



Press Release

For immediate release

Tamaani Internet and Partners Launch a Regional Backup Emergency Telephone Service

Kuujuuaq, Québec, December 7, 2015 – An important partnership between Ice Wireless, Iristel, Polycom, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, and the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) has produced a backup emergency telecommunications service for all of Nunavik's 14 communities.

"The new service is an independent voice and video communications link between the communities and with the south via the Internet," states Jean-François Dumoulin, KRG senior coordinator of programs and partnerships. "The service is already in place for use by the Kativik Regional Police Force and community CLSCs during emergency management and response situations. It uses a small amount of bandwidth that is reserved for public safety use."

"This is a redundancy that was severely needed and that we're very proud to implement," adds Ice Wireless and Iristel president Samer Bishay. "Now, even in the event of a standard telephone network failure, police and CLSC personnel will be able to use these local back-up phones and have their calls relayed independently to another community or the south."

Ice Wireless and Iristel are providing local media gateway expertise for the service and the KRG's Tamaani Internet, satellite Internet bandwidth. Polycom, for its part, has donated 28 Polycom® VVX® 500 business media phones with full video capability. The service combines voice, data and video communications.

"Bandwidth is a precious resource," says Gary Testa, Polycom global vice president for worldwide cloud and service provider sales. "Officials in Nunavik will be able to take advantage of high definition video and keep bandwidth usage to a minimum."

"Not everyone realizes how fragile communications are in the north," points out Isabelle Parizeau, KRG director general. "Up until now, we have been relying on a single satellite link for emergency telecommunications service. If this link were to be suddenly overloaded or severed, quality communications with the communities would be in jeopardy." Teleconferencing and telepresence solutions are important tools in Nunavik, where the communities are not connected by road and the cost of air travel is high.



More about the Partners

- Ice Wireless is a facilities-based regional mobile network operator (MNO) that delivers state-of-the-art 3G/4G HSPA+ technology to rural and remote areas of Canada.
- Iristel is one of the largest competitive local exchange carriers and VoIP providers in the country.
- Polycom is a leading provider of secure video, voice and content collaboration solutions.
- The Nunavik Board of Health and Social Services delivers health and social services to the residents of the 14 communities of Nunavik.
- The KRG's Tamaani Internet delivers Internet and IP network solutions across Nunavik.

More about Nunavik

Nunavik is part of the Arctic world, covering approximately 500,000 km² of the territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel and approximately 265,000 km² of offshore areas. Nunavimmiut live primarily in coastal communities with populations ranging in size from 180 to 2375. There are no road links between the region's communities or with southern Québec. Air transportation and telecommunications keep the communities connected year-round. The summer sealift ensures the delivery of necessary non-perishable foods and supplies, while locally Inuit depend on snowmobiles, ATVs and motor boats for their hunting, fishing and trapping activities and to visit families in neighbouring communities.

Since the KRG launched Tamaani Internet and began delivering broadband Internet services in 2004, the Internet has become a vital communications tool in homes, businesses, schools and organizations in all of Nunavik's 14 communities. Whereas high-capacity broadband Internet infrastructure and services in southern Canada are delivered entirely by the private sector, in remote regions high infrastructure construction and operating costs mean that government and private-sector participation is mandatory.

While being important to the economic development of the region and communities, it must not be forgotten that high-capacity broadband Internet can also contribute to the promotion of Nunavik Inuit language and identity by increasing the availability of Inuktitut radio and television programming, as well as the connectivity of residents in different communities and Inuit regions to public decision-making forums.

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The KRG is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire

territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development.