she was even involved with the board during its inception."

Ms. Oolooyuk was chosen from several names put forward by hamlet councils in the Keewatin region and by the Kivalliq Inuit Association. The choice was a difficult one. There were a number of good candidates nominated. In making the decision, Mr. Ng consulted with a number of people in the region.

"I would like to thank those organizations that nominated candidates," Mr. Ng said. "They put a great deal of thought and effort into their choices. It was not easy to select a new board chair from such a well-qualified group. In the end, though, I believe Rosie Oolooyuk is the right person for the job."

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or Judy Langford
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98-050

GNWT/Nunavut Deputy Ministers To Meet in Iqaluit May 13-15

YELLOWKNIFE/IQALUIT, NT (May 12 1998) - Deputy Ministers from the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut will meet in Iqaluit May 13-15. The meeting is an opportunity for these senior government officials to exchange views and discuss issues that affect both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

"There are many issues to be resolved before the creation of two new territories on April 1, 1999," said Deputy Premier Goo Arlooktoo who is leading the GNWT delegation. "This is a valuable opportunity for Deputy Ministers in the GNWT to collaborate with their counterparts in the new Government of Nunavut."

The exchange will begin on Wednesday night with a social evening, which is open to the public at the Discovery Inn. Speakers include Interim Commissioner Jack Anawak, NTI President Jose Kusugak, Deputy Premier Goo Arlooktoo, MLA for Iqaluit Edward Picco, and the Mayor of Iqaluit, Jimmy Kilabuk.

"This meeting, which is the first of its kind is a chance for the deputy ministers to seek consensus in ensuring a smooth division of the Territories," Interim Commissioner Jack Anawak said.

On Thursday the participants will spend the day discussing emerging issues in Nunavut, as well as the business and budget planning process for the 1999-2000 fiscal year.

Friday will be devoted to operational issues such as human resources, and service arrangements following April 1 1999.

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98-051

Deputy Premier Did Not Write Note to MLA, experts say

YELLOWKNIFE (May 14) - According to an expert polygraph examiner and a forensic handwriting analyst, Deputy Premier Goo Arlooktoo did not write an anonymous note sent to the MLA for Hay River during the last session of the Legislative Assembly. The polygraph results also show that Mr. Arlooktoo was not involved in any way prior to the note being sent.

The note sent to Jane Groenewegen caused intense debate and media attention. Ms. Groenewegen had a handwriting analyst compare the anonymous note to a one-sentence note written by Mr. Arlooktoo. The results of this comparison were tabled in the House. They concluded it was "highly probably" that Mr. Arlooktoo wrote the note.

"News that I sent the note spread fast," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "I received a lot of calls from the media and from constituents over this. Although most were calls from constituents offering support, I was very concerned about my reputation; after all, that's what I was elected on and that's what I plan on leaving with."

"Even after the Member for the High Arctic, Levi Barnabas, apologized for sending the note and explained he had only sent it as a joke, there were rumblings and inferences that there was more to it," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "Because of this, I decided I should take steps to confirm my innocence beyond a shadow of a doubt."

The Deputy Premier agreed to take a polygraph test and submit several dated writing samples for forensic examination. Bison Security Group conducted the polygraph test. It confirms that Mr. Arlooktoo had no involvement in the note incident. The analysis of many handwriting samples by Questioned Documents Investigations resulted in a finding opposite to the conclusion of the handwriting expert hired by Jane Groenewegen.

"I am glad to close the book on this incident," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "I only hope something like this doesn't happen again. The public deserves better and I resent the time and energy spent on this issue by my staff and me, as well as the concern this caused my constituents."

Mr. Arlooktoo will table the results of the polygraph and the handwriting analysis in the Legislative Assembly during the upcoming session.

For more information, contact: Judy Langford
Press Secretary
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(867) 669-2302



98-052

Cross-Canada Youth Ambassadors Selected from Arctic Bay and Fort McPherson

YELLOWKNIFE (May 20, 1998) - Two grade 12 students from the Northwest Territories will participate in a once-in-a-lifetime experience this summer as part of a cross-Canada tour promoting tree planting. Darlene Naqitarvik, of Arctic Bay and Terri Elias, of Fort McPherson will join 31 other youth ambassadors from across Canada for the second annual "Let's Root for Canada" tour.

The group's mission is to plant, or promote the planting of, more than 600,000 trees in communities across Canada, including along the Trans-Canada Trail, a 15,000 km recreational trail which connects every province and territory. The program begins in Penticton, British Columbia on May 23 and finishes in Gander, Newfoundland on July 26.

As they travel, the youth ambassadors will experience first-hand the culture and history of each region, participating in various environmental and cultural events. They will also take part in a special tree-planting ceremony during Canada Day on Parliament Hill.

Ms. Naqitarvik and Ms. Elias were selected as NWT ambassadors for the tour through a high school essay contest sponsored by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

The tour is sponsored nationally by the Tree Canada Foundation, a not-for-profit, charitable organization which encourages Canadians to plant trees to reduce the harmful effects of carbon dioxide emissions.

Contacts: Brenda Hans or Rosanna Strong	or	Art Peters
Public Affairs and Communications		Tour Coordinator
Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development		Let's Root for Canada Tour
Tel: (867) 873-7779		Tel: (403) 239-5376
Fax: (867) 873-0114		



98-053

Framework Agreement to Develop Health Care Facilities Signed In Cambridge Bay

CAMBRIDGE BAY (May 20) -- The Government of the Northwest Territories, three Nunavut health and social services boards and two of the three regional birthright corporations yesterday signed a framework agreement to develop regional health facilities. Unfortunately, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation was unavailable to participate in the ceremony.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the territorial government by the Minister of Health and Social Services, Kelvin Ng, and by the Minister of Finance, John Todd. The development of the regional health facilities has received support from Nunavut Tungavik Inc. (NTI) and approval in principle from Mr. Jack Anawak, the Interim Commissioner for Nunavut.

"This agreement is designed to facilitate the speedy, cost-effective construction of much-needed regional health facilities in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay," Mr. Ng said. "We are taking an innovative approach to building these facilities in partnership with the health and social services boards and the birthright corporations."

The agreement calls for the birthright corporations to own the facilities, for the regional boards to continue delivery of programs and services and for the GNWT in conjunction with the boards to identify design parameters. The agreement also outlines the commitment to award all design and construction work in the proposed facilities through a public tenders - a request for proposal process.

Before entering into the framework agreement, Mr. Ng signed agreements with each birthright corporation for them to oversee the design, construction and long-term financing of the regional health facilities.

Final approval for entering into long-term operating leases for the three facilities is contingent on agreement from the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut.

For more information, please contact:

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(867) 669-2314



98-054

Northwest Territories Teams up to Help Launch National Physical Activity Campaign

YELLOWKNIFE (May 20, 1998) -- On May 22nd, residents of the Northwest Territories will join people across Canada to participate in Sneaker Day. This is the official kick-off of a month-long campaign to celebrate and promote regular physical activity, known as SummerActive '98.

On Sneaker Day, members of the Northwest Territories Dog Sledding Association will be training their dog teams to pull all-terrain vehicles. Local residents will be wearing their sneakers and running with the dog teams. As well, schools and community recreation groups will be holding a variety of events such as stair challenges, basketball and ball hockey tournaments, a SummerActive quiz, a graduation dance and a community feast.

Last August, the Honourable Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, joined her federal, provincial and territorial counterparts in agreeing to set as a target, a 10 per cent reduction of inactive Canadians by 2003.

"Northerners of all ages enjoy being physically active, volunteering and learning new skills. Recreation enhances the quality of life in the NWT, fosters community wellness, and promotes healthy living. As hosts of the 1998 Arctic Winter Games, our participation in traditional Northern sports is unsurpassed," says Thompson. "Many other special events also occur which encourage community groups to work together to profile local programs in the winter and summer months."

In January, the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute released a study that showed physical inactivity was linked to premature death and disability, heart disease, adult-onset diabetes, and colon cancer. Moreover, the study also found that two thirds of the residents of the Northwest Territories in all age groups were not sufficiently active to sustain good health.

Summer/Active is an annual physical activity campaign sponsored by Health Canada, in partnership with the provincial and territorial departments responsible for fitness, recreation and sport.

For more information, please contact:

Gary Schauerte
Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 920-6192



98-055

Community Development Conference Focuses on Common goals

YELLOWKNIFE (May 26, 1998) -- The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is hosting the First Annual GNWT Community Development Conference in Yellowknife from May 26-28, 1998.

The conference is hosted in partnership with the Departments of Education, Culture and Employment; Health and Social Services; Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; and Justice.

Its main objective is to facilitate a common understanding of what community development means in the territories and how to create an environment that supports it.

"I am delighted to announce the participation of more than 130 delegates" said Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. "We believe in supporting community development at the grassroots level. We are working closely with other organizations and government departments to use our resources better and make it easier for communities to take control of their futures. This will go a long way towards developing GNWT coordinated approaches to community development.

Opportunities for partnerships among various agencies will be highlighted. Participants will also explore successful community development practices within the NWT and Canada.

A variety of speakers will present their models for success:

- Jason Prince from the Municipality of Arviat, will outline the Community Round Table success story;
- Ross Thompson from rural Manitoba has partnered Keewatin with Northern Manitoba Round Tables;
- Brenda Lundrigan from the Dene Cultural Institute, will highlight their Community Development Program;

.../2

Community Development Conference Focuses on Common goals: Page 2

- Keynote speaker Flo Frank, nationally recognized for partnerships and teamwork, will share practical models of working together; and

- Keynote speaker Stephen Arneyaw, native of Ghana and professor at Simon Frazer University, will discuss the environmental and planning ingredients necessary for community development to occur in remote communities.

Workshops are scheduled to focus community development discussion on organizing and understanding community development, community planning and partnerships, community wellness, community justice, and training and evaluation.

"People will learn what partnerships are, where they can be developed and how to be effective in them. Creating a more positive environment in which community development in the NWT can flourish is our main objective" says Thompson.

The conference will take place at the Explorer Hotel in Yellowknife on May 26, 27 and 28, 1998.

Contact: Graeme Dargo
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Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
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98-056

Choices We Make sets the stage for boat safety this year

YELLOWKNIFE (MAY 26) -- The Department of Transportation will launch the 1998 Small Boat Safety Awareness Program with the first public screening of the ground-breaking new video Choices We Make at a ceremony in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly.

Produced in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Choices We Make is a moving 24-minute video that features relatives and survivors telling their stories about recent boating tragedies. Filmed on location, the video highlights the 1996 boating accident in Rae and the 1994 accident in Iqaluit, the single largest boating accident in the NWT. The video also features elders and professionals providing valuable tips on surviving boating accidents.

"We felt that testimonials from people in the communities would be the most effective means of reinforcing the message about boat safety," says the Honourable Jim Antoine, Minister of Transportation. "But even more importantly, we wanted people to understand how senseless these drowning tragedies were. With safety precautions such as life jackets or floater suits, most drownings can be avoided. Ultimately the message of the video, and in fact of our whole program, is very simple - wear a PFD."

"Life lessons from the communities have underscored the important message of choosing safety first in boating" says Mr. David Anderson - Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. "In the production of this video once again we see the value of working together. Northerners have stated compelling reasons to adopt safe boating practices. It is wonderful to see them embrace this program.

Choices We Make has been nominated for the best education/information video at the Dream Speaker's Festival, a celebration of Aboriginal Art, scheduled for May 29 in Edmonton.

The video is just one of the activities of the 1998 Small Boat Safety Awareness Program, which is designed to combat drowning fatalities by encouraging safe boating practices. Other activities include a brochure on hypothermia, training sessions and a PFD Loaner program in a number of communities.

The Northwest Territories continues to have the highest per capita drowning statistics in Canada, particularly for young men between the ages of 16-35.

The ceremony at the Great Hall will also include remarks by the Honourable Jim Antoine, Minister of Transportation, and the Canadian Coast Guard.

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For more information, contact:

Dale Thomson

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98-057

Launch of the Video *Choices We Make* Delayed

YELLOWKNIFE (May 27) -- Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Department of Transportation regrets to inform the public that the screening of the video *Choices We Make* will not be launched today as earlier indicated. The launch of the 1998 Small Boat Safety Awareness Program will proceed as planned at 3:00 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly. Guest speakers will include the Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, Mr. Jim Quinn, Regional Director and Ms. Sue McDonald, both of the Canadian Coast Guard.

The Department of Transportation is pleased to announce that during today's ceremony, they will launch a new series of Public Service Announcements that have been produced for the 1998 Small Boat Safety Awareness Program.

Contact: Dale Thomson
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98-058

Alberta and Northwest Territories Sign Agreement to Increase Truck Safety

EDMONTON (May 29) -- An agreement to increase truck and bus safety was signed in Edmonton today by the Premier of the Northwest Territories, Don Morin and Alberta Minister of Transportation and Utilities, Walter Paszkowski. Premier Morin signed the agreement, relating to the Partners in Compliance (PIC) commercial carrier safety program, on behalf of NWT Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine.

"This is the first in a number of steps aimed at creating a seamless program between the two jurisdictions and in achieving the goal of improving motor carrier safety through the cooperation, trust and good judgment of responsible carriers," said Morin.

The agreement means greater cooperation between Alberta and the Northwest Territories as the PIC program expands to include the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories Motor Transport Association.

"This is the first step towards national and international participation in the Partners in Compliance program. The agreement is seen as a way to expedite the cross-border movement of goods between Alberta and the NWT and to provide recognition and prestige to carriers who operate at high safety levels," said Paszkowski.

The PIC program started as a joint and innovative program between Alberta Transportation and Utilities, and the Alberta Trucking Association in 1995. Under the program, transportation carriers, including truck and bus operators, commit to a high level of compliance and safety performance based on a system of benchmarks, reporting and general monitoring.

.../2

Alberta and Northwest Territories Sign Agreement to Increase Truck Safety: Page 2

Transportation carriers who participate in the PIC program are rewarded with a number of operational and administrative considerations, such as reduced random inspections and less paperwork, in return for their increased commitment and responsibility for highway safety. Government benefits from greater regulatory compliance, improved highway safety, and the ability to refocus enforcement efforts and resources on those carriers requiring greater attention through activities such as random roadside vehicle inspections and facility inspections.

For more information, please contact:

Richard MacDonald
Director, Motor Vehicles
Dept. of Transportation
Government of the NWT
(867) 920-8915

or

Roger Clarke
Executive Director, Vehicle Safety and
Carrier Services
Alberta Transportation and Utilities
(403) 340-5995



98-059

Premier Morin Responds to Conflict of Interest Commissioner's Decision

YELLOWKNIFE (May 29) -- Premier Don Morin says he is pleased that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has dismissed part of the complaint against him.

Conflict of Interest Commissioner Anne Crawford has decided to dismiss a portion of the complaint made by Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen and to refer the rest of the complaint to a public inquiry.

"I look forward to the opportunity to clear up the rest of these allegations," Mr. Morin said. "Once this matter is investigated further, I am confident that what is left of the complaint will also be dismissed. I would like the inquiry to be held as soon as possible."

For more information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Department of the Executive
(867) 669-2302



98-060

Food Rates Increase for Income Support Program

YELLOWKNIFE (May 29) -- The Income Support Program's food rates will increase by eight per cent, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

"During the past few months a survey of the cost of 161 food items has been carried out in communities across the NWT," says Mr. Dent. "Based on the results of the survey, we have determined that the price of food has gone up by about eight per cent since the last rate increase in 1992. We are increasing our rates to match this change."

The survey information is also being used to group communities with similar food costs into the same rate zones. This helps to ensure that clients who live in communities with higher costs are compensated accordingly.

Taken together, these changes will mean that no Income Support client will receive less than they are currently receiving. When combined with benefits being provided under the National Child Benefit supplement and the NWT Child Benefit, all low-income northerners will have more money to spend on necessities.

"This change to the food rate is the most recent adjustment to the Income Support Program," notes Mr. Dent. "Following extensive public consultation, the program has been redesigned to more effectively support northerners who are in the greatest need."

The Income Support Program changes during the past two years have included increasing the amount of income which can be earned by clients before benefits are reduced and the requirement that clients become involved in a productive choice if they receive benefits for more than two months.

For more information, contact:

Dana Heide
Director, Income Support Programs
Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 920-8921



98-061

Kivalliq Leaders Support Further Development of the Keewatin Pilot Project

YELLOWKNIFE (June 3) - Kivalliq Leaders recently met in Yellowknife and continue to support the further development of the Keewatin Pilot Project.

The Kivalliq Leaders met on May 27-28 to discuss the future of the Keewatin Pilot Project. Also at the meeting were Deputy Premier Goo Arlooktoo, NTI President Jose Kusugak, Municipal and Community Affairs Minister Manitoq Thompson, Iqaluit MLA Ed Picco and Yellowknife North MLA Roy Erasmus.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs gave a presentation that explained the Keewatin Pilot Project concept and explored potential options for structuring how the pilot project could evolve. The majority of the participants fully endorsed the concept of the Keewatin Pilot Project but agreed that implementing this model prior to the start up of the Nunavut Government would not be practical.

The Kivalliq Leadership have decided to continue work on the conceptual development of the pilot project, focusing on assessments, training and building capacity in their communities.

"I am proud of the progress that the Keewatin mayors have made in developing a model that makes sense for them. We must continue to support their efforts and remain open minded about new ideas that can help communities to develop, become more effective and less dependent," said Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs Manitoq Thompson.

A Kivalliq Leadership Steering Committee will develop the proposal, which will be reviewed and endorsed by the full Kivalliq Leadership before it is presented to the Nunavut Legislative Assembly.

A copy of the resolution passed by the Kivalliq Leaders on May 27, 1998 is attached.

For more information, contact:

Shawn Maley
Superintendent, Keewatin Region
Dept. of Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 645-5049
Fax: (867) 645-2321

Kivalliq Leadership Resolution #11-98

Whereas: The Kivalliq Leadership has been exploring infrastructure transfer alternatives over the past two years; **and**

Whereas: The Kivalliq Leadership is interested in further development of models for consideration by the Nunavut Legislative Assembly; **and**

Whereas: The Kivalliq Leadership requires dedicated resources to assist with the development of these models and to provide support to the steering committee;

Therefore Be It Resolved That:

The Kivalliq Leadership lobby the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to provide a coordinator position to assist this process.

Be It Further Resolved That:

The Kivalliq Leadership and Municipal and Community Affairs develop models for the consideration of the Kivalliq Leadership prior to presenting an agreed upon model to the Nunavut Government for their approval.



98-062

Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor Workshop

YELLOWKNIFE (June 3) - The Government of the Northwest Territories is hosting a stakeholders' workshop on Thursday June 4, 1998 to determine and discuss issues which should be addressed in follow-up studies of the Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor.

Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, along with Finance Minister John Todd identified \$2 million to prepare the socio-economic, environmental, and pre-engineering investigation of four highway projects in the North. The four projects are:

- Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor
- Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension
- Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Acceleration of Highway 3 Reconstruction - Rae to Yellowknife

To begin the Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor project the Department of Transportation has invited communities, aboriginal groups, environmental organizations, industry organizations and government agencies to Yellowknife to discuss issues related to the project studies. The issues which will be discussed at the workshop relate to the need and feasibility of the project, identification and analysis of financing alternatives, socio-economic impact and benefit cost analysis, preliminary engineering and environmental scoping.

The intention of the workshop is to bring together stakeholders with a cross-section of interests to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with the Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor project. The presentations and discussions at the workshop, in conjunction with subsequent written submissions, will assist the Department of Transportation to design and manage an effective planning and technical studies process to examine in detail the need for and feasibility of the Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor project.

The objectives of the workshop are:

1. To provide background information on the NWT Highway Strategy and the Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor project.
2. To enable participants to ask questions, make comments and participate in discussions respecting the opportunities and challenges associated with the Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor Project.

Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor Workshop: Page 2

3. To identify key factors, issues, challenges and opportunities regarding the Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor project and to ensure that these are addressed within the planning and technical studies.
4. To discuss the establishment and role of a Project Advisory Committee and to invite workshop participant representation by sector.

For more information, contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
(867) 920-3460



Backgrounder

Highlights of the Highway Strategy June 2, 1998

This initiative allocates \$2 million in fiscal year 1998/99 to enhance funding for the planning and analysis of new roads in the Northwest Territories.

Funding will be used to undertake studies including:

- identification and analysis of project financing alternatives
- socio-economic impact and benefit-cost analysis.
- technical studies including route analysis and pre-engineering
- environmental scoping and preliminary collection of baseline information

The results obtained from these studies will be used to develop project concepts, project information bases, and to develop the case for approaching the Province of Alberta and the Federal Government to gain their support.

Four road projects will be studied:

- Slave Geologic Province Transportation corridor
- Mackenzie Valley Highway
- Inuvik - Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Highway 3 Accelerate Reconstruction Rae to Yellowknife

All studies will be undertaken in cooperation with all stakeholders.

The end result of this initiative will be a blueprint for the future development of the four proposed road projects. The blueprint will include:

- identification of financing opportunities
- quantification of the economic impact of the road projects
- detailed assessment of construction alternatives and costs
- identification of environmental constraints

Realization of the projects proposed in the Highway Strategy will:

- improve the transportation system in the Northwest Territories,
- provide northern employment and training opportunities,
- reduce transportation costs, and provide economic development opportunities.



98-063

Regulatory Reform Bill Will Streamline Government Procedures and Eliminate Business Barriers

YELLOWKNIFE (June 4) -- An omnibus bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly today would make significant changes in the way the Northwest Territories carries out a number of its regulatory programs and services.

Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development Stephen Kakfwi announced that the *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* would make amendments to 16 regulatory statutes and repeal three others. "These reforms are a good start toward building a regulatory framework that will continue to protect Northerners effectively, while streamlining government procedures and eliminating unnecessary red tape," Mr. Kakfwi said.

Specific measures included in the bill would simplify certain kinds of property acquisitions and construction approvals, as well as Public Utilities Board proceedings. Regulatory frameworks for motion pictures and door-to-door salespersons would be updated and brought into line with those in the rest of Canada. Other proposed reforms would affect standards for regulating electrical installations, boilers and pressure vessels, procedures for civil emergencies, liquor control requirements, income support programs and legislation for the legal profession and Chartered Accountants.

"The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* also sets out a new voluntary compliance mechanism that would substantially strengthen environmental protection practices by allowing a company or property-owner to undertake their own environmental audit or environmental site-assessment," said Mr. Kakfwi.

The bill has received Second Reading and has now been referred to a Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly for review.

The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* is one of several legislative and policy initiatives being undertaken by the Government of the Northwest Territories to modernize the regulatory environment. A small, specialized Secretariat was established in March 1997, reporting jointly to Mr. Kakfwi and to the Minister of Finance John Todd. It has a mandate to reform outdated or cumbersome regulatory requirements that are seen by stakeholders as inefficient or as creating impediments to the growth of Northern industry and business.

For more information, contact: Alan G. Downe
Executive Director
Regulatory Reform Secretariat
Tel: (867) 873-7365

Backgrounder

Regulatory Reform Measures Act

Overview

The improvement of economic conditions in the Northwest Territories has been established as one of the core priorities for the remaining term of the current Government. A key component of that goal involves streamlining government regulatory processes and eliminating "red tape".

In March 1997, the GNWT established a small, specialized Secretariat, with a mandate to reform outdated or cumbersome regulatory processes which are creating impediments to the growth of Northern industry and business. The Secretariat reports jointly to the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development and to the Honourable John Todd, Minister of Finance.

On June 4, 1998 Mr. Kakfwi introduced a bill to enact the *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* in the Legislative Assembly. This omnibus bill seeks to amend 16 regulatory *Acts* and to repeal three others. Amendments included in the bill are all geared toward simplifying government procedures, streamlining approval processes, eliminating paperwork, establishing new roles for community governments and correcting areas where existing gaps in legislation are creating uncertainty or delays for businesses and other stakeholders across the North.

The bill has received Second Reading and has now been referred to a Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly for review. Plans are in place for a second *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* to be developed, tentatively scheduled for introduction in the legislature in Fall 1998.

Highlights

The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act*, introduced in the legislature on June 4th, would make a number of amendments to NWT regulatory statutes. A few of these could be described as "housekeeping amendments", intended to correct wording or areas where interpretation and enforcement has proved difficult. Several others eliminate barriers that apply only to a particular sector of the Northern economy. And some represent very significant changes to the way the GNWT carries out its regulatory responsibilities.

Key areas of change would include:

Faster approvals, less duplication, reduced paperwork. A number of the proposed amendments would change the way regulatory departments deal with requests from the construction industry and others. Amended procedures for issuing approvals on building plans, boiler plant ratings and plans for electrical installations and elevators would reduce delay and lower costs. In a number of cases, faster and fairer appeal processes have been established for persons affected by regulatory decisions.

New Roles for Community Governments and Local/Regional Organizations. Some of the amendments included in the *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* would open the door for communities to take on greater regulatory roles, in the even that the community was interested in undertaking them and had the capacity to do so. This could include some of the licensing and review activities carried out by the Office of the Fire Marshal, as well as the administration of income support and “productive choices” programs.

“Voluntary Compliance” Mechanisms for Environmental Protection. The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* would establish a new procedure to substantially strengthen environmental protection practices. Amendments to the *Territorial Environmental Protection Act* would provide a mechanism through which a company, property-owner or other person could take on the responsibility to arrange for an environmental audit and/or environmental site-assessment of their own property or operations. These would be detailed reports examining whether the procedures used by the person were in compliance with environmental regulations and standards. If the audit or site-assessment revealed environmental non-compliance, the company or individual would be able to use the information to work with the GNWT’s Chief Environmental Protection Officer to develop a plan for dealing with it. So long as the plan for addressing the non-compliance — and any order issued by the Environmental Protection office — were followed, the person would be guaranteed immunity from prosecution for the non-compliance identified in the environmental audit or environmental site-assessment. A number of important safeguards would also be established in the *Environmental Protection Act* to ensure that this “voluntary compliance” mechanism could not be abused. With these controls in place, business and industry would be encouraged to more quickly identify and act on environmental problems themselves. All current enforcement authorities in the *Environmental Protection Act* would remain in place to deal with situations in which persons fail to comply voluntarily.

Streamlined Public Utilities Board Processes. The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* includes amendments that would increase efficiency and reduce costs in the way public utilities proceedings are carried out. The *Public Utilities Act* would be amended to allow the PUB clear legislative authority to use “negotiated settlement” procedures in resolving matters brought before it. As well, modifications to procedures for filing decisions/orders and for reviewing franchise agreements would be made to eliminate “rubber stamp” requirements that exist in the present *Act*.

General Identification Cards. During consultations, the Regulatory Reform Secretariat heard that some Northern youth and others have trouble doing business or writing cheques because it is difficult to obtain personal identification. Frequently, businesses that sell liquor or cigarettes have commented that establishing “proof of age” can be one of their biggest problems. The *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* contains amendments that would allow for a “general identification card” to be issued through existing motor vehicles licensing offices.

Liquor Reforms. Existing requirements for the Liquor Licensing Board to hold public hearings on licence cancellations would be eliminated under circumstances where the licensee has requested that his/her own licence should be canceled. Provisions allowing persons under 19 years of age to be served beer or wine outside the home would be limited only to special family social functions like weddings, reunions, birthdays or anniversaries. At the same time, changes to the *Liquor Act* would allow some licensed establishments to permit persons under 19 years of age to enter the premises, but not be served liquor. New authorities would be included to make it easier for licensees and liquor inspectors to ensure that minors are not in licensed establishments where they shouldn't be. Other amendments in the *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* would make it easier and less costly to hold community plebiscites on moving from one restriction system to another and establish a notice-period, to allow for broader consultation with businesses and other community members, before *Special Prohibition Orders* were issued by the Minister.

Detailed Description of Proposed Amendments:

If enacted, the *Regulatory Reform Measures Act* would make the following changes in NWT laws:

Commissioner's Land Act

- eliminates delays in property transactions by removing the requirement for the Commissioner of the NWT to approve the acquisition of Commissioner's land by GNWT employees.

Consumer Protection Act

- creates a new, more straightforward set of regulatory requirements for door-to-door salespersons;
- harmonizes the NWT's regulatory framework for door-to-door salespersons with other Canadian jurisdictions, eliminating the requirement for separate forms and procedures;
- establishes clearer requirements protecting NWT residents from unfair sales practices.

Electrical Protection Act

- allows quicker construction planning by waiving the requirement for review of electrical plans, if the plans have been prepared by a professional engineer;
- allows faster response time by inspectors by eliminating requirements for unnecessary internal reports;
- modernizes legislation respecting elevator inspections by including all regulatory requirements in one Act and allowing for the repeal of an unnecessary statute (*Elevating Devices Act*).

Environmental Protection Act

- strengthens environmental practices by allowing a company or property-owner to undertake their own environmental audit or environmental site-assessment.

Financial Administration Act

- gives Ministers more authority to set fees and establish fee schedules for government services delivered by the departments for which they are responsible, rather than requiring Financial Management Board (Cabinet) approval each time fees are established or modified. This will reduce delays in modifying fee schedules according to market influences and other factors.

Fire Prevention Act

- enables the Minister to enter into written agreements with municipalities to take on certain activities — such as issuing fireworks licences or reviewing building plans — that are ordinarily carried out by the Office of the Fire Marshal;
- removes outdated wording in certain sections and establishes necessary regulation-making authorities to enforce standards for petroleum tanks.

Gas Protection Act

- removes outdated wording in one of the sections.

Institute of Chartered Accountants Act

- strengthens the self-regulating nature of the professional association to which Chartered Accountants belong, by removing requirements for the Commissioner of the NWT to approve the Institute's by-laws;
- allows the Institute to enter into associations or agreements with national organizations, for instance to facilitate training of Northerners wishing to become Chartered Accountants;
- removes the requirement that the head office for the Institute of Chartered Accountants must be located in Yellowknife.

Legal Profession Act

- strengthens the self-regulating nature of the professional association to which lawyers belong, by removing Commissioner's ability to order an audit on the financial accounts of Law Society members;
- enables the Law Society to make rules respecting the ledgers, accounts and other financial records that must be maintained by lawyers.

Liquor Act

- exempts the Liquor Licensing Board from the requirement to hold a public hearing when cancelling a liquor licence, if the cancellation is requested the licence-holder him/herself;
- clarifies that a community which has a system of liquor restrictions may vote on removing some of those restrictions or on substituting another system of restrictions;
- establishes a 15-day minimum notice period for a request for a *special prohibition order*;
- authorizes a licence holder or liquor inspector to request proof of the age of a patron in a licensed establishment;
- eliminates the exemption that allows a person under 19 years of age to be supplied beer or wine in a public dining room, if accompanied by a parent;
- establishes that a person under 19 years of age can be supplied beer or wine if attending a closed family social function (such as a family reunion, wedding reception, etc.), accompanied by a parent;
- enables regulations to be made that would allow persons under 19 years of age to enter certain licensed premises (such as a billiard hall, pub, patio or similar environment), but not be served liquor.

Motion Pictures Act

- eliminates unnecessary licensing requirements for motion picture theatres;
- repeals outdated standards for the structural design of theatres (now included in the National Building Code) and for equipment that is now obsolete;
- changes the title to the *Film Classification Act* and provides a new, more efficient system for establishing 'audience classification ratings' for movies shown in theatres.

Motor Vehicles Act

- provides a framework for issuing "general identification cards" that can be used for personal identification of *proof of age* by Northerners;

Public Utilities Act

- establishes clear legislative authority for the Public Utilities Board to use 'negotiated settlements' when dealing with rate and other applications;
- eliminates requirements for the board to review franchise agreements between municipalities and utilities, unless requested by one of the parties;
- eliminates requirements to file decisions and orders with the Supreme Court, while retaining the option to do so if required.

Social Assistance Act

- speeds up several processes by authorizing the Minister to exercise certain powers that were previously exercised by the Commissioner of the NWT;
- authorizes the Minister to enter into a written agreement allowing local or regional organizations to administer income support services.

Repeal of Several Acts

- *Locksmiths, Security Guards & Other Security Occupations Act*;
- *An Act to Amend the Locksmiths, Security Guards & Other Security Occupations Act*;
- *Elevating Devices Safety Act*.



98-064

The Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension Workshop

Norman Wells (June 8) - The Government of the Northwest Territories is hosting a stakeholders' workshop on Tuesday June 9, 1998 to determine and discuss issues which should be addressed in follow-up studies of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension.

Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, along with Finance Minister John Todd identified \$2 million to prepare the socio-economic, environmental, and pre-engineering investigation of four highway projects in the North. The four projects are:

- Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor
- Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension
- Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Acceleration of Highway 3 Reconstruction - Rae to Yellowknife

To begin the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension project the Department of Transportation has invited communities, aboriginal groups, environmental organizations, industry organizations and government agencies to Norman Wells to discuss issues related to the project studies. The issues which will be discussed at the workshop relate to the need and feasibility of the project, identification and analysis of financing alternatives, socio-economic impact and benefit cost analysis, preliminary engineering and environmental scoping.

The intention of the workshop is to bring together stakeholders with a cross-section of interests to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension project. The presentations and discussions at the workshop, in conjunction with subsequent written submissions, will assist the Department of Transportation to design and manage an effective planning and technical studies process to examine in detail the need for and feasibility of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension.

The objectives of the workshop are:

1. To provide background information on the NWT Highway Strategy and the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension project.
2. To enable participants to ask questions, make comments and participate in discussions respecting the opportunities and challenges associated with the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension project.

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The Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension Workshop: Page 2

3. To identify key factors, issues, challenges and opportunities regarding the Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension project and to ensure that these are addressed within the planning and technical studies.
4. To discuss the establishment and role of a Project Advisory Committee and to invite workshop participant representation by sector.

For more information, contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
(867) 920-3460



Backgrounder

Highlights of the Highway Strategy June 2, 1998

This initiative allocates \$2 million in fiscal year 1998/99 to enhance funding for the planning and analysis of new roads in the Northwest Territories.

Funding will be used to undertake studies including:

- identification and analysis of project financing alternatives
- socio-economic impact and benefit-cost analysis.
- technical studies including route analysis and pre-engineering
- environmental scoping and preliminary collection of baseline information

The results obtained from these studies will be used to develop project concepts, project information bases, and to develop the case for approaching the Province of Alberta and the Federal Government to gain their support.

Four road projects will be studied:

- Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension
- Mackenzie Valley Highway
- Inuvik - Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Highway 3 Accelerate Reconstruction Rae to Yellowknife

All studies will be undertaken in cooperation with all stakeholders.

The end result of this initiative will be a blueprint for the future development of the four proposed road projects. The blueprint will include:

- identification of financing opportunities
- quantification of the economic impact of the road projects
- detailed assessment of construction alternatives and costs
- identification of environmental constraints

Realization of the projects proposed in the Highway Strategy will:

- improve the transportation system in the Northwest Territories,
- provide northern employment and training opportunities,
- reduce transportation costs, and provide economic development opportunities.



98-065

Dogrib Caribou Skin Lodge Exhibit to Open June 13

YELLOWKNIFE (June 8) - The public is invited to attend the official opening of the Dogrib Caribou Skin Lodge exhibit at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, beginning at 1 p.m. on June 13.

The ceremony, which will be held outside the Heritage Centre, will include the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School Drummers, remarks from dignitaries, a feeding the fire ceremony, a tea dance and a feast. The exhibit will be located in the Feature Gallery of the Heritage Centre and may be viewed at any time throughout the afternoon.

"I am very pleased to join the Dogrib people in celebrating the opening of the Caribou Skin Lodge exhibit," says Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. "This exhibit is the result of close cooperation between the staff of the Heritage Centre and the Dogrib people. Elder Elizabeth Mackenzie is the co-curator of the exhibit and other Dogrib Elders, translators and researchers have played an essential role in its development."

The exhibit showcases a caribou skin lodge that was returned to the Northwest Territories last year, after being out of the North for more than 100 years. The tipi had been part of the University of Iowa's Natural History Museum collection since 1894, when Frank Russell, a 24 year old graduate student at the university, purchased it from an important Dogrib trading chief called K'aawidaa, or Bear Lake Chief.

In April of 1997, a delegation from Rae and Yellowknife, including three direct descendants of Bear Lake Chief, travelled to Iowa City to accept the lodge from the Natural History Museum. The lodge is made from the tanned hides of 30 caribou and has never been displayed.

The Dogrib Caribou Skin Lodge is on display at the Heritage Centre until October 31, 1998.

For more information, contact: Charles Arnold
Director, Culture and Heritage
Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 873-7551



98-066

Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road Workshop

INUVIK (June 9) - The Government of the Northwest Territories is hosting a stakeholders' workshop on Wednesday - June 10, 1998 to determine and discuss issues which should be addressed in follow-up studies of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project.

Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, along with Finance Minister John Todd identified \$2 million to prepare the socio-economic, environmental, and pre-engineering investigation of four highway projects in the North. The four projects are:

- Slave Geological Province Transportation Corridor
- Mackenzie Valley Highway Extension
- Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Acceleration of Highway 3 Reconstruction - Rae to Yellowknife

To begin the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project the Department of Transportation has invited communities, aboriginal groups, environmental organizations, industry organizations and government agencies to Inuvik to discuss issues related to the project studies. The issues which will be discussed at the workshop relate to the need and feasibility of the project, identification and analysis of financing alternatives, socio-economic impact and benefit cost analysis, preliminary engineering and environmental scoping.

The intention of the workshop is to bring together stakeholders with a cross-section of interests to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project. The presentations and discussions at the workshop, in conjunction with subsequent written submissions, will assist the Department of Transportation to design and manage an effective planning and technical studies process to examine in detail the need for and feasibility of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project.

The objectives of the workshop are:

1. To provide background information on the NWT Highway Strategy and the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project.
2. To enable participants to ask questions, make comments and participate in discussions respecting the opportunities and challenges associated with the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project.

Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road Workshop: Page 2

3. To identify key factors, issues, challenges and opportunities regarding the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road project and to ensure that these are addressed within the planning and technical studies.
4. To discuss the establishment and role of a Project Advisory Committee and to invite workshop participant representation by sector.

For more information, contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
(867) 920-3460



Backgrounder

Highlights of the Highway Strategy June 2, 1998

This initiative allocates \$2 million in fiscal year 1998/99 to enhance funding for the planning and analysis of new roads in the Northwest Territories.

Funding will be used to undertake studies including:

- identification and analysis of project financing alternatives
- socio-economic impact and benefit-cost analysis.
- technical studies including route analysis and pre-engineering
- environmental scoping and preliminary collection of baseline information

The results obtained from these studies will be used to develop project concepts, project information bases, and to develop the case for approaching the Province of Alberta and the Federal Government to gain their support.

Four road projects will be studied:

- Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Mackenzie Valley Highway
- Inuvik - Tuktoyaktuk Road
- Highway 3 Accelerate Reconstruction Rae to Yellowknife

All studies will be undertaken in cooperation with all stakeholders.

The end result of this initiative will be a blueprint for the future development of the four proposed road projects. The blueprint will include:

- identification of financing opportunities
- quantification of the economic impact of the road projects
- detailed assessment of construction alternatives and costs
- identification of environmental constraints

Realization of the projects proposed in the Highway Strategy will:

- improve the transportation system in the Northwest Territories,
- provide northern employment and training opportunities,
- reduce transportation costs, and provide economic development opportunities.



98-067

New Young Offenders Facility in Inuvik, changes to Yellowknife, Hay River programs announced

YELLOWKNIFE (June 12) - Minister of Justice Goo Arlooktoo today announced plans for the construction of a 12-bed facility for female Young Offenders to be built in Inuvik. The facility is to include secure, remand and open custody placements. It would allow the separation of male and female young offenders and for gender-specific programming to be offered.

Mr. Arlooktoo also announced plans for the expansion of the young offenders program in Yellowknife. The current facility on School Draw Avenue will be replaced by a new building that would include open, remand and secure custody for 24 male young offenders.

The Dene K'onía facility in Hay River will continue to operate as an open custody facility. The NWT Fire Marshall has ordered that young people in secure and remand custody be removed from Dene K'onía because the building does not meet the National Building Code standards for this type of use.

"This decision allows a majority of young offenders to remain closer to their communities and reduces unnecessary transportation costs," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "It also meets the need for more remand custody. In Yellowknife, for example, young people have been kept in RCMP cells because there was no remand custody available. We have heard from parents and others in the community that this is not an appropriate way to treat young people who have only been charged with a crime, not convicted."

"These changes mean we will be able to accommodate the projected increase in young offender placements until the year 2011," Mr. Arlooktoo said.

For more information, contact: John Dillon
Director, Corrections
Dept. of Justice
(867) 920-8922



98-068

NWT Trade Delegation to Probe Business Opportunities With China

YELLOWKNIFE (June 12) - A trade delegation of government and business representatives from the Northwest Territories (NWT) will be visiting the city of Harbin, China, June 15 - 22. Organized by the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the trip is aimed at promoting business and investment opportunities between China and the Northwest Territories.

The trip is a result of Premier Morin's contact with Mr. Han Shoude, President of the China Heilongjiang International Project and Technical Cooperation Group (CHPT). On a visit to the NWT last August, Mr. Han formally invited an NWT delegation to Harbin to further mutual trade and investment interests.

CHPT officials will be invited to Yellowknife in September to participate in Prospects North '98, a business and investment conference organized by the NWT Chamber of Commerce.

The trip coincides with a major trade fair in Harbin which will provide an opportunity for NWT business representatives to assess products and services, as well as develop contacts. Construction, remote community electricity supply, engineering services and opportunities related to fur will be explored.

The delegation will be led by the Honourable Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, and will include representatives from the Trade and Investment Division of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the NWT Construction Association, Camilus Engineering and the NWT Power Corporation.

For more information, contact: Otto Olah

Acting Assistant Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 873-7551
Fax: (867) 873-0563



98-069

Environment Ministers to Meet in Inuvik

YELLOWKNIFE (June 16) -- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) will be meeting in Inuvik September 10 - 11. The meeting will be chaired by the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi.

Environment ministers from all 13 federal/provincial/territorial jurisdictions are expected to attend, with approximately 50 participants anticipated in total.

The main topic of discussion will be progress on the implementation of the Canadawide Accord on Environmental Harmonization. The Accord brings a cooperative approach to environmental management issues across Canada by creating a framework for a working partnership between federal, provincial and territorial governments.

As the 1998-99 chair of the council, Mr. Kakfwi looks forward to productive discussions. "The Accord allows us to build on each other's strengths, approaching environmental protection on a more cooperative basis," he said. "This process will ensure governments are working in partnership to achieve the highest level of environmental quality for all Canadians."

Mr. Kakfwi also looks forward to introducing his fellow ministers to the Mackenzie Delta. "The Delta is a unique part of Canada's environment and I'm pleased to be able to show colleagues this area of the Northwest Territories."

CCME is the major inter-governmental forum in Canada for discussion and joint action on environmental issues of national and international concern.

For more information, contact: Joseph Handley
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 920-8691
Fax: (867) 873-0563



98-070

Low Income Families to Receive New Child Benefits

YELLOWKNIFE (June 19) - Starting in July, low-income families in the Northwest Territories will receive increased financial benefits for their children, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment Charles Dent announced yesterday. This follows on the announcement of a Northwest Territories child benefit program by Minister of Finance John Todd in his budget address in January.

"Children are our future," says Mr. Dent. "To protect our future we must ensure our children receive a good start in life. These initiatives will help families meet the costs of raising children."

Low-income parents will receive increased support in two ways.

The first is through the new National Child Benefit Program, unveiled by the Government of Canada earlier this week. This new federal benefit program features an enhanced Child Tax Benefit and a National Child Benefit Supplement blended to form a financial support program for parents of low-income families.

An additional benefit known as the NWT Child Benefit will take the form of a tax-free payment provided to low-income families in the Northwest Territories. It includes a basic benefit plus a Territorial Workers' Supplement - an additional tax-free benefit provided to qualifying families with earned income and children under age 18 living at home. Both these Northwest Territories benefits will be administered by Revenue Canada through the current Child Tax Benefit Program.

.../2

Low Income Families to Receive New Child Benefits: Page 2

Minister of Finance John Todd says, "I am pleased that the Government of the Northwest Territories was able to supplement the federal program with its own NWT Child Benefit, to be able to put more money into the hands of the parents and children who are most in need."

Increased benefits will be based on several factors: the number of children under age 18 living with a family; the family's net income; and the family's earned income. To receive the NWT Child Tax Benefit, both spouses must file income tax returns, even if they have no income to report. Families that already receive the federal Child Tax Benefit will automatically be considered for the NWT Child Benefit.

People who would like more information on the NWT Child Benefit can phone 1-800-661-0763 (1-800-661-0764 for French language). People who would like more information on the National Child Benefit can phone 1-800-387-1193.

For more information, contact:

Dana Heide
Director, Income Support Programs
Department of Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 920-8921

or

Margaret Melhorn
Deputy Minister
Department of Finance
(867) 873-7117



98-071

International Fire Researchers Back in Fort Providence for Phase Two of Experiments

YELLOWKNIFE (June 23) - Fifty-eight forest fire scientists from around the world will gather in Fort Providence June 22 - July 13 to conduct a series of highly technical and complex experiments to assist forest managers in gaining a better understanding of the behaviour and effects of crown fires.

Titled the International Crown Fire Modelling Experiment, the project will simulate several high intensity crown fires. These types of fire characteristically affect conifer trees and create and account for a major proportion of forest fire destruction in Canada and the world. Data collected by scientists will create a model to predict how crown fires begin and spread, and their effect on global climate change and the environment.

A better understanding of crown fire behaviour will be most useful to fire management agencies who determine the optimum use of fire detection and fire suppression resources.

Scientists from Russia, Australia, France and the United States, including the NASA space agency, participated in this cooperative international experiment. Five Canadian organizations, including the Forest Management Division of the GNWT Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED), are also taking part.

For the residents of Fort Providence, involved in the planning and logistics of the project, this project is also a source of local employment and business opportunities.

Crown forest fires account for a major proportion of forest fire destruction in Canada and the world.

An actual test burn, while a spectacular sight, will last for only about four minutes. Data will be collected on the rate of fire spread, flame characteristics, fuel consumption, soil and heat flux and incident radiation. Helicopters may also be used to collect smoke samples for composition analysis.

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International Fire Researchers Back in Fort Providence for Phase Two of Experiments - Page 2

Similar experiments were conducted in Russia in 1993. Canada is completing its second year of testing, while Alaska has been selected as the next year's research site.

A web site at www.nofc.forestry.ca/fire/fmn/nwt, which will be updated daily while events are in progress. You can also link to it from the RWED website, through Special Events.

For further information, contact:

Paul Johnson

Manager of Forests, South Slave Region
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 872-6431
Fax: (867) 872-4250

or

Rick Lanoville

Manager, Forest Science Services
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 699-4271
Fax: (867) 699-3208
(Fort Providence burn site)



98-072

Alberta Delegation on Transportation to Visit Yellowknife and Hay River

YELLOWKNIFE (June 23) -- A delegation of officials with Alberta Transportation and Utilities will be traveling to Yellowknife and Hay River this week to meet with Northwest Territories Transportation Minister Jim Antoine.

Led by their Minister of Transportation, Walter Paszkowski, the Alberta delegation will tour Royal Oak's Giant mine and BHP's Ekati diamond mine on Thursday before traveling to Hay River on Friday to tour NTCL's facilities and the rail head.

"The visit will provide an opportunity for Alberta officials to view current economic developments in the North, says Mr. Antoine, "and to see first-hand the benefits that Alberta can derive from on-going partnerships with the NWT." To that end, a number of informal meetings will also be arranged with business and political leaders in both Yellowknife and Hay River.

Alberta is one of the NWT's largest trading partners thanks in part to close transportation links between the two regions. Almost all major air, highway and rail access to and from the western Northwest Territories is through Alberta centers. "These links are critical for economic development, tourism and general commerce", Mr. Antoine says.

This is not the first meeting for the two Ministers who have worked cooperatively over the past two years on the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Council of Minister's of Transportation. They also met last December in Alberta to discuss ideas of mutual importance.

An informal press conference has been tentatively scheduled for June 25, 1998 ant 1:45pm at the Yellowknife Airport.

For further information, contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
(867) 920-3460



98-073

Joint Federal-Territorial Support for Emergency Preparedness Program

YELLOWKNIFE (June 24) - Federal and territorial commitments totalling \$319,357 to support the ongoing programs of the NWT Emergency Measures Organization and its emergency preparedness training program were announced today by the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Secretary of State (Children and Youth) and the Honourable Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs with responsibility for civil emergency measures in the NWT.

The federal commitment of \$154,000 announced by Ms. Blondin-Andrew on behalf of the Honourable Art Eggleton, Minister of National Defence and Minister Responsible for Emergency Preparedness is made available under the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP). This program enables the federal government to contribute to, or to undertake jointly with the provinces and territories, emergency preparedness projects that ensure a standard level of emergency response and preparedness across the country.

"This emergency preparedness funding demonstrates the federal and territorial governments' commitment to working together to ensure communities are prepared to cope with serious emergencies that threaten lives, property and the environment," said Ms. Blondin-Andrew.

"We welcome this ongoing partnership with the federal government. It is through partnerships such as this that we continue to assist northern residents in maintaining a safe and healthy lifestyle," said Ms. Thompson.

The funds committed by both governments enhances emergency preparedness and response capabilities at the regional and community level.

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**Joint Federal-Territorial Support for Emergency Preparedness Program:
Page 2**

The federal JEPP funding is an example of how the federal government is prioritising its spending so that it can better serve Canadians. Since JEPP began in 1980, the federal government's contributions toward emergency preparedness projects in the NWT, including the commitments announced today, will total approximately \$2.9 million by the end of March 1999.

For more information, contact: Don Campbell
Regional Director
Alberta and Northwest Territories
Emergency Preparedness Canada
(403) 495-3005

or

Eric Bussey
Director, Emergency Services Division
Government of the Northwest Territories
(867) 873-7944



98-074

NWT Housing Corporation in Canada-Russia Housing Demonstration Project

YELLOWKNIFE (June 26) - The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is participating in a project to build homes in the Russian Far East.

Other key participants in the project are the Canadian International Development Agency, the Government of Alberta, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and a variety of private sector agencies.

"The NWT Housing Corporation has proven it has the expertise to deliver and build houses in remote northern communities," said Minister Goo Arlooktoo. "This makes the Corporation an excellent partner in this initiative which will help build export opportunities for NWT housing expertise and products."

The Corporation which has developed a significant network of contacts in Russia, has an extensive understanding of Russian conditions. The Corporation's expertise in cold weather construction and its development of housing and programs in Canada's North will be invaluable in addressing the unique social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions it will face.

Five demonstration homes will be built. As a condition of its involvement, the NWT Housing Corporation requires that housing components manufactured in the NWT are a part of each home.

"An important element in this project is its partnership with NWT businesses," said Minister Arlooktoo. "Our small manufacturing sector has developed a range of products which are specially designed to work in the North."

Yellowknife-based Canada North Projects Ltd. will provide management for the project which will take 36 months to complete. The demonstration homes completed in the first year will serve as show homes for the remainder of the project.

"Once the Russians become more familiar with our style of construction and products we believe they will want more housing from us," said Minister Arlooktoo.

For further information, contact:

Paul Johnson
Public Affairs Coordinator
NWT Housing Corporation
(867) 873-7854



98-075

Detailed Coroner's Report Inconclusive

YELLOWKNIFE (June 26) The NWT Chief Coroners office says it cannot determine how an underground blast occurred at Con Mine in December of 1994.

In his Judgment Of Inquiry, Coroner Larry Campbell states that foul play is not suspected in the explosion that took the life of miner Brian Bodnariuk. The exact cause of the blast, however, cannot be determined due to a lack of definitive evidence.

The detailed report also states that investigators were unable to determine if the explosion was deliberate or accidental.

The report was made available this morning following a comprehensive multi-disciplinary investigation by the RCMP, post blast explosives technicians from Yellowknife and Edmonton, Mine Safety Officials and the NWT Chief Coroner's Office.

Copies of the JOI are available by contacting the Office of the Chief Coroner.

For more information please contact: **Percy Kinney**
Chief Coroner
Tel: (867) 873-7460
Fax: (867) 873-0426



98-076

NWT Hosts Western Premiers' Conference July 2-4

Yellowknife (June 29) - The Government of the Northwest Territories is proud to host the 25th annual Western Premiers' Conference. The conference will take place July 2-4 in Yellowknife at the Legislative Assembly.

The leaders of the western provinces, the NWT and the Yukon meet each year to discuss economic and social issues.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce our western neighbours to the NWT," Premier Don Morin said. "It is a very special occasion. The Western Premiers' Conference has never been held in the NWT before. This is also the first time the conference has been held in a legislature building."

The leaders and delegates will arrive on Thursday, July 2 and attend a private reception hosted by Mr. Morin. They will spend all day July 3 in meetings before attending a cultural event in the evening. Everyone is welcome to join the leaders at the show, which begins at 8:30 pm at Fred Henne Park (in case of rain, at the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre). Performers include:

- Dream Catchers
- The Gumboots
- Aklavik Drummers and Dancers
- Custer's Last Band
- Lee Mandeville
- Tom Hudson Band
- Mary Ittunga and Bessie Uquqtuq
- Chief Jimmy Bruneau School Drummers

Saturday, July 4, is the final meeting day. The leaders will hold a final news conference at 2 pm in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly.

For more information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Dept. of Executive
(867) 669-2302
FAX (867) 873-0169
judy_langford@gov.nt.ca



98-077

Information For Victims of Forced Sterilization

YELLOWKNIFE (June 30) Information and help is being offered to Northerners who may have been unknowingly sterilized while patients in Alberta hospitals.

The Department of Health and Social Services made the announcement today following media reports that individuals who traveled south for medical treatment during the 1960s and 1970s were sterilized without their consent.

Individuals who believe they may have been sterilized may contact the Health and Social Services Department in Yellowknife at 1-867-873-7925.

Department staff will help potential victims gather information about the treatment they received and how their consent to that treatment was given. Further information will be made available to those who are interested.

For more information, contact: Shaun Dean
Communications Specialist
Health and Social Services
(867) 920-3253



98-078

Deputy Minister's Appointed

YELLOWKNIFE (June 30) - Premier Don Morin appointed two long-term northerners to positions as Deputy Ministers.

Effective Friday, Penny Ballantyne will inherit the position of Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services. Bob McLeod will assume the Deputy Minister portfolio for Municipal and Community Affairs in August.

Mr. McLeod, currently an Assistant Deputy Minister with Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, is a former senior manager with the federal government. He has served as Co-Chair of the Northern River Basin Study and as a GNWT representative on Canadian delegations for the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy. Mr. McLeod also played a role in Canada's negotiations with the European Union to develop an agreement on international humane trapping standards.

Ms. Ballantyne is the present Deputy Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. She is a past president of the NWT Housing Corporation (1995/96) and former Assistant Deputy Minister for Health and Social services (1993/95).

For further information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Dept. of the Executive
(867) 669 - 2302



98-079

New Civics Unit to be Launched in the Fall

YELLOWKNIFE (July 2) - Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, today released an update to the Civics component taught in NWT Junior/Secondary schools.

Civics is a study of government and the political process. It enables students to learn about their rights and duties as citizens while developing the attitudes and skills that will enable their effective participation in a democratic society.

"It is important to connect our students' education with the political realities they see around them," says Mr. Dent. "As the political environment of our region changes, our programs must keep pace. This resource reflects current changes in the western territory and Nunavut. It will help prepare students to participate in the future territory in which they live."

Titled, "Civics - A Resource Book for Teachers Grade 7-9", the new document was developed with the assistance and input of many educators and will become a part of social studies programs in NWT schools this fall.

"I hope it will be a welcome addition to the resources that teachers are currently using to teach social studies courses," says Mr. Dent. The Department appreciates any suggestions from educators for additional resources that could be included in future updates to resource lists.

For further information, contact:

Fiona O'Donoghue
Director Early Childhood & Social services
Education Culture and Employment
(867) 920-8991

Canada



98-080

Ministers Integrate Payments to Low-Income Seniors

YELLOWKNIFE (July 13) - The Secretary of State (Children and Youth), M.P. Western Arctic, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, on behalf of Federal Human Resources Development Minister Pierre S. Pettigrew, Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment Minister Charles Dent and Public Works and Government Services Canada Minister Alfonso Gagliano, today announced a new initiative that will integrate benefit payments to Northwest Territories' low-income seniors, saving administrative costs and improving service.

The federal/territorial initiative will combine benefits paid under them Northwest Territories Senior Citizens supplementary Benefit (SCSB) and the Government of Canada Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, or the Spouse's Allowance, into a single monthly payment. The combined payment, to be issued through Public Works and Government Services Canada, comes into effect July, 1998.

Human Resources Development Canada will continue to be responsible for administering the Old Age Security program. The Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment will continue to administer all other aspects of the SCSB program.

Approximately 1,560 seniors are affected by this change. They will continue to receive the full amount to which they are entitled under each benefit. The first combined payment, to include the SCSB, will be issued at the end of July, 1998. All subsequent cheques will usually arrive in the last three banking days of the month.

"From the youngest of our citizens to the oldest, we are working together to meet the needs of the Northwest Territories," said Ms. Blondin-Andrew.

"This partnership approach to delivering benefits responds to concerns raised by senior citizens, and in fact many Canadians, about unnecessary duplication between the two levels of government," Mr. Pettigrew said. "It's a positive example of how we can work together to better serve the people of the Northwest Territories."

"I am pleased we have been able to act on this issue," said Mr. Dent. "This streamlined service provides greater convenience to seniors, who will receive their benefits in one combined payment. The territorial government has worked with the NWT Seniors' Society to ensure seniors are aware of this change."

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Canada



Ministers Integrate Payments to Low-Income Seniors - Page 2

Benefits will be sent to clients by their preferred method of payment, either by direct deposit to the bank account of their choice or by cheque mailed to their home address.

"As Receiver General for Canada, I am proud that my department is contributing to this initiative by providing a better, more efficient service to Canadians living in the Northwest Territories," said Mr. Gagliano. "Partnerships like this save taxpayer dollars, while providing higher quality service to payment recipients," he added.

The combined federal/territorial payment is the second of its kind in Canada after Saskatchewan. Mr. Pettigrew added he hopes other provinces and the Yukon Territory will follow the examples that Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories have set.

If people have questions related to the Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement or Spouses' Allowance benefit, they may call Human Resources Development Canada free of charge at 1 800-277-9914. Questions about the Senior Citizens Supplementary Benefit should be directed to the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment free of charge at 1 800-661-0763 outside of Yellowknife or, in Yellowknife, at 920-8921. Questions may also be directed to the NWT Seniors Information Line at 800-661-0878 outside of Yellowknife, or in Yellowknife, at 920-7444.

This agreement underlies the commitment of both governments to establish spending priorities that will best serve the people of the Northwest Territories through the most efficient use of tax dollars.

For further information please contact:

Robert W. Allen
A/Senior Operations Manager
Income Security Programs
Human Resources Development Canada
Alberta/Northwest Territories
Edmonton, Alberta
(403) 495-2740

Dana Heide
Director, Income Support Programs
Education, Culture and Employment
Government of the Northwest Territories
(867) 873-8921

Diana Dowthwaite
Media Relations
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Hull, PQ
(819) 956-2315



98-081

Trucking Industry Stakeholders Meet to Discuss Regulatory Reform

YELLOWKNIFE (July 13) - Northern truckers and the Government of the Northwest Territories are working together to improve the regulatory environment for the motor transport industry.

A special all-day meeting was held on July 11 to provide government officials and trucking industry stakeholders an opportunity to discuss a range of regulatory issues. Representatives from the NWT Motor Transport Association, major inter-provincial transport firms, local carriers and the GNWT attended the Yellowknife meeting.

The meeting was jointly sponsored by the GNWT's Department of Transportation, the Regulatory Reform Secretariat and the NWT Motor Transport Association, which represents the trucking industry in the Northwest Territories.

"These regulatory reform issues are important to us," said Al Smythe, Executive Director of the NWT Motor Transport Association. "Many of the regulations that are now on the books were made a long, long time ago. Our industry has undergone considerable change over the past several years, and it's timely to take a hard look at whether this regulatory framework is actually accomplishing all that is needed, or whether there are some better ways of achieving compliance with safety standards."

Participants at the meeting tackled a number of key problems within the regulatory framework that governs trucking practices in the NWT. A need for better harmonization of regulations dealing with truck weights and dimensions was identified, with industry representatives pointing out that it is costly for the NWT to differ from standards in other jurisdictions.

.../2

Trucking Industry Stakeholders Meet to Discuss Regulatory Reform - Page 2

Proposals for revising federal regulations on the number of hours operators can drive on the road were discussed, with a special focus on special provisions for Northern carriers. Several trucking firm representatives also called for a merit rebate program within the Workers' Compensation Board, to reward companies who maintain good occupational health and safety standards.

Saturday's meeting was one of several stakeholder consultations to take place in conjunction with the GNWT's Regulatory Reform Initiative. A small, specialized Secretariat was established in March 1997, reporting jointly to the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and to the Honourable John Todd, Minister of Finance. It has a mandate to reform outdated or cumbersome regulatory requirements that are seen by stakeholders creating impediments to the growth of Northern industry and business.

For more information please contact:

Richard MacDonald
Director, Motor Vehicles Inspection
Department of Transportation
Government of the NWT
(867) 920-8915

or

Al Smythe
Executive Director
NWT Motor Transport Association
(867) 873-2831



98-082

GNWT Proposes Mediation

Yellowknife (JULY 14) In an effort to resolve the impasse at collective bargaining, the Government of the Northwest Territories negotiator has invited the Union of Northern Workers to return to the bargaining table with the assistance of a mediator.

The government believes that the parties have an obligation to make good faith efforts to achieve a negotiated collective agreement. A mediator can help each side reach the compromises that are a necessary and fundamental component of any bargaining process.

The first step will be for the parties to agree on what the outstanding issues are and who the mediator should be. If agreement cannot be reached on the choice of mediator, either party can request that the courts appoint a mediator.

For more information please contact:

Herb Hunt
GNWT Negotiator
(867) 920 8900



98-083

Economic Strategies Under Development

YELLOWKNIFE (July 15) Work is underway to develop economic strategies for Nunavut and the new western territory, Finance Minister John Todd announced today. The new strategies are intended to support ongoing efforts to stimulate the economy, put northerners to work and improve social conditions.

Mr. Todd said that with financing formulas in place, the time is right to develop economic strategies for both future new territories. "The need is urgent and these strategies will provide a basis for the two new governments to act quickly."

Mr. Todd noted the positive signals from the recent federal budget. "I have had preliminary discussions with the federal ministers of Finance and Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and I intend to have more detailed discussions as the strategies develop," he said.

Mr. Todd also noted the support western provinces showed at the recent Western Premiers Conference in Yellowknife. Premier Don Morin and Alberta Premier Ralph Klein announced their intention to sign a memorandum of understanding, which focuses on economic cooperation. A similar agreement is already in place with Manitoba.

The strategies will identify the key economic development opportunities in Nunavut and the western territory. It will look at partnerships in infrastructure, community, business and labour force development to take advantage of the potential in these areas.

The work is being done under the direction of Cabinet and will be steered by a group of deputy ministers. Following a public Request for Proposals, a northern company, Roland C. Bailey and Associates, has been selected to lead a team of consultants and senior government staff in developing the strategies. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Office of the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut have also been asked to participate. "We need the best expertise and advice available from the private and public sectors," Mr. Todd said.

Draft strategies are expected to be completed by the fall and will form the basis for consultation with other governments, industry and aboriginal leaders.

For further information please contact:

Andrew Gamble
Secretary to Cabinet
(867) 873 7100

Until Friday, July 17:
c/o GNWT Ottawa
(613) 234 6525



98-084

RWED Partners with Arctic Energy Alliance to Improve Program Delivery

YELLOWKNIFE (July 17) - The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED) and the Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA) have formed a partnership to improve energy management in the Northwest Territories.

The Alliance recently signed an agreement with RWED to deliver energy management programs on behalf of the department. As a result, RWED energy management staff are now working under the Alliance.

"The Arctic Energy Alliance was formed to assist energy consumers, regulators and producers to work together to reduce energy and utility costs in the North," said Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi. "This partnership supports the GNWT's goal of reducing its reliance on imported fuels and is an important step in this government's response to global climate change."

Rob Marshall, Executive Director of the Arctic Energy Alliance, says the partnership enhances the ability of the Alliance to fulfill its mandate. "RWED and the Alliance share similar objectives on energy management. By combining resources, we will be able to deliver energy management services to all regions of the North more effectively," Mr. Marshall said.

"In particular, the skills and knowledge of RWED's energy management staff will be very useful in developing the Alliance's core programs and profile in the North."

The head office of the Arctic Energy Alliance is in Yellowknife, with regional officers in Cambridge Bay and Fort Smith. The Alliance is in the process of staffing an energy management position in the Keewatin.

For further information, contact:

Lloyd Henderson
Manager, Energy Programs
Environmental Protection Services
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 873-7654
Fax: (867) 873-0221

Rob Marshall
Executive Director
Arctic Energy Alliance
Tel: (867) 920-3333
Fax: (867) 873-0303



98-085

Commemorative Sculpture Unveiled in Inuvik

YELLOWKNIFE (July 27) – Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, has unveiled a sculpture to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Great Northern Arts Festival.

The six-and-a-half foot high marble sculpture is on permanent display outside the Visitors' Information Centre in Inuvik. Five artists from different cultures and regions of the Northwest Territories began carving the sculpture in April in Yellowknife. It was then barged to Inuvik earlier this summer where the artists have been putting on the finishing touches during the ten-day festival.

The theme of the sculpture is *unity within diversity*. The symbols presented in marble express the history and culture of the North, its land and people. "The symbols on this sculpture are shared by many cultures in the Northwest Territories," Mr. Kakfwi said during an unveiling ceremony in Inuvik on Saturday (July 25). "These artists have cooperated to produce an excellent showcase of the unique qualities and connections between the people from both the eastern and western Arctic. This is especially fitting given that we are on the verge of creating two new territories."

The artists who created the sculpture are:

Bill Nasogaluak - Yellowknife
Paul Malliki - Repulse Bay
Dolphus Cadieux - Yellowknife
Eli Nasogaluak - Inuvik
Allyson Simmie - Ottawa

Destined to be a key attraction for visitors to Inuvik, the sculpture was funded through the Community Initiatives Program of RWED's Business Development Fund.

For further information please contact:

Bob McLeod

Assistant Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
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Fax: (87) 873-0114

98-086

GNWT Reacts to Decision of the Human Rights Tribunal

YELLOWKNIFE (July 30) - The Human Rights Tribunal ruling in a Pay Equity complaint against the federal government makes it very unlikely that GNWT employees will get a better pay equity deal than the one offered by the GNWT to the UNW.

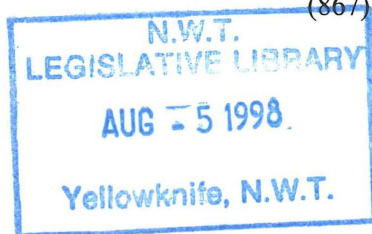
A preliminary analysis of the July 29 of the Tribunal's ruling supports the GNWT's position for a negotiated settlement.

"The Human Rights Tribunal ruling is another indication that a negotiated settlement of the pay equity complaint is in the best interest of the GNWT and its employees," Finance Minister John Todd said. "The risk to employees is that several years from now, following expensive legal and court rulings, the pay equity complaint could be dismissed or a Human Rights Tribunal may make an award that is less than the terms of the GNWT's settlement offer. Our offer is as good as or better than the one awarded by the Human Rights Tribunal for federal government employees."

The UNW indicated in a public statement yesterday that it is interested in meeting with the GNWT to negotiate a settlement of the complaint in the context of the recent Human Rights Tribunal ruling. Mr. Todd said he agrees that the parties should return to the bargaining table as soon as possible to re-examine the GNWT's settlement offer in light of the Tribunal's decision. Mr. Todd has instructed his negotiators to consider reasonable changes to the settlement offer if it would mean getting a package to employees for their ratification vote.

The GNWT will formally invite the UNW to return to the bargaining table to try to negotiate a mutually acceptable settlement of the pay equity complaint.

For more information, please contact: **Herb Hunt**
Director
Labour Relations and Compensation
(867) 920 8900





98-087

GNWT Welcomes Appointment Of Northern-based Diamond Valuator

YELLOWKNIFE (July 31) – Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, today expressed his approval at the appointment of a northern aboriginal company as Canadian Government Diamond Valuator.

Earlier today, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Jane Stewart, announced that Diamonds International Canada Ltd. (DICAN), a Yellowknife-based firm, will be responsible for ascertaining the gross value of diamonds produced at BHP's Ekati mine. The value will be used to assess and collect royalties from BHP.

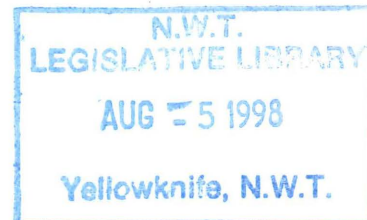
"This is an important step in the development of a diamond industry in the Northwest Territories," said Mr. Kakfwi. "The involvement of Aboriginal businesses in this contract is significant. The transfer of knowledge and expertise on diamonds is important for the future participation of northerners in the NWT diamond industry."

DICAN is owned jointly by WWW International Diamond Consultants and Aboriginal Diamonds Group Ltd. (ADG). ADG is one-third owned by Nishi-Khon Enterprises, one-third by Deton'Cho Corporation, and one-third by Kitikmeot Corporation. These corporations represent the business interests of the Dogrib Nation, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

DICAN was chosen by a seven-member panel, which included representatives from the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, the Department of Finance, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Government of Western Australia.

For more information, contact:

Joseph L. Handley
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
(867) 920-8048





98-088

NWT Committed to Improving Fire Protection System

YELLOWKNIFE (August 7) - The Office of the Fire Marshal is taking steps to improve the Fire Protection System in the North.

The government is concerned about the NWT's high fire loss rates. A few days ago, the Cambridge Bay High School was destroyed by fire. Investigators are still determining the cause of the fire. Preliminary damage estimates are approximately seven million dollars.

In March 1997, the Attagoyuk School in Pangnirtung was completely destroyed by fire. At the time of the fire, the school was undergoing a major renovation project. The GNWT retained Morrison Hershfield Limited to conduct an independent investigation and identify the factors that contributed to the loss of the Pangnirtung school.

The report prepared by Morrison Hershfield Ltd. provides a valuable outside perspective on fire protection issues and identifies key areas where the government can make improvements to the fire protection system.

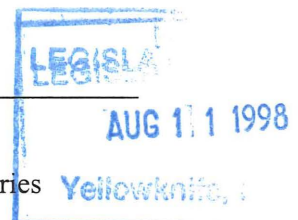
"The report is an effective means of focusing the review of the fire protection system to develop recommendations for change", said Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Maniok Thompson. "MACA is developing strategies to address major areas of concern such as firefighting training, codes and standards review, and information technology. This recent loss of the school in Cambridge Bay only illustrates again the need to ensure all components of an effective fire protection system are in place."

The territorial government has already made changes to improve services in this area. Three additional regional staff will be hired to help Assistant Fire Marshals better support community fire departments, and deliver fire prevention programs to residents. Additional resources will also be provided to enhance the building plan review process.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will continue working with other stakeholders, within and outside government, to improve the fire protection system in the North.

Copies of the Morrison Hershfield report and the territorial government's response are available from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs upon request.

For further information, contact: **Eric Bussey**
Director, Emergency Services Division
Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 920-6133





98-089

Sparkling Opportunities in Diamond Industry Showcased at Career Fair

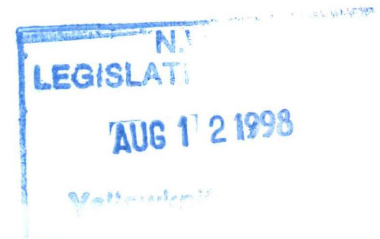
YELLOWKNIFE (Aug. 10) - The Department of Education, Culture and Employment will bring together major employers and educational institutions to showcase diamond-related careers and training programs at a Career Fair this Wednesday evening, Aug. 12, in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly.

With Canada's first diamond mine set to begin operations this fall at BHP Ekati Diamond Mine site, and several other companies ready to follow suit, Northerners can now take advantage of a wide variety of new and exciting career opportunities. These opportunities are the focus of this unique career fair. Anyone interested in the diamond industry or anyone looking for a career in this fascinating industry are welcome to attend.

"We've organized this event so people can find out more about career opportunities in the diamond industry, the training available, and the kinds of jobs that are out there," Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent said. "The diamond processing industry represents potential new career opportunities for Northerners. This is a terrific new field in the northern job market."

The department has assembled a number of participants including Aurora College, Sirius Diamonds, BHP Diamonds, Diavik Diamonds and the North Slave Career Centre. Booths will be set up for one-on-one consultations, and there will be special presentations throughout the evening. A wide variety of people are expected to attend, from high school students considering their future to professionals thinking of a career change, and anyone interested in becoming involved in the diamond industry.

For further information, contact: Hilary Jones
Program Development Coordinator
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 920-3422
Fax: (867) 873-0200





98-090

Minister Appoints Advisory Committee for Enterprise

ENTERPRISE (August 10) - Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, today appointed a Settlement Advisory Committee for the Settlement of Enterprise.

The members of the committee are: Anne Leskiw, Cecile Richards and Stanley Jones. Their appointments are effective August 10, 1998 to December 14, 1998.

The role of the Settlement Advisory Committee is to advise the Settlement Administrator in exercising his powers and performing his duties. These include meeting the Enterprise Settlement Corporation's legislated requirements and establishing business and administrative policies and procedures.

Enterprise residents were asked to submit their names to serve on the advisory committee. The Minister received the names of six people and appointed three of them to the committee.

"This is a positive step for Enterprise," Ms. Thompson said. "The advisory committee will assist the Settlement Administrator in fulfilling his legislated requirements and getting the Enterprise Settlement Corporation back on its feet."

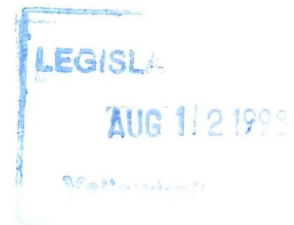
On April 7, 1998, the Minister appointed a Settlement Administrator for the Enterprise Settlement Corporation. This action was taken because Enterprise's Council had failed to meet legislated requirements under the Settlements Act. Council is deemed to have resigned until such time that the Minister is satisfied that control should be returned to an elected Council.

For further information, contact:

Paul Gammon
Settlement Administrator
Enterprise Settlement Corporation
(867) 984-3491

or

Ian Legaree
Acting Director,
Community Monitoring and Evaluation
Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 873-7245





98-091

GNWT asks Court to Appoint a Mediator

YELLOWKNIFE (August 18) -- The GNWT has asked the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories to appoint a mediator pursuant to the *Public Service Act* to assist the Government and the Union to achieve a negotiated settlement of outstanding bargaining issues.

"Over the past three months the GNWT has listened carefully to comments on the government's Settlement Offer. Although the consensus of opinion is that the offer is a good one for employees, there remains some concerns that we want to address through proposed changes to the offer at mediation," said Minister of Finance, John Todd.

The GNWT had invited the UNW to return to the bargaining table with the assistance of a mediator on July 13, 1998, and served formal notice of mediation on July 15, 1998. The UNW responded by accusing the GNWT of bad faith bargaining on a Union assertion that the GNWT negotiated collective bargaining to an impasse over the settlement of the equal pay complaint. The UNW set pre-conditions that it demanded be met before it would listen to the proposed changes to the Government's Settlement Offer.

"The allegation of bad faith bargaining has no substance," said Minister Todd, "There can be no impasse in negotiations either for a collective agreement or a settlement of the equal pay complaint when the GNWT wants to negotiate reasonable revisions to its last Settlement Offer."

The GNWT has the right to negotiate rates of pay in the Collective Agreement based on the Hay Job Evaluation System to the point of impasse, if necessary. The parties also have the ability to pursue a settlement of the equal pay complaint at collective bargaining. The law provides for negotiated settlements of equal pay complaints. Collective bargaining is the most appropriate process since the UNW in its complaint is alleging that rates of pay in the prior collective agreements that the UNW signed off with the GNWT including the one currently under negotiations discriminate against female employees. However, the GNWT has not brought nor does it intend to bring negotiations to an impasse over the resolution of the equal pay complaint.

"An impasse in negotiations is totally unnecessary in view of the Settlement Offer that is already on the table and the Government's stated intent to negotiate further changes to address those specific concerns that have been raised", said Mr. Todd.

.../2

GNWT asks Court to Appoint a Mediator: Page 2

The revisions that the GNWT wishes to propose at mediator assisted negotiations include:

- making retroactive equal pay payments to former employees on the same basis as already proposed for current employees,
- providing simple interest on the retroactive equal pay payments,
- agreeing to an independent chairperson for the Special Job Evaluation Review Committee, and
- negotiating other changes that may be appropriate to reflect the changes to Hay Job Evaluation point ratings that are the result of the manager and employee informal review process that has been ongoing over the past three months.

"The Government's Settlement Offer is good and we are prepared to make it better in a sincere effort to achieve a negotiated agreement", said Mr. Todd.

For more information contact: **Herb Hunt,**
Director, Labour Relations and Compensation
(867) 920-8900



98-092

P-3 Bidders Selected

YELLOWKNIFE (August 19) -- The Government of the NWT has selected five developers who will be invited to submit proposals on the government's first public/private partnership projects.

Chairman of the Financial Management Board, John Todd and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent, announced today the results of the GNWT's Requests for Qualifications process for student housing projects in Fort Smith and Cambridge Bay.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment recently requested interested firms to submit bidding qualifications on two projects:

- New Family Housing for Thebacha Campus of Aurora College in Fort Smith will provide student accommodation in the form of twenty-five three and four-bedroom units;
- Student Housing in Cambridge Bay will provide twenty new student housing units, ranging from one to three bedrooms, for students attending the Kitikmeot Campus of Nunavut Arctic College.

As a result of a review conducted by interdepartmental teams, the following developers have been selected and will be requested to submit full proposals on the projects.

For the Fort Smith New Family Housing:

- Freund Building Supplies of Fort Smith,
- Martselos Services Ltd. of Fort Smith, and
- Nova Construction of Yellowknife.

For the Student Housing in Cambridge Bay:

- Nova Construction of Yellowknife,
- Enokhoak Development Corp. Ltd. of Cambridge Bay, and
- Urbco of Calgary.

.../2

P-3 Bidders Selected: Page 2

Under the P3 approach, developers are invited to submit bidding qualifications in response to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The review process at this stage focuses on the completeness of the company's team, experience, depth of skills and the financing strengths that the potential proponents will bring to the project.

Developers who are successful at the RFQ stage will be invited to submit full proposals. A second rigorous evaluation of proposals will result in the government signing a lease agreement with the successful developer.

Minister of Finance, John Todd, announced the Public/Private Partnership (P3) initiative last January, as a means to increase the GNWT's current annual investment in public infrastructure by up to \$100 million. Under the P3 approach, the government enters into lease arrangements with private sector partners for the provision of public buildings.

Two other projects are currently at the RFQ stage:

- Submission of qualifications for the NWT Housing Corporation's energy conservation measures initiative closed earlier this month, and submissions will be evaluated soon.
- The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has just published an RFQ for construction of a new Aurora College Inuvik Campus.

For more information contact: **Lew Voytilla**
Secretary, Financial Management Board
(867) 873-7211

or

Debbie DeLancey
Director, Budgeting and Evaluation
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 873-7079



98-093

Sheldon Kennedy to visit Northwest Territories

YELLOWKNIFE (August 21) -- Former NHL hockey player Sheldon Kennedy will visit the NWT on August 27, 1998, as part of his five-month Skate Across Canada to raise awareness of child abuse.

The Departments of Health and Social Services and Municipal and Community Affairs, the Status of Women Council and other community groups are working together to get ready for the visit.

Mr. Kennedy, who was sexually abused by his junior hockey coach, hopes his cross-Canada in-line skate will encourage communities to discuss child abuse openly, create awareness of existing resources and educational programs, and build positive community partnerships to take action to deal with child abuse. "By confronting my own abuse, I hope to inspire other victims to come forward so we can begin healing ourselves and educating our society," he says.

Plans for the day include a trip to Ndilo, a skate in downtown Yellowknife, a community barbecue, and visits to a treatment centre and a local school. Mr. Kennedy will speak to and answer questions from children in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Inuvik, and Whitehorse via audio and video links provided by NorthwesTel.

"I have a great deal of respect for what Sheldon Kennedy is doing. His stature as an athlete has resulted in a lot of attention and the kind of message he is sharing is very important in trying to eliminate child abuse," Minister of Health and Social Services Kelvin Ng said.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has partnered with the sport and recreation community to take action against child abuse. "Our proactive approach has led to the development of a professional code of ethics, a coaching code of conduct, and a discipline policy," Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs Manitok Thompson said.

An informational brochure on child sexual abuse is being prepared in conjunction with the visit. This will build on the work of the Child Sexual Abuse Coalition of the NWT, which includes Pauktuutit, the Native Women's Association of the NWT, the Status of Women Council, the Yellowknife Women's Centre, the YWCA, the Inuvik Family Counselling Centre, the Nunavut Social Development Council, and Mianiqsijit Project of Baker Lake. The coalition has been working to collect information and resources, build awareness, and encourage greater attention to the issue of child sexual abuse in the NWT.

For further information:

Robert O'Rourke

Department of Health and Social Services
(867) 920-3407

Gary Schauerte

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 920-6192



98-094

GNWT invites discussion on WCB transition plan

YELLOWKNIFE (Aug. 24) - The Government of the Northwest Territories has invited the Office of the Interim Commissioner, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and the Western Coalition to discuss a transition plan for the Workers' Compensation Board after April 1, 1999.

The decision to pursue a transition arrangement was taken after the Western Coalition notified the GNWT that there was no compelling reason to support the territorial government's proposal for a joint WCB. The coalition further recommended that discussions begin on the division of the WCB.

While the GNWT had supported, subject to further review, the establishment of a WCB under the joint and equal political control of the two territories, as described in **Footprints in New Snow** and **Footprints II**, it has become apparent that many issues remain unresolved.

"Without consensus from all parties representing both new territories, it would be very difficult to achieve any substantive progress in discussions concerning a single board," Minister Responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, John Todd, said.

The GNWT hopes to achieve a transitional agreement with the Office of the Interim Commissioner which will provide sufficient time for a smooth transition from one WCB to two, as well as to achieve a fair and equitable division of the WCB's assets and liabilities.

The GNWT will be meeting with officials from all parties to discuss the drafting of such a Transition Agreement, to set out the process to be used to divide the assets of the current WCB and to establish a Nunavut WCB.

For more information, please contact: **Richard Bargery**
Assistant Deputy Minister
Division Secretariat
(867) 920-3322

April Taylor
Executive Assistant
Hon. John Todd
Tel: (867) 669-2377



98-095

NAV Canada Fee Deferrals Fail to Address Transportation Inequities

YELLOWKNIFE (August 27) – Minister of Transportation Jim Antoine, says he is more than disappointed with Nav Canada’s proposal to postpone but not resolve the issue of fees for air navigation services in the North.

“The deferral of some fees does not correct the fundamental and structural imbalance in the proposed fee structure itself,” he said. “I wanted substantive changes in the fee structure. The objections I have raised, over and over, with Nav Canada have to do with the inequity in the basic fee structure and not with the implementation dates.”

Despite serious objections that the Government of the Northwest Territories has raised with the Phase II proposal, the new fees will still come into effect but at a later date.

Mr. Antoine says he will ask federal Minister of Transport Mr. Collenette to withhold his approval pending amendments to the fee structure that will result in an equitable outcome for both northern and southern Canada. Under the *Civil Air Navigation Services Commercialization Act*, the federal Minister has 30 days to accept, amend or reject the proposed fee structure. Once the Minister has given final approval to the fee structure, there is no legal or political mechanism in the *Act* for subsequent changes.

Nav Canada has conceded that, due to the character of air passenger and freight traffic in northern Canada, the new air navigation service fees exact a disproportionately higher cost on air transportation in northern Canada than in southern Canada.

Nav Canada’s service fees are intended to make up for the elimination of the *Air Transportation Tax*. By Nav Canada’s own calculations, northerners will pay \$7.5 million more a year over and above what they used to pay under the *ATT*.

For more information contact:

Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
Government of the Northwest Territories
Tel (867) 920-3460
fax (867) 873-0363



98-096

Non-Confrontational Way Needed to Resolve Equal Pay Issues

YELLOWKNIFE (August 28) - - The federal government's decision to review its equal pay legislation is a general recognition that the current equal pay law is not working and must be fixed, GNWT Minister of Finance John Todd said today. The federal government announced that it will appeal the equal pay Human Rights Tribunal decision, fix the problems with the equal pay legislation and deal with equal pay for federal employees in collective bargaining and through negotiations.

The federal government is appealing the decision of the Human Rights Tribunal on the grounds that the decision is inconsistent with the law and could be seen by future tribunals as a precedent if it is unchallenged. The tribunal award in the Federal Treasury Board case is not consistent with the law concerning joint union liability where wages in a collective agreement are found to discriminate on the basis of sex. The tribunal also accepted a method of measuring pay differences that is not consistent with what the law requires.

A non-confrontational way is needed to ensure that male and female employees are paid equally for performing work of equal value, Mr. Todd said.

"I have stated consistently that equal pay issues arising from a collective agreement have to be settled between the parties who created the problem."

The alternative is to have the tribunals and courts deal with the equal pay issue. In addition, employers and employees, including the GNWT and its employees, are now faced with the uncertainty about what form the legislation will take following review and consultation. The federal government has sent a clear message that it wants equal pay issues settled in collective bargaining and through negotiations.

Mr. Todd said the GNWT has a great opportunity to quickly conclude a negotiated collective agreement and a settlement of the long-standing equal pay complaint at mediation. "The GNWT has a good offer on the table we are prepared to make it better in a sincere effort to settle the complaint."

Mr. Todd said that while the GNWT intends to vigorously pursue a negotiated settlement, the GNWT does not intend to hold up a collective agreement over the settlement of the equal pay complaint.

.../2

Federal Government Appeals Equal Pay Tribunal Decision: Page 2

"It is unlikely that there will be another opportunity like we have today to solve the equal pay complaint" Mr. Todd said. "If mediated settlement talks break down, millions of dollars of taxpayers money and union dues will be spent arguing equal pay issues before the courts and Human Rights Tribunals."

"At the outset of collective bargaining, I made a strong plea for the government and the union to work together to solve the equal pay complaint in a way that makes everyone a winner."

"I encourage all those affected to not throw away what could be our last opportunity to negotiate a settlement of the equal pay complaint. For the government's part, our negotiators have been instructed to listen carefully to what the UNW and a mediator have to say and to look for ways to structure a mutually acceptable collective agreement that includes a settlement of the equal pay complaint."

For more information contact: Herb Hunt
Director, Labour Relations and Compensation
(867) 920-8900



98-097

P3 Bidders Selected

YELLOWKNIFE (September 2) -- The Government of the Northwest Territories has selected two developers who will be invited to submit proposals on the Energy Conservation Measures public/private partnership (P3) project.

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation recently requested interested firms to submit bidding qualifications for the financing, installing, and maintenance of electricity saving equipment, fixtures and appliances in housing units identified by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The Chairman of the Financial Management Board, John Todd, and the Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Goo Arlooktoo, have announced the results of the Request for Qualifications. As a result of a review conducted by an interdepartmental team, the following developers will be asked to submit full proposals on the project:

1. Frontec, from Yellowknife
2. DEL Management Solutions, from Toronto

Under the P3 approach, developers are invited to submit bidding qualifications in response to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The review process at this stage focuses on the completeness of the company's team, experience, depth of skills and the financing strengths that the potential proponents will bring to the project.

Developers who are successful at the RFQ stage are invited to submit full proposals. A second rigorous evaluation of proposals results in the government signing a lease agreement with the successful developer.

Mr. Todd announced the Public/Private Partnership (P3) initiative in January, as a means to increase the GNWT's current annual investment in public infrastructure by up to \$100 million. Under the P3 approach, the government enters into lease arrangements with private sector partners for the provision of public infrastructure.

For more information contact:

Jim Fennel

Director, Housing Corporation Operations - East
(867) 920-6550

Debbie DeLancey

Director, Budgeting and Evaluation
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 873-7079



98-098

GNWT Still Calling for Appointment of a Mediator in Collective Bargaining

YELLOWKNIFE (September 2) - The Union of Northern Workers' September 1 offer to return to the bargaining table sets out similar pre-conditions to negotiations as the UNW has demanded in the past. The approach of setting pre-conditions is not helpful in collective bargaining. For this reason, the GNWT feels that a mediator is still a critical requirement to making progress at negotiations.

The GNWT has a good offer on the table that includes: A 2 per cent to 31 per cent increase in wages in the first year and 2 per cent in the second year; \$790 to \$33,199 in equal pay payments; 5 per cent performance pay bonus; and \$421 to \$4,096 northern allowance increases in addition to a \$500 lump sum amount. The GNWT proposes to implement the Hay Job Evaluation System at absolutely no risk to employees or the UNW. The GNWT wishes to make the offer better at mediation by negotiating revisions that include:

- Making retroactive equal pay payments to former employees on the same basis as already proposed for current employees;
- Providing simple interest on the retroactive equal pay payments;
- Agreeing to an independent chairperson for the Special Job Evaluation Review Committee;
- Negotiating other changes that may be appropriate to reflect changes to Hay Job Evaluation point ratings that are the result of the manager and employee informal review process that has been ongoing over the past three months.

The GNWT would be pleased to return to the bargaining table immediately, should the UNW agree to the appointment of a mediator. Otherwise, the GNWT will proceed with its application to the Supreme Court of the NWT on September 21, 1998, for the appointment of a mediator to help the parties conclude a negotiated settlement.

For further information contact: Herb Hunt

Director
Equal Pay and Negotiations
(867) 920-8900



98-099

Chinese Trade Delegation Sees Viable Business Opportunities on NWT Tour

YELLOWKNIFE (September 8) – Members of a Chinese trade delegation have signed a letter of understanding with the Northwest Territories Development Corporation (NWTDC) and the GNWT Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED). The delegation consisted of representatives from the China Heilongjiang International Project and Technical Cooperation Group (CHPT), including company president, Han Shoude.

The agreement outlines a possible joint venture with the NWTDC to develop a mink farm and to investigate the possibility of CHPT buying wild fur, as well as developing a greenhouse vegetable production facility.

Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development hosted the Chinese delegation's six-day visit to Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Resolution. Minister Stephen Kakfwi said he welcomed delegations interested in pursuing business partnerships in the NWT. "They provide a new perspective on our economy," he said. "They also offer potential investment capital and access to new markets that are needed for the NWT to grow and diversify."

For Mr. Han, this was a return visit to Yellowknife, and was prompted by an invitation from the Premier last August. It compliments the efforts of a NWT delegation of government and business representatives who visited China in June. During his latest trip, Mr. Han formally registered his company in the NWT to seriously pursue further development of northern business opportunities.

The delegation also met with the Premier, officials from the City of Yellowknife, members of the Yellowknife business community and representatives from the Hay River Chamber of Commerce. In Fort Resolution, they met with Chief Don Balsillie and Council regarding the mink farm proposal. The visitors were very impressed by the vitality of these business communities and the agricultural opportunities they presented.

The CHPT group also discussed the marketing of seal products with Iqaluit MLA Ed Picco. Their company is particularly interested in acquiring seal oil products for medicinal use in China.

For further information, contact: **Mr. Joseph Handley**
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 920-8048
Fax: (867) 873-0563

Canada



98-100

New Funding for NWT Literacy Projects announced on International Literacy Day

YELLOWKNIFE (September 8) - As part of Canada's support for International Literacy Day, the Government of Canada, in partnership with the Government of the Northwest Territories, today announced new funding for four projects in the Northwest Territories designed to foster literacy skills at home and work.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) first recognized international Literacy Day in 1966. Since then, literacy groups from around the world have engaged in a variety of activities on September 8 to raise awareness of literacy issues.

Today, Minister of Human Resources Development Canada, Pierre S. Pettigrew, and GNWT Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent have announced \$524,285. in literacy funding.

The Government of Canada is participating in these projects through the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS), working in partnership with the GNWT. In the western NWT, the projects include Aurora College community projects and family community literacy development. In the eastern NWT they include the creation of an eastern arctic literacy council and Nunavut Arctic College community projects.

"By fostering literacy skills, these projects will help Canadians in their transition to a new knowledge based economy, and will help expand their learning opportunities," said Mr. Pettigrew. "Through higher literacy levels, Canadians will be better prepared to tackle the challenge of competing in a global economy."

"As we prepare for the creation of two new territories, these projects will help residents of the NWT prepare for leadership roles and jobs in the new governments," said Mr. Dent. "We have already taken great strides in enhancing literacy skills in the North and this funding will complement the work underway."

The projects are designed to help residents of the Northwest Territories improve their literacy levels and will contribute to the national effort to create a more literate Canada. Strong literacy skills are associated with employment stability, high incomes and access to knowledge-based jobs. Literate individuals have greater opportunities to receive training and improve their employability.

For more information, contact:

Lesley Allen, ADM Culture and Careers
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7252
Fax: (867) 873-0155



98-101

Government Wants Bad Faith Accusation Dealt With

YELLOWKNIFE (September 9) - The Government of the Northwest Territories sees little hope for a negotiated collective agreement with the Union of Northern Workers until the court deals with the union's accusation of bad faith bargaining.

"How can two parties hope to deal seriously with each other in difficult negotiations when one party is publicly accusing the other of bargaining in bad faith" said Finance Minister John Todd. "I want this issue resolved once and for all in a manner that will prevent it from being raised again and again as a tactic at negotiations".

There is a clear process laid out in legislation for collective bargaining that gives both northern parties protection and incentives as they move toward a collective agreement. Efficient dispute resolution mechanisms are provided for. By seeking court appointment of a mediator on September 21st, the government is, in good faith, following the process laid out in NWT legislation.

For further information contact **Herb Hunt**
Director
Equal Pay and Negotiations
(867) 920-8900



98-103

Todd Announces Good News Measures from WCB

YELLOWKNIFE (September 17) -- The Minister Responsible for the WCB, John Todd today announced three financial measures to decrease WCB employer assessment rates while increasing benefits to injured workers.

“Since 1996, the WCB has consistently reflected its financial success by decreasing employer assessment rates and increasing benefits to injured workers,” he said. “I am prepared, with the Board, to continue this approach.”

Effective January 1st, 1998 the WCB’s average employer rate will be reduced by 35% to \$1.21 per \$100.00 of assessable payroll. This new rate, already approved by the WCB’s Board of Directors, will be maintained for three years.

Mr. Todd also announced that he would recommend the WCB’s benefit ceiling or Years’ Maximum Insurable Remuneration (YMIR) be increased to \$60,000; a move that would see injured workers in the NWT become the highest compensated in Canada.

The final measure in Mr. Todd’s statement will see a supplementary pension increase of 5% for injured workers or dependents receiving lifetime pensions. Those receiving benefits based on a YMIR prior to July 1st 1996 will also receive an additional increase of 4.7% effective January 1st, 1999.

Mr Todd told the Legislative Assembly that such financial measures are the result of continued excellence in the management of the WCB. “I believe they demonstrate the continued commitment of the WCB to the workers and employers of the NWT,” he said.

For more information, contact: **April Taylor**
Executive Assistant to
Hon. John Todd
Tel: (867) 669-2377



98-104

MACA Awards Community Planning Scholarship to Three Students

YELLOWKNIFE (September 22) - Three students from the Northwest Territories will be awarded scholarships from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs this fall.

Nalini Naidoo, Ouri Scott and Dawn Spreacher from Yellowknife will each receive \$1,000.00 to assist them in their studies. The department awards up to three scholarships each year to students interested in pursuing a career in community and/or regional planning.

Ms. Naidoo is entering her final year of a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning Program at Queen's University. Ms. Scott is entering her second year of the Urban Studies Program at the University of Calgary and Ms. Spreacher is entering her second year of a Masters Program in Environmental Design Planning at the University of Calgary.

"We hope these scholarships will provide incentive for other students to pursue community planning as a career," said Municipal and Community Affairs Minister, Manitok Thompson.

The Igal Roth Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by the GNWT in 1988 to commemorate the pioneering work done by community planner, Igal Roth from 1978 to 1983. In 1980, Mr. Roth was appointed head of MACA's Community Planning Section, a position he held until his death on February 6, 1983.

For information on the scholarship program, contact the Municipal and Community Affairs office in your region, or write to the Igal Roth Memorial Scholarship, Community Development Division, Municipal and Community Affairs, Government of the Northwest Territories, Suite 400, 5201 50 Avenue, Yellowknife NT X1A 3S9.

For more information, contact: Carol Beck
Community Based Planning Advisor
Community Development Division
Municipal and Community Affairs
Tel: (867) 873-7597



98-105

World Diamond Experts to set Standards for Canada's North

YELLOWKNIFE (September 24) – In an important step towards the development of a diamond manufacturing industry in Canada's North, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is hosting Canada's first standards validation meeting for the diamond industry.

Experts in the field of diamond cutting will gather September 27 and 28 in Toronto, to assist the GNWT's Department of Education, Culture and Employment in setting occupational standards for diamond polishers, the North's newest manufacturing business.

"The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has been working with the Diamond High Council of Antwerp said Minister, Charles Dent. We have also entered into a partnership with their subsidiary, the Diamond High Council of Canada, to pull this project together."

Occupational standards are statements of the knowledge, skills and attitudes, deemed necessary by the diamond industry, for successful employment in the North's new secondary diamond industry. World renowned diamond cutter, Gabi Tolowsky, from Antwerp, Belgium will join Canadian, American and European diamond cutters to assist the GNWT in determining its standards. "Setting these standards will enable Canada to establish itself as a diamond centre," said Dawn Moss of the Canadian Diamond Cutters of Vancouver.

Canada's first diamond mine, Ekati, is based 200 kilometers north of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. In full production, it is expected to produce approximately five per cent of the world's gemstone quality diamonds.

For further information, contact: **David Gilday**
Director
Career Development
Education, Culture and Employment
Phone: (867) 873-7146
Fax (867) 873-0200



98-106

Diamond Cutting and Polishing Facility to Open in Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE (September 24) - Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, announced today that Sirius Diamonds NWT Ltd. will establish the first diamond cutting and polishing facility in the Northwest Territories.

The plant is expected to open in April 1999. It will process 2000 carats of diamond rough (uncut and unpolished diamond crystals) from BHP Diamonds' Ekati Mine per month. Production is expected to expand as the supply of trained personnel and rough diamonds increases.

In conjunction with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Sirius Diamonds NWT Ltd., will train and employ 25-30 Northwest Territories' residents as diamond cutters and polishers.

"The agreement with Sirius Diamonds confirms the government's commitment to develop a value-added diamond industry in the NWT," said Mr. Kakfwi.

"It represents a co-operative effort between my Department, the MLAs, Mayor and council of Yellowknife and a significant effort from Charles Dent, Minister of Education Culture and Employment and Minister of Finance, John Todd. It exemplifies how we all intend to maximize jobs and opportunities for northerners from the development of our resources."

"We are excited to be here in the NWT. We look forward to developing the opportunities associated with northern diamonds," said Sirius Diamonds NWT Chairman, Jim Ben-Oliel.

The decision by Sirius Diamonds to establish the first facility in the NWT, is a result of an agreement between BHP Diamonds and the GNWT to work together to develop and support value-added activities in the NWT.

"We intend to make the Northwest Territories the 'diamond centre' of North America," added Mr. Kakfwi. "The GNWT will continue to work toward that vision with BHP Diamonds, other diamond manufacturers and future NWT diamond producers."

.../2

Diamond Cutting and Polishing Facility to Open in Yellowknife: Page 2

To ensure a coordinated approach to the allocation of support and funding programs, the GNWT has developed a policy framework to support the diamond processing industry. The framework establishes the Diamond Review Committee, an interdepartmental group which will review, assess and provide recommendations on all diamond value-added proposals.

For more information contact: **Joseph Handley**
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 920-8691; Fax: (867) 873-0563



98- 107

GNWT Responds to Report on Crime and Corrections in the NWT

YELLOWKNIFE (September 24) - Minister of Justice, Goo Arlooktoo today unveiled a comprehensive plan to address community justice and corrections in the NWT.

The Minister's announcement follows closely the release of a report, authored by James Evans, and commissioned by the GNWT in 1997, to determine the state of crime and corrections in the NWT.

"The report does not paint a rosy picture of crime and corrections in the Northwest Territories," Mr. Arlooktoo told the Legislative, Assembly. "We have to respond to the challenges presented by the Evan's Report. The time to take action is now."

Planned initiatives include the overhaul of community corrections including the continued development of wilderness camps and community justice committees; a dedicated probation service for communities and a commitment to work with the Department of Social Services for victims of crime. The plan will also seek to improve facilities and rehabilitation programs at the Yellowknife Correctional Centre.

Although partial funding has already been approved by the GNWT, Mr. Arlooktoo said supplementary funding will be required to ensure full implementation. "I will be seeking the support of this house, and indeed all MLAs, to breathe life into this plan," he said.

For further information, contact: **Mr. Don Cooper**
Deputy Minister
Department of Justice
Tel: (867) 902-6102



98-108

Aboriginal Language Learning Colloquium to be held in Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE (September 25) -- The Department of Education, Culture and Employment is holding a Colloquium on Aboriginal Language Learning October 1-2 in Yellowknife, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent announced today.

Representatives from all Divisional Education Authorities Councils and Teacher Education Programs in the Northwest Territories will attend the two-day session to develop strategies on improving aboriginal language learning in their communities.

“When the language and culture of students is a regular part of classroom and school activities, students are more successful,” Mr. Dent said. “The work of the colloquium will be important in ensuring a strong foundation in language learning across the Northwest Territories.”

The Colloquium will focus on issues involved in teaching and learning aboriginal languages in the NWT and will provide direction on planning and policy issues in these areas. Discussions on aboriginal language learning will be lead by Jim Cummins and David Corson from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto, and Irene Silentman from the Dine Language and Cultural Center in Window Rock, Arizona.

The Colloquium will provide participants with an opportunity to address language and cultural issues raised during the “Strength from Culture” Symposium in April 1998. Participants will also discuss challenges involved in developing plans to promote the maintenance and retrieval of aboriginal languages in the NWT.

For more information, contact: **Fiona O’Donoghue**
Director, Early Childhood and School Services
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7176
Fax: (867) 873-0109



98-109

Legislation to Implement NWT Investment Tax Credit Program is now Approved

YELLOWKNIFE (September 25) -- Finance Minister John Todd says he's pleased that the Legislative Assembly has approved the legislation necessary to implement the Northwest Territories Investment Tax Credit Program that he announced in his Budget last January.

Today the Risk Capital Investment Tax Credit Act and an Act to Amend the Income Tax Act received assent in the Legislative Assembly. This legislation provides northern investors with a tax credit, against NWT income tax payable, of up to 30 per cent of their investment, to a maximum of \$30,000.

"Investment in northern business is key to the long-term growth of our economy" said Mr. Todd. "Traditionally, small firms have had difficulty in accessing equity capital. This program is designed to encourage northerners to invest in northern companies".

The Investment Subcommittee of the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations addressed the lack of access to capital in 1996. The subcommittee recommended that the government consider investment tax credits as a means of encouraging investment in the north. Mr. Todd noted that, "this legislation, therefore, flows from the joint efforts of the government and the members of the Legislative Assembly to find innovative ways to promote economic growth and sustain employment across the territories."

Taxpayers will qualify for tax credits by investing in eligible northern corporations. Eligibility criteria relate to the size of the corporation, as well as the percentage of assets and employees located in the Northwest Territories. The business must have a permanent place of business in the NWT. It cannot have publicly traded shares at the time of the investment.

A taxpayer will qualify for tax credits by purchasing shares in any one of three venture capital corporations: Labour Sponsored Venture Capital Corporations; Employee Venture Capital Corporations and Community Endorsed Venture Capital Corporations. Taxpayers will also qualify for tax credits by investing directly in eligible businesses.

.../2

Legislation to Implement NWT Investment Tax Credit Program is now Approved: Page 2

A Program Administrator will be appointed for Nunavut and another for the Western Northwest Territories to administer the investment tax credit program.

The attached backgrounder provides further detail about the program.

For further information contact: **Margaret Melhorn**
Deputy Minister
Department of Finance
(867) 873-7117 (phone)
(867) 873-0414 (fax)
mmelhorn@fin.gov.nt.ca

Backgrounder

NWT Risk Capital Investment Tax Credit Program

The start-up or expansion of small and medium-sized NWT businesses is restricted due to current difficulties in accessing equity capital. The existing tax system does not encourage NWT taxpayers to invest in NWT businesses. Limited familiarity with investment opportunities in the NWT also impedes investment.

Starting this year, the government is introducing a new NWT Risk Capital Investment Tax Credit Program. The purpose of this tax credit program is to encourage:

- the NWT private sector to market newly issued shares of NWT businesses for sale to NWT taxpayers;
- NWT investors to purchase shares of NWT businesses that are planning start-ups or expansions.

Under the program, there will be four investment vehicles: **labour sponsored funds** (encouraging unions and employee associations to sponsor mutual funds that in turn will invest in new/expanding NWT businesses); **employee sponsored venture capital funds** (encouraging employees to purchase shares in their employing business); **community endorsed venture capital funds** (encouraging the private sector and not-for-profit groups to establish small mutual funds that in turn will invest in new or expanding NWT businesses); and, **private new common shares sales** (encouraging the direct sale of shares in new or expanding NWT businesses to NWT taxpayers).

Investors in labour sponsored funds will be eligible for NWT income tax credits of 15 per cent of the first \$5,000 invested annually and 30 per cent of the balance up to a maximum total annual investment of \$100,000. Up to \$5,000 annually in investments to such funds are also eligible for a 15 per cent federal income tax credit.

Investments in other funds will receive a credit of 30 per cent of investments, to a maximum credit of \$30,000 a year. NWT income tax credits earned but unused in any one year, can be carried backward for three years, or forward for seven years.

All funds raised through the program can only be used to assist in financing the start-up or expansion of NWT businesses. Investments in businesses with publicly traded shares, or with the majority of their activities or employees outside of the NWT, will not be eligible for a tax credit.

The legislation allows for identical but separate approval processes for Nunavut and the Western Territory.

Individuals and corporations paying NWT income taxes are eligible investors under the program. However, individuals or corporations can not be related or associated (as defined under the *Income Tax Act*) to the business in which they are investing. Individuals or corporations can not acquire control through the purchase of shares under the program.

- The maximum NWT equity tax credits available in any tax year will be set through regulation. A maximum of \$1 million in credits will be available for the 1998 taxation year.

How Will the Program Work?

The GNWT will appoint two Program Administrators, one for the Western Territory and one for Nunavut.

Groups wishing to sponsor a Venture Capital Corporation, or companies wishing to use the program to issue new shares, will apply to the administrator for approval. Once approval has been obtained, the Venture Capital Corporation or private company will issue receipts to investors.

Revenue Canada will administer the credits on behalf of the NWT. Investors will submit receipts with their tax returns; receiving tax credits to a maximum of \$30,000 or their NWT income tax payable.

Four mechanisms are proposed to facilitate the purchase of "eligible shares" in "eligible businesses":

NWT Labour Sponsored Venture Capital Corporations (LSVCC)

Any NWT trade union or employee association can sponsor an LSVCC. The first \$5,000 of shares purchased by individuals in an LSVCC are eligible for the 15 per cent federal LSVCC tax credit, and the 15 per cent NWT tax credit. The next \$95,000 is eligible for the 30% NWT tax credit. LSVCCs will invest in equity and debt of eligible businesses in the NWT. At least 50 per cent of the investment in eligible businesses must be in equity.

NWT Employee Venture Capital Corporations (EVCC)

Any employee group or association of an eligible business can sponsor an EVCC. Through the EVCC, employees can invest in the business in which they are employed. Shares purchased in an EVCC are eligible for the 30 per cent NWT Risk Capital Investment tax credit.

NWT Community Endorsed Venture Capital Corporations (CEVCC)

Individuals, businesses, or not-for-profit groups can sponsor a CEVCC. However, the investment targets of the CEVCC must be endorsed by the council(s) of the community(s) in which the investment targets are located.

Shares purchased in a CEVCC are eligible for the 30 per cent NWT Risk Capital Investment tax credit. CEVCCs will invest in equity and debt of eligible businesses in the NWT. At least 50 per cent of the investment in eligible businesses must be in equity

Direct Investment in Territorial Business Corporations

Any “eligible business” will be able to issue shares or debt directly to NWT investors. These share and debt issues are eligible for the 30 per cent NWT Risk Capital Investment tax credit. At least 50 per cent of the investment of any taxpayer must be in equity.

Corporate investors will be eligible for a credit of 15 per cent of eligible investments, to a maximum credit of \$30,000 a year.

Eligible Business

An Eligible Business is a Canadian joint venture, co-operative or corporation incorporated and an employer in the NWT and:

- Where the investment is made in an LSVCC, the business pays at least 50 per cent of its total wages to employees in the NWT and has at least 50 per cent of its work force in the NWT, and has, with related corporations, total assets worth less than \$50 million and less than 500 employees.
- Where the investment is made in an EVCC, pays at least 75 per cent of its total wages to employees in the NWT and pays at least 75 per cent of its work force in the NWT and has total assets worth less than \$100 million and has, with related corporations, less than 500 employees.
- Where the investment is made in a CEVCC or directly, pays at least 75 per cent of its total wages to employees in the NWT and pays at least 75 per cent of its work force in the NWT and has total assets worth less than \$100 million and less than 500 employees.
- The business has a permanent place of business in the NWT.
- The business has at least 80 per cent of its assets located in the NWT.
- The business does not have publicly traded shares at the time of the investment.

Eligible Shares

Eligible Shares are common shares of “eligible businesses” that are newly issued, and paid for in full in cash by an eligible investor, and:

- The shares must have full voting rights, be eligible to receive dividends, permit attending and voting at AGM’s, and receive a share of assets on the dissolution of the corporation (shares in a co-op must provide full “membership” benefits); and,
- An “eligible business” cannot provide any financial assistance to an investor to assist in the purchase of “eligible shares”.

Eligible Investments

Eligible Investments are restricted to the purchase of common shares in “eligible businesses” and subordinated debt to a maximum of 100 per cent of the value of the eligible shares purchased. The investment proceeds (i.e., sale of shares and subordinated debt) may be used for business start-ups, expansions, and restructuring.

With respect to LSVCCs and CEVCCs, within 12 months of the end of the fiscal year:

- No more than 30 per cent may be held as reserves.
- The balance must be invested in eligible businesses with less than 500 employees.

With respect to EVCCs, within 12 months of the end of the fiscal year end, a minimum of 70 per cent of equity raised must be invested in the business employing the investors, and the balance may be held as “reserves”. With respect to direct investment, 100 per cent of the equity raised is to be invested in the sponsoring business.

Excluded Investments

Excluded Investments include:

- Acquiring control of a company, except for restructurings as may be approved by the Minister.
- Paying dividends or partner draws.
- Paying shareholder/director/officer liabilities (except for EVCCs).
- Reinvestment outside of the Nunavut or the Western Territory.
- Non-arms length transactions, unless specifically approved by the Minister.
- Purchase of anything at above market costs.
- Purchase of securities from an individual.
- Purchase of land, unless incidental to the prime purpose of the business.
- Payment of liabilities to any corporation registered under the Act.

Program Administration

Two Program Administrators will be appointed, for Nunavut and for the Western Territory. The appointments will be based on a review of responses to an advertised request for proposal for services from interested firms and individuals.

Tax credits are only available for the purchase of shares or debt in registered businesses.

A business will apply to the Program Administrator on a prescribed form, and on the recommendation of the Program Administrator, the Minister may approve the application for registration under the program.

Applications may be rejected if they are deemed to not conform to the spirit and intent of the program, if they do not meet the program criteria as set out in the legislation and regulations, or if all available tax credits for the year have been allocated. The Program Administrator will not be responsible for judging the quality or risk of the investment - the assessment of the quality/risk of the investment will remain a matter for consideration by the Investor.

The key roles of the Program Administrators will include:

- Receiving applications for registration from firms/venture capital funds wishing to sell shares eligible for an equity tax credit.
- Recommending the approval/rejection of the application for registration to the Minister responsible.
- Receiving annual performance reports from firms wishing to remain registered under the program.
- Issuing an annual public report setting out a listing of currently “registered firms” and costs/benefits of the program.
- Setting a fee schedule to recover the cost of registering firms under the program.

For further information contact: Fiscal Policy Division
Government of the Northwest Territories
Phone: (867) 920-6436



98-110

Federal Minister to Review Nav Canada Fees

YELLOWKNIFE (September 25) – A lobbying effort by the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety, has persuaded the Federal Minister of Transportation, David Collenette to mitigate the effect of proposed Nav Canada fees on the NWT and other remote regions.

GNWT Minister of Transportation, Jim Antoine organized the lobby effort yesterday in Regina. His efforts were rewarded by a commitment from the federal minister to investigate the cost implications of Nav Canada fees and to mitigate their impact on the economies of northern and remote communities.

“I think we have accomplished everything we asked for,” Mr. Antoine said today. “This is an excellent example of what we can do when we work together.”

Fees were introduced by Nav Canada Ltd. to offset the transfer of navigation services from a publicly supported system to a commercialized full-cost-recovery system. While such fees would reduce the cost of air transportation in high traffic areas of Canada, the fee structure would have increased the cost of air transportation in the North by \$7.5 million.

For more information, contact: Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
Tel: (867) 920-3460



98-111

Changes Improve Student Financial Assistance Program

YELLOWKNIFE (September 28) — The system of processing applications for Student Financial Assistance (SFA) has been improved as a result of recommendations by the ministerial forum on Student Financial Assistance.

Most SFA applications are now being processed within ten working days following the receipt of necessary documents. As a result, a large majority of northern students were able to receive their money during the first week of the fall semester.

More training for staff, better communication and a commitment of additional resources during the program's busiest months of the year are accounting for this year's improvements. The SFA program received more than 1900 applications from students wishing to attend a post-secondary institution this fall.

This summer, the Department of Education Culture and Employment hired consultants to undertake an administrative review of the SFA Program. Their final report will be available at the end of September. It will outline further recommendations to streamline the application and payment processes and enhance communication with students and the public.

The administrative review of the program was undertaken following last year's Ministerial Forum on Student Financial Assistance. The department will continue to work on redesigning its SFA program model to address recommendations of the Ministerial Forum on Student Financial Assistance.

For more information, contact: Linda Ecklund
Acting Director, Income Support
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7746
Fax: (867) 873-0443



98-112

Hay River Hosts First NWT Forestry Conference

HAY RIVER (October 1) – Forest resource specialists from the Northwest Territories, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon will gather in Hay River October 5 - 8 for the first forestry conference ever held in the NWT. Approximately 130 speakers and delegates will share their knowledge and expertise on forest management and development to promote sustainable forest management in the NWT.

Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, says he's pleased with the diverse delegation of community, business and government interests the conference will bring together. "Our forests yield many products and benefits for northerners. It is important, however, that we do not lose sight of our government's commitment to sustainable development. The best way to achieve that goal is through co-operation with all users of our forests."

Sponsored by RWED's Forest Management Division, the primary goal of the conference is to encourage dialogue and establish working relationships among aboriginal organizations, government, industry and public users of our natural forests.

This unique conference will take place on the Hay River Dene Reserve, with field trips to the communities of Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Fort Resolution and Hay River. The program will include plenary sessions, workshops, a trade show, social activities and guided field trips. The field trips have been chosen to profile a wide range of forest resource development approaches.

Conference workshops will address such topics as modern forest management practices, the ecology of northern forests, cultural and socio-economic use of the forest, integrated resource management planning, forest management technology, developing primary and secondary forest industries, political and regulatory issues, training and employment in forest management, and commercial forestry opportunities.

For further information, contact: Peter Redvers

Northern Forestry Conference
Tel: (867) 874-4405
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Ken Caine

Resources, Wildlife & Economic Dev.
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98-113

New Runway Opens in Deline

DELINE (October 1) – An official ceremony was held today to open the new community airport in Deline.

“This new airport is a testament to the spirit and drive of the community of Deline,” said Stephen Kakfwi, Sahtu, MLA and Minister of Resources Wildlife and Economic Development. “I want to congratulate the community on its resolution in seeing this important project completed.”

The four-million dollar airport relocation project, a joint effort between businesses serving Deline and local, territorial and federal governments, will better meet the community’s long-term growth and air transportation requirements said Mr Kakfwi, who also brought greetings from GNWT Transportation Minister Jim Antoine.

The community’s airport was relocated and extended to facilitate community expansion and improve the safety and efficiency of flight operations in the community. Construction on the airport was scheduled over a four-year period to maximize training, employment and business development opportunities for the community.

Also in attendance today was Western Arctic MP, Ethel Blondin-Andrew who secured federal funding support for the project.

For more information, contact: Ron Williams
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
Tel: (867) 920-3460



98-114

Educational Leadership Symposium held in Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE (October 5) - The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, in conjunction with Aurora College, recently hosted a symposium in Yellowknife on educational leadership in the Western Northwest Territories.

Delegates representing various aboriginal organizations, community leaders, divisional education councils/authorities, Aurora College and the department gathered, in part, to identify future skills school principals will require to keep pace with the NWT's rapidly changing education system.

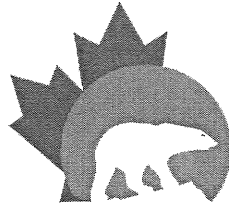
The Northwest Territories, Ontario and New Brunswick are the only Canadian jurisdictions where principal certification is mandatory. The NWT program has been delivered for the past ten years in conjunction with Aurora College. Since its inception, the program has certified 208 principals and is considered one of the best programs of its kind in Canada.

"I am extremely impressed with the practical and useful recommendations, which came from this focus group," Mr. Dent said. "School principals play a pivotal role in the delivery of education and it is crucial that they have the skills required to ensure excellence in our schools."

Recommendations from this symposium will be sent to divisional education councils and district education authorities and schools. They will be incorporated into the development of future principal certification and other leadership programs for the Northwest Territories.

For more information, contact:

Malcolm Farrow
Director, Board Operations
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 920-8990
Fax: (867) 873-0338



98-115

Labour Market Development Agreement now in effect

YELLOWKNIFE (October 5) – Under the Canada-Northwest Territories Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is now responsible for labour market development in the Northwest Territories.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) will coordinate and deliver employment programs and services based on the goals of the active employment measures outlined in the Employment Insurance Legislation. These measures include job listings, career assessment, career and employment counseling, and educational training and employment programs.

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) will retain responsibility for labour market activities that are pan-Canadian in scope. These responsibilities include Income Security benefits, Labour programs, Employment Insurance Benefits, federal programs for youth, persons with disabilities and the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy. HRDC and ECE will share the responsibility of the collection and dissemination of labour market information.

“Human Resources Development Canada and Education, Culture and Employment have worked together to establish a service delivery network that is responsive and accessible to clients,” said Mark Cleveland, Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Russ Brown, HRDC Director General for Alberta/NWT said, “Through HRDC and ECE’s collective efforts, we can help Canadians in the NWT find and keep work.”

The Government of the Northwest Territories is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide access to services and programs through the Canada-Northwest Territories Service Centres. These Centres will be located in Yellowknife, Inuvik, Hay River, Rankin Inlet, Fort Smith, Fort Simpson and Iqaluit.

For information, contact: **Lesley Allen**
Assistant Deputy Minister,
Culture and Careers
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7252
Fax: (867) 873-0155



98-116

Resource Training Receives Additional Funding Support

YELLOWKNIFE (October 6) - Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent today announced that Aurora College will spend an additional \$382,000 this year on training northerners to work in the oil, gas and mining industries.

“Resource industries are important to the North,” said Mr. Dent. “We need to ensure that northerners have the skills they need for jobs that are available in these industries.”

This increased support comes at an important time. BHP’s Ekati mine will officially begin mining this month while additional diamond projects are expected to open within the next two years. Renewed activity in oil and gas industries in both the Sahtu and Deh Cho regions are also creating employment opportunities for northerners.

The NWT Mine Training Committee, Aurora College and Education, Culture and Employment have worked closely in the past to respond to training needs in this growth sector. Thanks to additional funding, programs will be offered this year for future driller blasters, camp managers, caterers, environmental workers, surveyor helpers and rock truck personnel.

“Additional funding makes it possible for us to plan a number of programs that can meet current industry training needs,” said Dan O’Neill of the Mine Training Committee. “It will enable the industrial sector to do much of their hiring right here in the North.”

Aurora College is also excited about the training opportunities provided by the new funding. “We will be able to offer our students greater training options for a wider variety of industrial jobs,” said Danny Yakeleya, Chair of the Aurora College Board of Governors. “We look forward to working with our partners in both the mining and oil and gas sectors to ensure trained Northerners are gaining employment in their fields.” The college will be announcing delivery locations and dates for their new programs in coming months.

.../2

Resource Training Receives Additional Funding Support: Page 2

Earlier this year, the Mine Training Committee, Aurora College and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology signed an agreement to work together on training initiatives in the NWT. This partnership will ensure that northerners are prepared for jobs at both the skilled and technical/professional levels in the mining industry.

For information, contact:

Bill Hoggarth

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Education Culture & Employment
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Tim Gauthier

Manager
Public/Corporate Affairs
Aurora College
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98-117

NWT/Alberta MOU

YELLOWKNIFE (October 6) – The Premiers of the Northwest Territories and Alberta today signed an agreement to cooperate on the further development of Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Premier of the Northwest Territories Don Morin and Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in a ceremony at the Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife.

“This MOU confirms our commitment to continue working together in the areas that concern both our governments,” Mr. Morin said. “This is an important step to developing programs and agreements that will further benefit people in the NWT and Alberta.”

As part of the MOU, the two governments agree to investigate opportunities to develop more specific agreements in areas including:

- Trade
- Transportation
- Tourism
- Regional and Community Economic Development Initiatives
- Resource Development
- Health
- Education and Training

A steering committee, with representatives of both governments, will be responsible for making sure the intent of the MOU is fulfilled and for recommending any further agreements. The MOU remains in effect until May 1, 2003 at which time it may be renewed or amended.

For more information, contact: Office of the Press Secretary
Government of the Northwest Territories
(867) 669-2302

Hon. Don Morin
Speaking Notes
Signing of Alberta/NWT MOU
Oct. 6, 1998.

Premier Klein, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It's a pleasure to be here today as we witness another chapter in the long shared history of the Northwest Territories and the Province of Alberta.

The links that join us go back to before there was an NWT or a Province of Alberta. Aboriginal people traveled north and south across the 60th parallel. The area south of Great Slave Lake was an important meeting place for many generations.

People have continued to move back and forth over the border. Alberta is the major source of the people who move to the Northwest Territories. On a personal note, my own mother came north to Hay River from Fort Vermilion, Alberta.

There is a long history of commercial ties between us. Starting with the fur trade, people in the North and Alberta have exchanged goods and resources.

I'm proud to say my family was part of this exchange. My grandfather, my father and my uncle were trappers. My father also worked as a fisherman on Great Slave Lake. Before there was a road, the fish was shipped by freezer barge. Today, we have the Mackenzie Highway. We all know how much that highway has done to open the North to trade and development. And how much Albertans and northerners have gained from that development.

Today, Alberta is our second-largest trading partner. We have long and proven commercial links, whether it's northern bush pilots bringing up supplies or oil and gas exploration in the Mackenzie Valley.

The agreement we're signing today will strengthen those links. It brings us closer and gives us a way to build on what we already have.

As Premier of the Northwest Territories, I'd like to thank Premier Klein and our other friends from Alberta for coming today. I know we all look forward to building our future together.

**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – ALBERTA
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

BETWEEN:

The Government of the **Northwest Territories** (represented herein by the Premier) hereinafter referred to as the “GNWT”,

And

The Government of the Province of **Alberta** (represented by the Premier) hereinafter referred to as the “Government of Alberta”.

Whereas the GNWT and the Government of Alberta, as well as specific communities within each jurisdiction, have a history of cooperation in a broad range of services, inter-jurisdictional commerce and other areas of human and economic development.

Whereas the GNWT and the Government of Alberta agree that there is potential for development in northern communities which could enhance economic conditions in or affecting these communities.

Whereas the GNWT and the Government of Alberta agree that the development of northern communities is hampered by a wide range of obstacles heightened by economic, climatic, demographic, social and logistical conditions present or affecting these communities which differ greatly from southern Canadian communities.

Whereas through cooperation and a coordinated approach in addressing northern circumstances, governments can make more effective use of resources, develop and expand sources of opportunity and implement programs and joint means of fostering economic growth.

Whereas a cooperative approach to development could have a fundamental impact especially on the regional development of Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Whereas a blended developmental approach which considers both government programs and policies, as well as private sector activities, services and opportunities, is required if Northern Alberta and Northwest Territories residents are to share in the development of improved regional economies.

Whereas long term planning of cooperative development initiatives is essential if regional and inter-jurisdictional initiatives are to respond to emerging opportunities and the ongoing needs to regions, communities, and residents.

The Government of the Northwest Territories and The Government of the Province of Alberta therefore agree as follows:

PURPOSE:

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to confirm the commitments between the jurisdictions to develop cooperative measures and agreements to:
 - Develop communities, services and infrastructure of Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.
 - Jointly focus on increased participation by residents in the economic life of Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.
 - Maintain and improve cooperation, consultation and joint planning in areas of mutual concern and priority in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.
 - Investigate the potential for joint initiatives directed at the strategic development of specific sectors, areas of joint endeavour and/or inter-jurisdictional cooperation, and to;
 - Investigate the potential for and to develop options directed at economic partnerships with the private sector.

OBJECTIVES:

2. The Government of Alberta and the GNWT agree that the following objectives will guide the development of measures and agreements incorporating strategic and sector specific development initiatives:
 - a) Improved Government of Alberta/GNWT coordination of programs, opportunities and initiatives as they relate to both economic and human development;
 - b) Increased and improved provision and usage of community, regional, institutional and transportation infrastructure;
 - c) Coordinated development of the human resource base through focused development in the areas of training, education, and youth development;
 - d) Developmental strategies based on priority needs as expressed by northern residents, as well as the Government of Alberta and the GNWT;
 - e) Recognition of the principles of sustainable development capable of incorporation into development strategies;
 - f) Flexibility to respond in an ongoing manner to changing Northwest Territories and Northern Alberta development circumstances.

PRIORITIES FOR GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA/GNWT COOPERATION:

3. It is recognized between the jurisdictions that programs and policies which affect the economic development of Northern Alberta and Northwest Territories residents and communities fall under the responsibility of many different Ministers of both the GNWT and the Government of Alberta. Targeted policies and programs need to be reviewed in order to ensure maximum benefit and effectiveness to residents of the Northwest Territories and Alberta and reflect changing economic circumstances.
4. The parties agree to incorporate environmental stewardship, based on the principles of sustainable development, as a integral part of economic activity.
5. The jurisdictions will work together and, where applicable, will coordinate initiatives through the Ministers responsible for various programs and policies affecting development in agreed upon priority areas. These priority areas represent sectors of common interest to the jurisdictions and will form the basis of their joint collaboration under this memorandum. Effort will be made to build on opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and coordination, to analyze gaps and barriers in existing programs and services and to study potential areas of cooperation.
6. The GNWT and the Government of Alberta agree to cooperate in the investigation of opportunities aimed at pursuing specific measures and preparing more detailed development agreements which may include, but will not be limited to the following sectors:
 - 1) Trade
 - 2) Transportation
 - 3) Tourism
 - 4) Regional and Community Economic Development Initiatives
 - 5) Resource Development
 - 6) Health
 - 7) Education and Training

JOINT ACTION AND COOPERATION:

7. The GNWT and the Government of Alberta will agree on programming responsibilities, overall resource levels and areas of common focus prior to the signing of any additional proposed agreements. The Governments will cooperate in the identification of areas of mutual priority and related areas of jurisdictional focus as well as sources of support which may be used in implementation strategies aimed at long term development.
8. The GNWT and the Government of Alberta agree to pursue discussions with a view to signing more detailed agreements where appropriate .

COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

9. A GNWT/Government of Alberta Steering Committee, co-chaired by representatives, approved by the Premiers, will be responsible for ensuring the intent of the MOU is fulfilled and for recommending any subsequent agreements to Ministers and Premiers. Alberta Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs will be represented ex officio on the Steering Committee.

10. The Steering Committee will recommend management procedures for the implementation of the agreement, including the accession to this MOU by the Government of Nunavut following division of the Northwest Territories on April 1, 1999.

11. This Memorandum of Understanding comes into effect on the 6th day of October 1998 and shall terminate on the 6th day of October 2003. The Agreement may be renewed or amended by mutual consent of the parties.

Signed

The Honourable Ralph Klein
Premier
Government of Alberta

The Honourable Don Morin
Premier
Government of
Northwest Territories



98-118

Skills for Healthy Relationships program now in northern schools

YELLOWKNIFE (October 6) - The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) is distributing a comprehensive sexuality education and HIV/AIDS prevention program, to district education councils/authorities and NWT schools offering grade 7 and 8 programs.

The program, 'Skills for Healthy Relationships' (SHR), was developed in response to a 1996 study, conducted by the GNWT Department of Education, that showed high levels of sexual activity, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy among young people in the north.

"Skills for Healthy Relationships differs from other programs of its kind because of a special emphasis on skills development, peer support for responsible behaviour and parental involvement", says Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. "Studies show that it is not enough for young people to simply have information. They must also be equipped with the communication skills and practical abilities to avoid risk situations."

The new program is an adaptation of one made available by the Canadian Ministries of Education in 1994. It was originally pilot-tested by classroom teachers and health educators in 1995. Pilot educators in northern communities identified SHR as an excellent resource and reported high student interest in the program. To make the program more effective, they recommended that it be adapted to reflect a northern context. Scenarios in student activities have since been altered to reflect situations relevant to northern teens.

Northern statistics, cultural background, suggested adaptations, and multi-level groups were also added to the SHR program. A parent video, "Your Turn To Do The Talking" was produced in English, French and eight aboriginal languages. Through its use, parents and community members can learn more about, and participate in, the sex education of their youth.

For more information, contact:

Fiona O'Donoghue

Director, Early Childhood and School Services
Education, Culture and Employment

Tel: (867) 873-7175

Fax: (873-0109)



Correction to News Release

No. 98-118 released October 6, 1998.

Skills for Healthy Relationships Programs Now in Northern Schools

Contact information provided for Fiona O'Donoghue is incorrect.
News Release should read:

Fiona O'Donoghue
Director, Early Childhood and School Services
Education Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7176
Fax: (867) 873-0109



98-119

Fire Prevention Week

YELLOWKNIFE (October 7) – October 4 to 10, 1998 marks Fire Prevention Week across the Northwest Territories.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs encourages all NWT residents to participate in Fire Prevention Week activities in their communities.

The rate of fire loss in the NWT continues to be three times the national average. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is working with community governments and the NWT Fire Chiefs' Association to develop public education strategies to reduce the number of accidental and deliberate fires.

“Through public awareness and fire safety education, we are working to protect people and property by reducing the number of fires that occur in our communities,” said Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Manitok Thompson.

In addition to the traditional Learn Not To Burn Program, MACA has also launched the Juvenile Fire Setters Intervention Program to work with youth prone to starting fires. The Department is also working to develop strategies that will improve fire protection systems in communities and help community fire departments to effectively deliver fire prevention programs to NWT residents.

For more information on Fire Prevention, please contact your local Fire Chief or Regional Assistant Fire Marshal:

Wolfgang Dautel	Assistant Fire Marshal, Baffin Region	(867) 979-5188
Tim Hinds	Assistant Fire Marshal, Keewatin Region	(867) 645-5042
John Gould	Assistant Fire Marshal, Kitikmeot Region	(867) 983-7349
Tim Pawluk	Assistant Fire Marshal, Inuvik Region	(867) 777-7297
Kellie Mitchell	Assistant Fire Marshal, South Slave/Deh Cho	(867) 874-5077

For further information, contact: **Eric Bussey**
Director, Emergency Services Division
Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 920-6133



98-120

Supreme Court Dismisses UNW's Bad Faith Bargaining Complaint and Appoints Mediator

YELLOWKNIFE (October 8) – The Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories has dismissed the UNW's bad faith bargaining allegation and has appointed a mediator under the Public Service Act to assist the parties in their efforts to resolve all the outstanding collective bargaining issues.

Finance Minister John Todd said that he is encouraged by the decision and hopes that the two sides will get back to the bargaining table and quickly conclude a collective agreement. Mr. Todd said that he would like to see a collective agreement concluded in time to get the wage and benefit increases in the hands of employees before Christmas. He said that in order for employees to take advantage of the tax benefits from the Northern Allowance for 1998, the money must be in the hands of employees before December 31, 1998.

Mr. Todd said that government employees provide important and essential services to the people of the NWT. The significant increases that are offered show the government's appreciation for dedicated public service by its employees. The increases that are being offered will also assist the government in retaining and recruiting employees.

Mr. Todd said that if the parties do not conclude a negotiated Collective Agreement before March 31, 1999, there would be no way for employees to get their increases for the 1998/99 fiscal year. After April 1, 1999, there will be two separate governments with their separate public services. Separate unions will represent employees of each of the two governments. This means that the two new governments will, in reality, only be in a position to negotiate from April 1, 1999 onwards. The only way to get a collective agreement for the 1998/99 fiscal year is to negotiate one before March 31, 1999.

For more information, contact: Herb Hunt

Director, Labour Relations
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 920-8900



98-121

NWT supports appeal of Firearms Act ruling

YELLOWKNIFE (Oct. 15) -- The Attorney General of the Northwest Territories, Goo Arlooktoo, plans to support an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada concerning the constitutionality of the federal Firearms Act and related Firearms Program.

"This new legislation is wrong for the North," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "Many northerners rely on firearms to feed their families and they respect rules concerning the safe storage and use of weapons, but this new law makes criminals out of people who fail to complete paperwork. We cannot sit idly by and accept that."

The Government of the Northwest Territories joined with Alberta and four other jurisdictions in asking the Alberta Court of Appeal to rule on the constitutionality of the Firearms Act. In a split decision, the court decided the legislation was valid. Alberta now has the right to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. As an intervenor in the original case, the Government of the Northwest Territories automatically has the right to intervenor status in the Supreme Court appeal.

The new Firearms Act is set to be implemented on Dec. 1, 1998. The Government of the Northwest Territories has refused to participate in the implementation and has transferred responsibility for the Firearms Program back to the federal government.

"We want no part of this unjust legislation and we have made our opposition very clear," Mr. Arlooktoo said. "We have taken every available opportunity to explain to the federal government that this legislation does not reflect the reality of the Northwest Territories. I look forward to another chance to express our concerns, northern concerns, this time to the Supreme Court of Canada."

For more information, contact: Mr. Paul Bachand

Executive Assistant to Hon. Goo Arlooktoo
(867) 669-2315



98-122

Departments Promote Active Living For Healthier Communities

YELLOWKNIFE (October 21) – The Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Health and Social Services participated in the launch of a new national Physical Activity Guide in the NWT today.

Canada's newest Physical Activity Guide promotes active living and includes simple guidelines on how to achieve health benefits by being physically active.

"We have an important role to play in encouraging active living, and I am pleased to share this valuable guide and other resource materials with communities", said Manitok Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

The key to active living is to participate in physical activity every single day. This can range from playing organized sports and exercising to going for a walk, shoveling snow, hunting and fishing, or basically anything that requires being active. Research has shown that regular physical activity has a significant positive impact on mental health and general well-being.

"Active northerners means healthier northerners and that's in everyone's best interest", said Kelvin Ng, Minister of Health and Social Services. "Small changes can go a long way towards helping northerners become more active and work towards healthier communities."

Parents, teachers and other community leaders can act as role models by being active with their children.

The Physical Activity Guide was developed in consultation with many groups and organizations across Canada. The Departments of Health and Social Services and Municipal and Community Affairs will distribute the Guide to a wide range of health care providers, schools, regional fitness and recreation coordinators and sport organizations throughout the Northwest Territories.

For more information, contact: Chris Szabo

Manager, Sport and Recreation Programs
Municipal and Community Affairs
(867) 873-7757

Vicki Lafferty

A/Manager, Health and Wellness Promotion
Health and Social Services
(867) 920-3056



98-123

P-3 Bidders Selected

YELLOWKNIFE (October 22) -- The Government of the NWT has selected three developers to submit proposals on a new college campus facility for Aurora College in Inuvik, through a Public Private Partnership (P3).

Chairman of the Financial Management Board, John Todd and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent, announced today the results of the GNWT's Request For Qualifications (RFQ) process for the financing, design, construction, ownership and maintenance of a new college campus facility for Aurora College in Inuvik.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment recently requested interested firms to submit bidding qualifications on the P3 project.

As a result of a review conducted by the interdepartmental team, the following developers have been selected and will be requested to submit full proposals on the project:

1. Ninety North, in co-operation with Pin Matthews, both of Yellowknife;
2. Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Development Corporations of Inuvik, in co-operation with Ferguson Simek Clark of Yellowknife; and
3. Bellanca Developments Ltd. of Yellowknife, in co-operation with Park Sanders Adam Viske Architects Ltd. of Yellowknife Nishi-Khon/PCL Constructors Ltd. of Yellowknife.

Under the P3 approach, developers are invited to submit bidding qualifications in response to an RFQ. The review process at this stage focuses on the completeness of the company's team, experience, depth of skills and the financing strengths that the potential proponents will bring to the project.

Developers who are successful at the RFQ stage will be invited to submit full proposals. A second rigorous evaluation of proposals will result in the government signing a lease agreement with the successful developer.

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P3 Bidders Selected: Page 2

Minister of Finance, John Todd, announced the P3 initiative last January, as a means to increase the GNWT's current annual investment in public infrastructure by up to \$100 million. Under the P3 approach, the government enters into lease arrangements with private sector partners for the provision of public infrastructure.

For more information contact:

Dan Daniels

Education, Culture and Employment
(867) 920-8827

Debbie DeLancey

Director, Budgeting and Evaluation
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 873-7079



98-124

Kakfwi Promotes Diamond Opportunities in Europe

YELLOWKNIFE (October 22) - Stephen Kakfwi, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, is meeting with diamond manufacturers in London and Antwerp to promote business opportunities in the Northwest Territories.

The building blocks have been put into place which will work towards establishing the Northwest Territories as the next world diamond centre," Mr. Kakfwi said. "We are now meeting with those major international diamond manufacturers who have expressed an interest in pursuing opportunities in the NWT."

Over the past six months, the NWT has marked the opening of BHP's Ekati Mine, the approval of the NWT's first diamond manufacturing facility and several agreements to pursue projects and programs relating to the secondary diamond industry.

Mr. Kakfwi will be promoting the NWT's diamond opportunities in the hopes of attracting international diamond manufacturers to invest in cutting and polishing facilities in the Northwest Territories.

He will also be meeting with the Central Selling Organization (CSO) to discuss the opening of an office in the NWT, and with Canadian Embassy officials in Brussels and London to raise the profile of diamond opportunities in the region.

For further information, contact:

Mr. Joseph Handley
Deputy Minister
Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
Tel: (867) 920-8048
Fax: (867) 873-0563



98-125

Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board Seeks Trustees

YELLOWKNIFE (October 22) -- Minister of Health and Social Services Kelvin Ng is seeking applications from Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah residents who are interested in serving as Trustees for the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board.

The Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board establishes policies that direct the activities of Yellowknife Health and Social Services, but does not get involved in the day to day operations of the organization.

The board was established under the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act. The board's operations were originally overseen by a Public Administrator.

It is expected that the first board will consist of one chairperson and seven members. Board trustees are expected to represent the community as a whole, rather than one particular group or area.

"This is a positive step for Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah," said Mr. Ng. "The new Board gives local residents an opportunity to help shape health and social services in their community. I encourage anyone interested in representing their community as a Board Trustee to apply."

Yellowknife Health and Social Services is responsible for all public health, home care, health promotion, health nutrition and social service programs operated in the communities of Dettah, N'Dilo and Yellowknife.

It employs approximately 60 people and has an operating budget of approximately \$7 million. It also provides \$6 million in funding for programs operated in Yellowknife by health related non-government organizations.

Yellowknife Health and Social Services' mission is to provide "a holistic (emotional, mental, social, spiritual and cultural) integrated range of services of health and social service programs to residents of Yellowknife, Dettah and N'Dilo."

For more information, please contact:

Rick Upton
Manager, Board Operations
Department of Health and Social Services
Phone: 867-920-3074



98-126

Finance Ministers Sign Funding Agreement for New Northwest Territories

YELLOWKNIFE (October 23) – Today in Yellowknife, NWT Finance Minister John Todd and Paul Martin, Minister of Finance for Canada, signed an agreement on new financing arrangements for the western Northwest Territories to come into effect on April 1, 1999.

The Formula Financing Agreement between Canada and the Northwest Territories will determine the Grant from Canada, which will represent about 70 per cent of the new territory's revenues.

Under the Agreement, Canada will provide annual funding to the territorial government to enable it to deliver programs and services to NWT residents. The payment is an unconditional Grant that will allow the Northwest Territories to allocate its resources according to the priorities of the NWT legislature. Federal funding through the Grant in the first year of the Agreement is estimated to total approximately \$490 million. This, in addition to tax and other revenues generated by the Government of the Northwest Territories, will provide an estimated \$700 million in revenues to the new government.

"This Agreement will provide a secure source of funding for the Government of the new Northwest Territories", said Mr. Todd. "It ensures a solid base from which the Northwest Territories can work towards greater economic and fiscal self-reliance."

The Agreement is the culmination of two years of extensive discussions between the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, the Office of the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut, the Western Coalition, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Minister Martin and Mr. Jack Anawak, Interim Commissioner of Nunavut, signed a similar Agreement this morning in Iqaluit with Mr. Todd in attendance. Overall, the funding provided under the two agreements represents an increase of approximately \$95 million over the current level of federal transfers.

"At a time when there are still many uncertainties about the Western Territory this Agreement provides some stability," said Floyd Roland, Chair of the Western Coalition.

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Finance Ministers Sign Funding Agreement for Northwest Territories: Page 2

The formula, which determines annual funding levels, will retain the basic structure of previous federal-territorial funding arrangements. In addition, there will be important improvements in the design of the formula mechanisms, which will increase the responsiveness of formula financing to economic and social changes and will result in greater administrative simplicity. The Northwest Territories Agreement has a term of five years, and will expire March 31, 2004.

For more detail on Territorial Formula Financing, please consult the attached backgrounder.

For more information please contact: Margaret Melhorn

Deputy Minister of Finance
Government of the NWT
(867) 873-7117
www.fin.gov.nt.ca

Backgrounder

Finance Ministers Sign Funding Agreement for New Northwest Territories

Current Arrangements

The GNWT currently receives an unconditional Grant from the federal government under the Formula Financing Agreement. This Grant is used to finance a wide range of government programs and services including health care, education and other social and economic programs. The current Agreement with the federal government expires on March 31, 1999.

For 1998-99, the GNWT's Grant entitlement was budgeted at \$826 million. Although the GNWT raises revenue from taxation (e.g., personal income tax, corporate income tax etc.), the Grant will account for about 75 per cent of total GNWT revenues this year.

The Formula Financing Grant is determined by a formula which takes into account territorial expenditure needs and the revenue raising capability of the territorial governments.

Gross Expenditure Base (GEB)

In the formula, expenditure needs are represented by the Gross Expenditure Base (GEB). The GEB is escalated each year by a proxy for the change in territorial spending needs. The escalator is calculated by multiplying the growth in provincial-local government spending in Canada by the growth in the territorial population relative to that of Canada. The escalator is calculated as a three-year moving average for both provincial-local spending and population growth.

In order to ensure that the Grant remains affordable for the federal government, the current formula contains a ceiling on the annual GEB escalator. The ceiling is equal to the three-year moving average of growth in nominal Canadian GDP.

In order to protect the territorial government from significant year-to-year declines in revenues, there is also a floor for the annual GEB escalator. The floor comes into effect if the provincial-local government spending component of the escalator falls by more than one per cent. In such a case, the Grant is topped up by an amount equal to the difference between the actual GEB and the GEB calculated as if provincial-local government spending had fallen by one per cent.

Revenues

The annual Grant is calculated as the GEB less a measure of the territories' revenue-raising capabilities. Revenues over which the territories have no control, such as transfer payments from Canada, are measured in actual amounts received. Revenues for which the territories control tax rates are adjusted for territorial tax effort.

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The ability to raise revenue is estimated by measuring the revenues the territories would collect if territorial tax rates (tax effort) were the same as average provincial rates. Different economic circumstances in the north are taken into account by reducing the tax effort factor by 15 per cent.

The Economic Development Incentive (EDI) is designed to promote northern economic development and greater self-sufficiency. Twenty per cent of any revenue increases arising from economic growth are retained by the territories and are not offset by decreases in the Grant.

Formula Funding Arrangements Post - 1999

The new Formula Financing Agreements will come into effect on April 1, 1999 for both Nunavut and the western Northwest Territories.

The key elements of the structure of the current financing arrangements for the GNWT will remain in the new Agreement. The following elements of the existing formula will be changed:

Calculating Gross Expenditure Bases (GEB's)

The GEB's for both Nunavut and the western Northwest Territories will be based on historical funding requirements. In order to establish the funding needed to maintain programs and services, the Government of the Northwest Territories reviewed its 1996-97 spending on programs and capital. Administrative costs were estimated separately based on the existing government structure in the western Northwest Territories and on the Footprints 2 model of decentralized government in Nunavut.

Spending Needs

Funding levels will be based on identified spending needs for Nunavut of \$587 million and \$690 million for the Western Territory. This represents about \$95 million in incremental costs associated with running two governments rather than one. The costing studies underlying these figures were reviewed by all parties to the Formula Financing Arrangements including the Office of the Interim Commissioner, NTI, the Western Coalition and Finance Canada.

Escalator

The spending needs for both territories will be adjusted for revenues excluded from the Formula and then escalated by GEB escalator for Nunavut and the western Northwest Territories for 1997-98 and 1998-99 in order to determine GEB's in 1999-00. The method of escalating the GEB's will be the same as in the existing arrangement with the exception that separate population growth rates will be used for Nunavut and the western NWT.

GEB's for the new Agreement

Once the 1999-2000 GEB's have been calculated, they will be escalated in the same manner as in the current Agreement. There have been some modifications to the escalator components.

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Backgrounder - Finance Ministers Sign Funding Agreement for New Northwest Territories

The measure of provincial-local government spending has been expanded. The new measure will more closely reflect the spending requirements of territorial governments.

The ceiling on the GEB escalator has been changed. In 1999-2000, the ceiling will not apply to the GEB escalator. Beginning in 2000-01, the cumulative growth of the GEB will be limited to the cumulative growth in nominal Canadian GDP over the term of the Agreements. An annual cap equal to the growth in nominal Canadian GDP will apply to the GEB in any year. The new ceiling allows the territories to recoup escalation 'lost' to the ceiling in a given year, if Canadian economic growth exceeds provincial-local spending growth in subsequent years.

Revenues

The treatment of revenues in the formula will be simplified. The largest territorial revenue sources (e.g. personal income tax, corporate income tax, fuel tax, tobacco tax) will be treated in the same manner as in the current Agreement. Smaller revenue sources (e.g. fees and licenses) will be estimated in 1999-2000 and will be unchanged over the remainder of the term of the Agreement. This will simplify the measurement of smaller revenues for both territorial governments.

1999-00 Budget Revenues

Based on current data, the 1999-00 budget revenues are estimated to be \$615 million in Nunavut and \$700 million in the Western Territory. These estimates will change prior to April 1, 1999 as the data used in the formula is periodically updated.

Term of the Agreements

The Formula Financing Agreements for the western NWT will be in effect for the period from April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2004. The Agreement for Nunavut will be for an initial period of two years. The Agreement with Nunavut contains an option for the Government of Nunavut to renew for an additional three-year period.

For more information please contact: Margaret Melhorn

Deputy Minister of Finance
Government of the NWT
(867) 873-7117
www.fin.gov.nt.ca



98-127

New Legislation Governs Family Law

YELLOWKNIFE (October 26) -- Two new acts on family law in the Northwest Territories come into effect on November 1, 1998.

The *Family Law Act* and the *Children's Law Act* are part of a family law reform package developed by the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services. Together with the *Child and Family Services Act* and the *Adoption Act* they will replace existing family law in the NWT.

The *Family Law Act* includes a new definition of spouse, a new framework for domestic contracts, and new provisions for dividing family property and determining possession of the family home in the event of a separation.

The *Children's Law Act* includes new provisions on custody of and access to children and includes guidelines for child support obligations that are similar to the federal Child Support Guidelines made under the *Divorce Act*.

The government first identified a need for new legislation in 1988. That's when the Working Group on Family Law Reform was created to conduct consultation and research into the area of family law and to provide advice on future reform.

Although it has been a long time coming, Minister of Justice Goo Arlooktoo says he's pleased with the resulting legislation. "This is the overhaul that was needed," he said. "These new laws better reflect the northern reality and ensure that the rights of all NWT residents are protected."

In October, the Department of Justice, with financial assistance from the federal government, opened a family law information office on the first floor of the Yellowknife Courthouse. General information concerning this new legislation can be received by contacting the office.

For more information contact:

Janis Cooper (Re: new acts)
Legal Counsel
Department of Justice
(867) 920-6341

Bev Alexander (Re: information centre)
Family/Civil Law Information Centre
Department of Justice
(867) 873-7044



98-128

Official Name Change - Snare Lake and Broughton Island

YELLOWKNIFE (October 28) – The official names for the communities of Snare Lake and Broughton Island will change November 1, 1998, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

On October 14, 1996 the Dechi Laot'i First Nation Council passed a Band Council Resolution supporting the official change of Snare Lake to the traditional name, Wekweti, (WUK-WU-TEE) which means 'rock lake' or 'snare lake'.

On August 28, 1997 the Broughton Island Hamlet Council passed a motion requesting that the name of their community be changed to Qikiqtarjuaq (QI-KICK-TAAK-JOE-AK) meaning 'big island'. Voters in the community voted in favour of the name change during a 1997 municipal election.

The GNWT's Geographic and Community Names Policy provides a process to officially recognize the traditional names for populated places in the NWT. Many communities in the North have already adopted traditional names, including Iqaluit, Arviat, Taloyoak, Lutsel K'e, Deline, Tsiigehtchic, Tulita, Wha Ti, Kimmirut and Kugluktuk.

For further information, contact: **Randy Freeman**
Territorial Toponymist
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 920-8854
Fax: (867) 873-0205



98-129

Landmark Agreement on Training for Diamond Workers

YELLOWKNIFE (October 28) – Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment signed an agreement today with the Diamond High Council of Antwerp and the Diamond High Council of Canada Inc. The agreement, the first of its kind, will provide for training of diamond workers through Aurora College.

Speaking in Antwerp Belgium, Mr. Dent told the international diamond community that the Northwest Territories is taking advantage of opportunities created by the opening of Canada's first diamond mine to create jobs for northerners in diamond polishing and jewellery manufacturing.

He also expressed appreciation for the joint effort of all the parties which led up to the agreement. "I look forward to January, 1999, when instructors will travel from Antwerp to Yellowknife to deliver the North's first diamond worker training program," said Mr. Dent.

The Diamond High Council, HRD Canada Inc. and the GNWT's Department of Education, Culture and Employment have worked closely for five months to develop the world's first occupational and certification standards for diamond workers. Experts in diamond cutting and polishing from Belgium, Canada and the United States provided their expertise to the department and continue to act as an industry advisory committee to the Minister. The Diamond High Council recruited world diamond experts as advisors and secured the assistance of the Flemish Department of Education in obtaining curriculum and professional profiles for use in Canada's North,

The contract signing ceremony was part of the third annual Financial Times Diamond Conference in Antwerp. International diamond manufacturers, jewellers and other related diamond businesses attended the conference. Diamond activity in Canada's North was the highlight of the conference.

For further information, contact: **Lesley Allen**
Assistant Deputy Minister
Advanced Education and Careers Branch
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7252
Fax: (867) 873-0155



98-130

NWT Justice Minister Promotes New North

YELLOWKNIFE (October 29) -- Justice Minister Goo Arlooktoo spoke today to a gathering of his colleagues from across Canada on the creation of the new territories and the pending emergence of a new North.

“This is the first change to the political map of Canada in 50 years. Mr. Arlooktoo told his audience. “It marks a new beginning of all Canadians.”

Speaking, in Regina, to a meeting of federal, provincial and territorial justice ministers, Mr. Arlooktoo discussed the history and progress of the Division process. He highlighted issues such as single level trial courts, decentralized government, the Nunavut Act and the implications on labour relations and the role of intergovernmental agreements.

The creation of unified courts was of particular interest to the justice ministers. When the new legislation comes into effect on April 1 1998, Nunavut will become the only jurisdiction in Canada to hold such a court system. In the single court system, one level of court will hear all cases.

“I’m very happy to have the opportunity to address these issues at a national level,” Mr. Arlooktoo said. “It’s important for us to take advantage of every opportunity we can to inform Canadians about the major developments in the northern region of their country.”

For further information contact: Gerry Sutton
Assistant Deputy Minister
Department of Justice
Tel: (867) 920-6197



98-131

Canada Career Week

YELLOWKNIFE (October 30) – November 1st to 7th marks Canada Career Week across the country.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, in partnership with the Canada Career Consortium, encourages everyone to get involved in Canada Career Week. Events are being planned across the Northwest Territories to highlight the importance of career planning and to promote career awareness.

Education, Culture and Employment is sponsoring a series of territorial contests for children of all ages, on the theme - *My Dream Job*. Included in this will be a writing contest for high school students and adults. All entries will be displayed and judged during Career Week.

The North Slave Career Centre in Yellowknife is hosting a number of presentations by local businesses throughout the week, and an open house on Friday, November 6th.

“Career planning is essential in helping people reach their career goals,” said Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. “It allows individuals to balance occupational and educational options with personal needs and prepares them for changes that come with each new decision in the development of their career.”

Resource kits have been sent to all schools, colleges, career centres and community learning centres in the Northwest Territories, to assist them in planning their own career week activities.

For further information, contact: **Margaret Purdy**
Learning Resource Coordinator
North Slave Career Centre
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 920-8812
Fax: (867) 873-0423

98-132

Department and Stakeholders to Seek New Approach to Treating Youth Addictions

YELLOWKNIFE (November 2) – Minister of Health and Social Services Kelvin Ng and Northern Addictions Services Board Chairperson Earl Johnson announced today that they will work together with other stakeholders to develop an integrated, holistic model for treating youth addictions in the Northwest Territories.

To help the department and its partners in the addictions treatment field focus on the development of a new model for treating youth addictions, the current Youth Addictions Program at Northern Addictions Services will cease its operations effective December 31, 1998.

The department will continue to offer services to youth with addictions problems on a case-by-case basis while the new treatment model is being developed. Northern Addictions Services will continue to offer addictions treatment services to adults and families.

“Youth addictions often are the result of other underlying problems,” Mr. Johnson said. “To successfully treat the addiction, we have to also treat the other problems. Developing an integrated and holistic model of youth treatment will be an important step toward that goal.”

“The department places a great deal of emphasis on treating youth with addictions problems,” Mr. Ng said. “We recognize youth addictions to be a serious problem and are committed to assisting youth who are having trouble with substance abuse. This move will help us focus on developing a treatment model that will best meet the needs of northern children and youth.”

For further information, contact:	Penny Ballantyne	or	Earl Johnson
	Deputy Minister		Chairperson
	Health and Social Services		Northern Addictions Services Board
	(867) 920-6173		(867) 669-9026



98-133

RWED Minister Shares Vision of the New Western Territory

YELLOWKNIFE (November 5) – The Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Stephen Kakfwi, today addressed a national forum about key challenges and opportunities facing the Northwest Territories after division.

Speaking to a meeting of the National Round Table on the Economy and the Environment in Ottawa, Mr. Kakfwi said he believes the new Western Territory can become an economic force in Confederation. “We are determined to take greater control of our economic future – to move from being an economic under-achiever to a net contributor to the country.”

The Minister indicated that the resolution of land claims and self-government agreements will be key to the future economic success of the new North, and to the way the government addresses sustainable development. Mr. Kakfwi said, “Part of our approach to sustainable development is based on the profound conviction that development should only proceed when the net benefits accrue to Northern people. We also insist that development be allowed to proceed only if it can be done in an environmentally-safe and responsible manner.”

The Minister told members of the Round Table that the Western Territory is home to massive oil and gas fields as well as rich deposits of diamonds, gold and other precious metals and minerals. He used the opportunity to once again urge the federal government to share the wealth and benefits from NWT-based resource projects with the Government of the Northwest Territories.

“We are working hard in the North to capitalize on the incredible opportunities within our grasp,” Mr. Kakfwi said. “We hope we can count on opinion leaders like you to help us realize our vision of equality and prosperity in the new Western Territory in the 21st century.”

**For further information, contact: Lynda Sorensen
Executive Assistant
(867) 669-2366**

98-134

Mediation Session ends Without Agreement, Minister urges Union to Settle

YELLOWKNIFE (November 13) – Time is running out for the Union of Northern Workers to settle a collective agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Finance Minister, John Todd said today. The latest mediation efforts between the government and the UNW ended yesterday without an agreement. The UNW has asked for more time to study proposed rates of pay that are based on the Hay Job Evaluation System.

Finance Minister, John Todd is urging the UNW to settle a collective agreement at the next mediation session, scheduled for Dec 12 – 13, and to give employees an opportunity to vote on that agreement.

“If we do not negotiate a collective agreement in December, we will have missed our last chance to get money into the hands of our employees by the end of this fiscal year. The mandate of this government to settle the collective agreement expires on March 31, 1999, and the collective bargaining process will have to start all over again sometime after April 1, 1999.”

The government has proposed that rates of pay be based on the Hay Job Evaluation System to ensure that all employees are paid equitably. Mr. Todd said that the UNW has to find a way to work with us on this gender neutral Job Evaluation System if we are to achieve a collective agreement.

“This government has done everything it can reasonably do to achieve a fair collective agreement and get money in the hands of our employees. It is now up to the UNW to either conclude an agreement for ratification by employees or else go without a collective agreement for the rest of this fiscal year,” Mr. Todd said.

For more information, contact: Herb Hunt
Director, Labour Relations
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 920-8900



98-135

National Child Day

YELLOWKNIFE (November 19) – Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent and Minister of Health and Social Services, Kelvin Ng are encouraging all northerners to celebrate National Child Day today.

A key objective of National Child Day is to increase awareness and understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy child development. Armed with this knowledge, we can take effective action to help children reach their full potential. National Child Day serves to remind all Canadians that children need love and respect to fulfil their potential. It is a day to listen to children, marvel at their uniqueness, and appreciate all that they have to offer.

National Child Day is marked with special activities in communities across the North and throughout Canada. Each will recognize the important contribution that children make to families and communities and celebrate children for being themselves.

“It is often said that it takes a whole community to raise a child,” said Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. “School, family and culture are examples of the factors that contribute to the development of a healthy child. It is important for us to take time to celebrate our children, not only today, but throughout the year.”

“All northerners have a part to play in ensuring that our children reach their full potential,” said Minister Ng. “National Child Day gives us a chance to think about how we can work together to build a healthy future for our children.”

November 20 was designated National Child Day by the Government of Canada in March 1993 to commemorate the United Nations adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child on November 20, 1959 and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on November 20, 1989. Canada ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognizes a child’s right to survival, protection, development and participation, in December 1991.

For more information, contact:

Fiona O’Donoghue
Director
Early Childhood and School Services
Education, Culture and Employment
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Angus Mackay
Director
Community Programs and Services
Health and Social Services
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98-136

Major Renovation Planned for Arthur Laing Building in Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE (November 20) - The territorial government plans a major renovation of the Arthur Laing Building in downtown Yellowknife. Plans for refurbishing the well-known government office building were announced today by the Minister of Public Works and Services, Jim Antoine.

"While the budget for the project has not yet been approved, we expect that the proposed building renovations and tenant improvements will be a significant benefit to local contractors and workers," Mr. Antoine said.

The government had earlier hoped to sell the Laing Building. However, responses to the public Request for Proposals were not as high as anticipated. "Selling the building at a low rate does not make good economic sense," Mr. Antoine said. "The best value for our dollar in this situation is to fix up the building and continue to use it for government offices."

Mr. Antoine said the government prefers to lease office space in privately-owned buildings, but extensive analysis showed that, in this case, keeping the government-owned Laing Building was the best option. As a result, the Request for Proposals for the sale of the building, and another RFP for replacement office space, have both been cancelled.

Public tenders for the renovation work will be issued starting next spring.

For further information, contact:

Bruce Rattray, Deputy Minister
Public Works and Services
Tel: (867) 873-7114
Fax: (867) 873-0264



98-137

Twenty-eight Northerners Certified in Non-violent Crisis Intervention

YELLOWKNIFE (November 23) - Twenty-eight instructors are now certified and prepared to deliver on-site non-violent crisis intervention training in all regions of the NWT, Charles Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced today.

“I am pleased that a significant number of NWT educators are now trained to use positive, proactive and non-violent approaches to behaviour management,” Mr. Dent said. “First and foremost, our schools must be safe and caring environments to ensure all students and staff can focus on learning.”

To this end, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has provided non-violent crisis intervention training to educators across the NWT for many years. This fall, the Department contracted the Crisis Prevention Institute, an international training institute specializing in the safe management of disruptive and assaultive behaviour, to conduct NVCi certification training for Northern educators in Yellowknife and Iqaluit. The Department will support new trainers through a mentoring program with a certified instructor.

In 1995/96, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, in partnership with the NWT Teachers' Association, conducted the NWT School Relationships Survey. It found that the majority of staff in NWT schools believe behaviour-intervention training holds considerable promise. In supportive settings, staff trained in behaviour intervention reported greater control in the school environment and less class time committed to discipline.

In focusing efforts on this important issue, the Department will continue to provide related workshops and programs for departmental staff, district education councils and the Northwest Territories Teachers Association.

For more information, contact:

Fiona O'Donoghue
Director
Early Childhood and School Services
Education, Culture and Employment
Tel: (867) 873-7176
Fax: (867) 873-0109



98-138

Statement by Premier Don Morin on Conflict of Interest Inquiry

YELLOWKNIFE (November 25) – Premier Don Morin made the following statement to reporters at the Legislative Assembly this afternoon following the tabling of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner’s report:

“The Commissioner has delivered her report to the Speaker. I have grave misgivings about the report and the process from which it developed, but I will adopt the advice given by Mr. Justice Vertes in court today and voice those misgivings on the floor of the Legislature when the report is considered. Thank you.”

Copies of the report will be available for public distribution from the Legislative Assembly. The report will also be posted to the Public Inquiry Commission’s web site at www.inquiry.ssimicro.com this evening.

For more information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Government of the Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2301
Fax: (867) 873-0169



98-139

Premier Don Morin Announces Resignation

YELLOWKNIFE (November 26) – The Honourable Don Morin today announced his resignation as Premier of the Northwest Territories.

“This was not an easy decision to make. However, I believe this is the best thing to do for the sake of my family, the well being of this government and for the people of the Northwest Territories,” Mr. Morin said.

“I would like to thank all those who stood beside me through the conflict of interest process. This has been a very difficult time for us all. I thank you for your support and your faith in me. To my constituents in Tu Nedhe, I look forward to serving you as your MLA to the best of my abilities.”

The Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, Deputy Premier, will assume the duties as Acting Premier, until the Legislative Assembly makes a further decision.

For more information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Government of the Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2301
Fax: (867) 873-0169

Transcript Remarks – November 26, 1998.

Hon. Don Morin, Premier

Yes, I have received the report of the Commissioner and I had an opportunity last night to review it. I still believe this whole process was a biased process. The Commissioner was very biased. I believed that she did not follow the natural rules of justice to carry out an inquiry. I believe that she showed a total disregard to myself as the Premier of the NWT and I do look forward to debating this issue next week in the Legislative Assembly and the fight is never over until it is over.

But what I want to make very clear to all the people of the NWT today, and to all the press here, is that I don't want anybody to say the only reason I am doing this is to keep my job as the Premier of the NWT. Because that is not the intention. My intention from day one has been to clear my name of the allegations made against me and I will continue to do that.

So, in order to focus the debate on the report and focus the debate on the process that was used, that is totally flawed, as of 5:00 today I will resign as the Premier of the NWT. I will continue to sit as MLA for Tu Nedhe and that feels good for me. That feels very good today because finally I can go out and fight and defend myself. I don't need the lawyers to do it. I don't need anybody else to do it. I found, that thinking about it last night, it was too much to ask my friends to support me and my colleagues. That is too much to call on. So, as of 5:00 today I will resign and I will carry on.

My colleagues across the floor in the Legislative Assembly, the ordinary members, better make some room because I am coming there and they will hear from me, everyone will hear me. I will keep government accountable, I will criticize government, but I will also offer some solutions.

I am looking forward to serving in the Legislative Assembly as an ordinary Member of the Legislative Assembly. It gives me freedom, it gives me myself back. And my wife and family are happy to have me back as well. They will see more of me. So, my wife is happy, my mother is happy, my kids are happy and I'm happy. I feel good about that.

I look forward to working with northerners in the future. It was an honour and I felt very good representing the NWT. That is a good honour. And to all the people in the NWT, I thank those who supported me through this. And like I said earlier, the fight has not ended yet. So with that I would just like to thank you all.

Mahsi Cho.

Hon. Goo Arloktoo
Deputy Premier
November 26, 1998

MY STATEMENT TODAY WILL BE SHORT

I RESPECT DON MORIN'S DECISION TO RESIGN AS PREMIER, IN THE INTEREST OF RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN THIS GOVERNMENT AND FOR PERSONAL AND FAMILY REASONS. A SPECIAL MEETING OF CABINET HAS BEEN HELD AND UNTIL A NEW PREMIER IS CHOSEN, I WILL BE THE ACTING PREMIER.

WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE PREMIER HAS DONE THE RESPECTABLE THING IN RESIGNING AND WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THE POSITIVE THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP SUCH AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT, DEALING WITH THE DEFICIT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTH AND RAISING THE NATIONAL PROFILE OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES THROUGH EVENTS SUCH AS THE LAST WESTERN PREMIER'S CONFERENCE

RECENT EVENTS HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

I CANNOT STRESS ENOUGH THAT IT IS UP TO THE LEGISLATURE TO CONSIDER THE CONFLICT REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS. THIS IS A COMPLEX AND COMPREHENSIVE REPORT THAT REQUIRES CAREFUL DELIBERATION BEFORE MEMBERS REACH ANY CONCLUSIONS. THAT BEING SAID, SOME OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE REPORT WILL REQUIRE THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY CHANGES TO POLICIES AND INTERNAL PROCEDURES WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND CABINET.

THAT BEING SAID, WE AS LEGISLATORS HAVE A JOB TO DO. IT IS CRUCIAL, IN THE NEXT FEW SHORT MONTHS BEFORE DIVISION THAT LEGISLATORS NOT BE DISTRACTED FROM THE DUTY TO ENSURE THAT BOTH NUNAVUT AND THE WESTERN TERRITORY START ON A STABLE FOOTING.

THE JOB OF GOVERNANCE CONTINUES. I CALL UPON ALL MEMBERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT THE NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER PLANNING IS DONE TO ENSURE A SMOOTH TRANSITION ON APRIL 1, 1999.

I WILL NEED THE HELP OF MY COLLEAGUES IN CABINET AND INDEED ALL MEMBERS TO CARRY ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE EXECUTION OF OUR DUTIES.

NOVEMBER 26, 1998

- MY STATEMENT TODAY WILL BE SHORT
- I RESPECT DON MORIN'S DECISION TO RESIGN AS PREMIER, IN THE INTEREST OF RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN THIS GOVERNMENT AND FOR PERSONAL AND FAMILY REASONS. A SPECIAL MEETING OF CABINET HAS BEEN HELD AND UNTIL A NEW PREMIER IS CHOSEN, I WILL BE THE ACTING PREMIER.
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- RECENT EVENTS HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
- I CANNOT STRESS ENOUGH THAT IT IS UP TO THE LEGISLATURE TO CONSIDER THE CONFLICT REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS. THIS IS A COMPLEX AND COMPREHENSIVE REPORT THAT REQUIRES CAREFUL DELIBERATION BEFORE MEMBERS REACH ANY CONCLUSIONS. THAT BEING SAID, SOME OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE REPORT WILL REQUIRE THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY CHANGES TO POLICIES AND INTERNAL PROCEDURES WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND CABINET.

- THAT BEING SAID, WE AS LEGISLATORS HAVE A JOB TO DO. IT IS CRUCIAL, IN THE NEXT FEW SHORT MONTHS BEFORE DIVISION THAT LEGISLATORS NOT BE DISTRACTED FROM THE DUTY TO ENSURE THAT BOTH NUNAVUT AND THE WESTERN TERRITORY START ON A STABLE FOOTING.
- THE JOB OF GOVERNANCE CONTINUES. I CALL UPON ALL MEMBERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT THE NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER PLANNING IS DONE TO ENSURE A SMOOTH TRANSITION ON APRIL 1, 1999.
- I WILL NEED THE HELP OF MY COLLEAGUES IN CABINET AND INDEED ALL MEMBERS TO CARRY ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE EXECUTION OF OUR DUTIES.



98-140

NWT Housing Corporation Announces New Home Ownership Pilot Program

YELLOWKNIFE (November 27) - The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation launched a new home ownership pilot program today, that may assist anyone to become a homeowner.

The Minimum Downpayment Assistance Pilot Program (MDAPP) officially starts December 1, 1998. The pilot program provides assistance to prospective homeowners through a once-in-a-lifetime grant that assists them to make a downpayment to purchase an existing home. Grants of \$10,000 are available for residents of the Western Arctic and grants of \$15,000 are available for residents of the Eastern Arctic. The difference in grant levels is due to the generally higher cost of housing in the Eastern Arctic.

"Across the NWT there are over 250 private homes that sit empty," said Goo Arlooktoo, Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. "Lets give people the chance to buy these homes."

This pilot program is designed to stimulate the Northern economy by making it more affordable for families to buy these homes. It is expected that existing homeowners will benefit from this pilot program by seeing the value of their properties increase.

More and more, people are moving between communities for work opportunities. At the same time, many workers in the NWT are flying into the North, only to return South after the end of their shift rotation. MDAPP is designed to assist both of these groups. Through MDAPP rotational workers and those families coming from other communities are encouraged to put down roots.

"When people have their own home in a community they take a more active part in the development of that community," Minister Arlooktoo said.

The pilot program is being administered through the Corporation's Yellowknife Headquarters. Information packages are going out to all banks and real estate agents in the NWT, so people can either apply through their bank or straight to the Corporation.

For more information contact: Doug Johnson
Public Affairs Coordinator
NWT Housing Corporation
(867) 873-7854

Minimum Downpayment Assistance Pilot Program - Backgrounder

The start date for MDAPP is December 1, 1998, unless extended the pilot program will end on March 31, 1999.

The objective of MDAPP is to make home ownership generally more affordable in the Northwest Territories. Specifically the program is targeted towards encouraging:

1. present NWT residents who lack the savings required to make a downpayment, to buy a home;
2. businesses to relocate their employees and their families to the North permanently, by making housing more affordable for them, and;
3. individuals/families who might live elsewhere in the NWT to move to communities for employment or training opportunities.

MDAPP will provide a \$10,000 downpayment grant towards the purchase of a home in the Western Arctic and \$15, 000 in the Eastern Arctic. These amounts are geared to providing the minimum downpayment required to meet the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's 95% Financing Program. CMHC provides insured mortgages base upon a 5% downpayment up to a maximum purchase price of \$175,000 for homes in the NWT. CMHC accepts a grant from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation as downpayment for clients in lieu of a client generated downpayment. The higher amount being offered to Eastern Arctic communities reflects the generally higher house prices there.

To qualify for MDAPP the client must qualify for a CMHC insured mortgage, a conventional bank mortgage or have another form of financing for a home purchased in the NWT. Clients must also be able to afford the ongoing operating, maintenance and mortgage costs. MDAPP may not be combined with the NWT Housing Corporation's Expanded Downpayment Assistance Program.

For the remainder of the 1998/99 fiscal year, clients will be able to buy existing homes only. Trailers and modular homes that have been owner-occupied for at least a year prior to the sale and which bear the Canadian Standards Association Z240 certification label are eligible. Existing condominiums will also be eligible. Units in a Co-operative Housing Project are not eligible under this pilot project. If the pilot program is extended into the 1999/2000 fiscal year, then new stick built or log built homes will be eligible for financing.

The purchase of the home must be completed before March 31, 1999. Clients must use the home as their principal residence and not have owned a home in the same community for the year prior to applying to this pilot program. For the purpose of this pilot program a client is defined as both a husband and wife or common-law spouse if the client is married or in a common-law

relationship. This ensures that one family member does not try to access the pilot program while the other owns a home in the same community.

The pilot program is being administered by the NWT Housing Corporation's headquarters in Yellowknife. Banks will forward the names of approved clients who meet normal lending criteria and the Corporation's criteria. The Corporation will forward cheques in trust to the purchaser's lawyer. All applications will be processed on a first come first served basis.

Applications are to be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer, NWT Housing Corporation, Box 2100, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P6, fax number (867) 920-8024. For general enquiries call: (867) 873-7898.



98-141

NWT Premier Addresses Meet the North Delegates

YELLOWKNIFE (December 1) - "It is an unprecedented opportunity!" That was the message yesterday from Acting NWT Premier Goo Arlooktoo as he addressed the Meet the North-Build a Vision conference in Edmonton.

The Edmonton conference, sponsored in part by the City of Edmonton, the Alberta Government and the GNWT, has brought together entrepreneurs, companies and agencies interested in exploring or developing business opportunities in the North.

Mr. Arlooktoo challenged delegates to find ways to achieve the North's full potential - for the good of all Canadians. "How can we work more effectively on productive partnerships to create benefits for Northerners and Albertans?" he asked. "How can we strengthen our successful partnerships and create new ways of doing business together? This is our challenge."

Joining Mr. Arlooktoo in the Alberta capital were Ministers Kakfwi, Dent, Todd, Antoine and Ng. A number of MLAs were also in attendance along with representatives of RWED, the NWT Housing Corp and Arctic Tourism.

Speaking to the theme, "the implications of political change", Mr. Arlooktoo said it was appropriate that the North be well represented. "Few places, if any, are changing as quickly and dramatically as the NWT," Arlooktoo said.

For more information, contact:

Judy Langford
Press Secretary
Department of Executive
Government of the Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2302
Fax: (867) 873-0169



98-142

Contract Awarded to Design and Build Highway #3

YELLOWKNIFE (December 3) – The Minister of Transportation, Jim Antoine, today announced the award of a contract to begin the reconstruction and paving of Highway #3, east of Rae-Edzo.

The Frank Channel to Stagg River portion of the Highway #3 construction project marks the beginning of highway reconstruction on the final leg between the Alberta border and Yellowknife. It has been awarded to the design-build team of Nishi-Khon/SNC Lavalin, Pelly Construction Ltd and Army's Construction Ltd.

"I am pleased to see this job underway and especially with this commitment to have at least half the work force from Rae-Edzo," Mr. Antoine said. North Slave MLA, James Rabesca echoed the Minister's enthusiasm. "I'm delighted that the project is going ahead," he said. "The community has worked hard to attract projects of this kind."

The design-build project is the first of its kind involving highway construction in the Northwest Territories. Operational plans include the use of open pit mining equipment. Skills learned on the project will be directly applicable to the road building industry and transferable to the mining industry.

Northerners and residents from the community will benefit from training and employment initiatives totaling approximately \$2,463,000.

Ninety per cent of the people hired for this project will come from the North, with half drawn from the community of Rae-Edzo. Training will be accomplished with the cooperation of Aurora College and the NWT Construction Association. A variety of training options will offer equal opportunity to all applicants regardless of skill level. The majority of training will be conducted on site with the remainder provided in classroom facilities in the community of Rae-Edzo.

The design-build team plans to complete the project, including chip seal, by September 1999 with a total project value of \$8,725,000.

For more information, please contact: **Ron Williams**
Deputy Minister
Department of Transportation
(867) 920-3460



98-143

P3 Design Architects Selected

YELLOWKNIFE (December 3) -- The Government of the Northwest Territories has selected a design architect to complete the preliminary design of the new Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Centre public private partnership (P3) project.

This facility will include 17 acute care beds, 25 continuing care beds, and 18 transient beds and will be approximately 8,440 square metres.

The Chairman of the Financial Management Board, John Todd, and the Minister of Health and Social Services, Kelvin Ng, have announced the results of the competition. As a result of a review conducted by the P3 Implementation Team of the submitted proposals, Park Sanders Adam Vikse Architects Ltd. of Yellowknife have been selected along with their partners to complete the preliminary design for the new hospital.

Mr. Todd announced the P3 initiative in January, as a means to increase the GNWT's current annual investment in public infrastructure by up to \$100 million. Under the P3 approach, the government enters into lease arrangements with private sector partners for the provision of public infrastructure.

For more information contact:

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98-144

Results of Municipal Legislation Review Tabled

YELLOWKNIFE (December 8) – Manitoak Thompson, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs yesterday tabled the results of a Municipal Legislation Review in the Legislative Assembly.

The two reports, containing recommendations and proposed changes to municipal legislation will provide a foundation for future municipal legislation in the Nunavut and Western governments.

Due to the reality of division and to give full and proper consideration to proposed amendments to municipal legislation, the reports will be transmitted to the governments of the two new territories for their future consideration.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the NWT Association of Municipalities have worked for the past three years to review municipal legislation. Three Bills were passed in 1997 that brought about much-needed changes to several *Acts*. In addition, the Municipal Legislation Review Committee has recommended substantial amendments to the *Charter Communities Act*, *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, *Hamlets Act* and *Settlements Act*, as well as further changes to the *Local Authorities Elections Act* and the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*.

Communities across the North have asked for more flexible legislation that better meets the needs of municipal governments. Modern legislation must recognize that communities are unique, and allow for differences in how they set their priorities and tackle issues of concern.

“New legislation is needed to make it easier for communities to make the best use of their resources. At the same time, there is a need to build in safeguards to ensure the territorial government can still identify and assist communities in difficulty. I believe that the Review Committee’s recommendations and proposals, if implemented, will address exactly these things,” said Ms. Thompson.

“The challenges facing northern municipalities have become more complex in recent years,” says George Roach, Mayor of Inuvik, President of the NWT Association of Municipalities and Co-Chair of the Municipal Legislation Review Committee. The changes proposed to the *Municipal Acts* will allow for more flexibility, while still keeping a close check to see that legal procedures are followed and that finances and debt creation are managed properly. NWT Municipal Governments will welcome changes to the present Municipal Acts,” Mr. Roach said.

Contacts: Robert McLeod	or	Mayor George Roach
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Negotiation Breakdown Could Jeopardize Ability for Employees to Receive 1998/99 Pay Increases

YELLOWKNIFE (December 14) – Mediation talks between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Union of Northern Workers broke down last night (Dec. 13) without a collective agreement. Failure to reach a collective agreement before March 31, 1999 could jeopardize employees' ability to receive 1998/99 pay increases.

"We are disappointed that employees will not get the right to vote on the package," Finance Minister John Todd said. "However, this is now an internal matter between the union and its members."

If employees don't get to vote on a package before Division, they will have to start the collective bargaining process over again. This could affect the ability of employees to receive pay increases for 1998/99. The Government of Nunavut cannot negotiate a collective agreement for the period before it legally existed; after April 1, 1999, the GNWT will not have money in its budget to pay back wages for Nunavut employees.

During negotiations over the weekend, the government and the union had agreed on the following:

- Use of the Hay Job Evaluation System as the basis for evaluating jobs;
- rates of pay that provide equal pay for work of equal value;
- an independent process for dealing with job evaluation appeals to make sure that the results were gender-neutral.

Talks broke down when the government asked the union to confirm, in writing, that this would provide a job evaluation system and a process to ensure gender-neutral results. The UNW wanted a collective agreement in which it retained the right to file an equal pay complaint. The union wishes to do this to protect its legal position in the outstanding Human Rights Tribunal case. However, the government and the union have a legal obligation to negotiate a collective agreement with gender-neutral rates of pay.

"The GNWT will write to the union asking it to reconsider the position and give employees the right to decide whether to ratify this collective agreement," Mr. Todd said.

Please see the attached backgrounder.

For more information, contact: Herb Hunt
Director, Labour Relations
Financial Management Board Secretariat
(867) 920-8900

Backgrounder

1. **How close were the parties to an agreement?** Very close: agreement had been reached on job evaluation provisions in the new contract. However, talks broke down because the UNW wanted the right to file an equal pay complaint on the new contract, and the GNWT wanted an agreement that the collective agreement meets the joint legal obligations to negotiate a gender-neutral job evaluation system as per the Supreme Court of the NWT ruling.
2. **Why would the UNW want the right to file a complaint about a contract it had just agreed to?** Because the UNW is involved in an equal pay case before the Human Rights Tribunal. In this case, the UNW is arguing that a different job evaluation system – the Willis system – should be used instead of the plan that the parties may negotiate in this collective agreement. The UNW is concerned that if it accepts a collective agreement that uses the Hay Plan, it could affect its case in front of the Human Rights Tribunal.
3. **How does this affect employees?** If employees don't get to vote on a contract before Division, they lose that chance to settle a collective agreement for the period April 1, 1998 –March 31, 1999. Those employees remaining with the GNWT will have to start the negotiation process over again. The situation is even more serious for the employees who will transfer to the Government of Nunavut. That government can't negotiate a collective agreement for a period before the government legally existed. Meanwhile, the Government of the Northwest Territories won't have money in its budget to pay retroactive wages to Nunavut employees.
4. **What happens next?** The mediator will issue a report in the next couple of weeks. Employees will not be in a legal strike position unless an essential services agreement is in place and they vote in favour of a strike. The GNWT will not impose a new collective agreement. The government is willing to return to the bargaining table at any time to consider any proposal the union wishes to make.



98-146

Minister Releases National Highway Systems Studies

YELLOWKNIFE (December 18) – Minister of Transportation, Floyd Roland, commented today on three reports detailing the condition of Canada’s national highway system and the benefits of highway investment to the economy.

The National Highway Policy Study reports, released Wednesday, were commissioned by the federal/provincial/territorial Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety.

“All jurisdictions have agreed that an efficient highway system is essential to the continued development of the Canadian economy,” Mr. Roland said. “The public is also becoming increasingly aware that transportation investment is a key component in the movement of people, resources and manufactured goods and is vital in achieving Canada’s social and economic goals.”

The main report, **Condition and Investment Needs Update**, concludes that the state of the 25,000 km long national highway system has not improved since 1988. An investment of \$17 billion is required to bring the national highway system up to an acceptable standard. Such an investment would generate an estimated \$30 billion in economic benefits over 25 years through savings in travel time, increased safety and reduced vehicle operating costs.

The national highway system includes 562 km in the NWT. It consists of Highways 1 and 3 from the Alberta border to Yellowknife, and the Highway 2 connection to Hay River. The report concludes that an investment of 254 million is needed to upgrade the NWT segment of the national highway to the required Canadian standard. Included in this estimate is a bridge across the Mackenzie River at Fort Providence, and the reconstruction and paving of Highway 3.

“The national highway system is of particular significance to the NWT because it is our connection to the rest of Canada,” said Mr. Roland. “We are dependent on it for community access, tourism and economic resource and development.”

The federal/provincial/territorial Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway safety will continue to work together to achieve appropriate levels of investment in the national highways system. “A greater federal role is necessary in this endeavour,” Mr. Roland said.

Please see the attached backgrounder.

For more information, please contact: Masood Hassan

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Department of Transportation
(867) 873-7934

Backgrounder (GENERAL)

Minister Releases National Highway System Studies

Undertaken jointly by the federal, provincial and territorial transportation departments, the National Highway Policy Study update reports were initiated in the early 1990's to determine the costs of improving the condition of, and reducing congestion on, the 25,000 kilometer network of key interprovincial and international road linkages.

These reports are:

1. The National Highway System: Condition and Investment Needs Update 1997
2. The Economic Context of an Efficient National Highway System: A review of the Literature and International Experience September 1998 (*includes a separate Executive Summary and Annotated Bibliography*).
3. Highway User Benefits Analysis of the National Highway System (*includes a separate Appendix*).

The key findings of the study are:

Governments have invested over \$8 billion in capital improvements and \$3 billion in maintenance in the National Highway System since 1988; annual expenditures on the system are currently twice the levels reported in 1988.

While increased investment has corrected some of the deficiencies on the system, overall the state of the National Highway System has not improved since 1988. When measured against the minimum design and operational criteria set in 1988, the length of the system with deficiencies in the areas of pavement roughness, operating speed/capacity has increased about 30%.

The estimated cost of correcting all current deficiencies on the National Highway System is 17.4 billion (1997 dollars). Departing from the procedure used in 1989, this updated estimate includes costs associated with required capacity improvements on existing freeways which have 4 or more lanes.

While estimated needs have dropped slightly in eastern Canada, cost estimates in central and western Canada are generally 30 to 50% higher than the estimates prepared in 1988.

The impacts and benefits that would be associated with an upgraded National Highway System have increased significantly, due in large part to increasing congestion on key linkages in the system. Over a 25 year horizon, the expected present value of benefits of the National Highway System investment program were estimated to exceed \$30 billion, comprising of:

- \$22.0 billion in travel-time savings
- \$ 5.8 billion in highway safety improvements
- \$ 2.9 billion in reduced vehicle operating costs
- \$ 1.3 billion in network benefits

Using a 25-year horizon for evaluation of benefits and a 5% discount rate, the expected net present value of investing the required capital in upgrading the National Highway System was estimated to be in the order of \$13.1 billion.

Reduced congestion and improved highway standards could reduce the number of fatal traffic accidents by up to 247 per year, and injury accidents by up to 16,000 per year.

Reducing congestion and improving the level of service provided by the National Highway System is expected to reduce fuel consumption by up to 236 million litres per year.

A review of literature and international experience provides strong evidence that investments in highways can generate significant productivity growth and support economic development. Canada's annual productivity growth has been steadily declining since the 1960's, dropping from 2.4% during the period 1960-69 to -0.08% from 1990-96.

The findings of the reviews of the literature and international experience go far in explaining why nations which are major competitors of Canada are allocating increased funding to highway construction and maintenance to support economic growth.

Copies of the report and supporting documentation are available from the Northwest Territories Department of Transportation or the Secretariat for the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety.

For copies requested in the NWT,
please contact:

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For copies requested outside the
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2323 St. Laurent Boulevard
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E-mail: secretariat@tac-atc.ca

The report is available on the web site located at www.tac-atc.ca/council_of_ministers.htm.

(Note: For information regarding the National Highway System for the Northwest Territories, see the attached NWT Backgrounder.)

Backgrounder (NWT)

Minister Releases National Highway System Studies

Within the Northwest Territories, the national highway system is 562 km long. It consists of the Highway 1 and 3 route from the Alberta Border to Yellowknife, and the Highway 2 connection to Hay River.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has made a concentrated effort over the past ten years to improve the Northwest Territories segment of the national highway system. A significant portion of the national highway system in the Northwest Territories has been upgraded (through reconstruction, widening and paving) since 1989. As a result the needs have decreased by 12%.

An investment of \$254 million is needed to upgrade the Northwest Territories segment of the national highway system to the required standard. Included in this estimate is a bridge across the Mackenzie River at Fort Providence, and the reconstruction and paving of Highway 3. It is interesting to note that the Rae to Yellowknife section of Highway 3 is the only gravel section on the entire national highway system.

Copies of the report and supporting documentation are available from the Department of Transportation or the Secretariat for the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety.

For copies requested in the NWT, please contact:

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(Note: For information regarding the National Highway System as a whole, see the attached GENERAL Backgrounder.)

