
News Release

CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT PROVIDES \$20.65M FOR WIDER BROADBAND ACCESS TO 43 NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

Kuujuuaq, Quebec, August 24, 2007 – Residents of 43 northern communities in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba can soon expect wider access to broadband service and its benefits thanks to a commitment from Canada's New Government to provide up to \$20.65 million to purchase new satellite infrastructure.

The announcement was made today by the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and Ms. Maggie Emudluk, Chairperson of the Kativik Regional Government, representing the Northern Indigenous Community Satellite Network (NICSN). The NICSN involves a partnership among three Organizations: the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) in Quebec; the Keewatin Tribal Council (KTC) in Manitoba; and the Keewaytinook Okimakanak Tribal Council (KOTC) in Ontario.

“Broadband is a key piece of infrastructure for 21st Century communities to help support their economic growth and prosperity,” said Minister Cannon. “Canada's New Government is pleased to partner with the Kativik Regional Government and the Northern Indigenous Community Satellite Network on this initiative that will provide residents with improved access to a wide range of services and will help stimulate economic development and enhance people's quality of life. E-health and tele-education are just two services this investment will open up.”

“With the ever increasing use of technology in a very short period of time, we have witnessed an increased consumption of broadband use to the point that important services such as tele-health and tele-education could not benefit from this technology. Therefore, this announcement will allow us to provide these important services to the region.” Mrs. Maggie Emudluk, Chairperson of the Kativik regional Government.

Canada's New Government is contributing up to \$20.65 million, or 75 per cent of the \$27.5 million cost, for the procurement of two satellite transponders and the required earth station and local access network upgrades. The funding is made available through the Government of Canada's National Satellite Initiative (NSI). The remaining 25 per cent (\$6.88 million) will come from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund (\$1.8 million), the Government of Québec's Villages branchés program (\$2.2 million) and Telesat Canada (\$2.88 million).

This project complements an initiative of the first round of the NSI, which allocated one Public Benefit Transponder (PBT) to NICSN to provide service to public institutions in the 43 communities. The funding announced today will enable the provision of broadband services to all members of the community.

Financial support for this project is conditional on meeting applicable federal requirements, including the successful completion of environmental assessments required under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, and the successful negotiation of a contribution agreement.

This is the first NSI project to be announced in Quebec. Two other NSI projects have received funding to date: one in Nunavut, and the other in the Northwest Territories.

Through its unprecedented \$33-billion “Building Canada” plan, the Canada’s New Government will help meet infrastructure needs across Canada through long-term, stable and predictable funding. “Building Canada” will support a stronger, safer and better country, through infrastructure projects that support cleaner air and water, a stronger economy, and a better quality of life for our communities.

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