

**NUNAVUT BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON February 25, 2011**

As the President of Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, I am pleased to report on the activities of NBDC, the QINIQ network that was initiated by NBDC in 2005, the current round of investment in broadband for Nunavut, NBDC's administrative status and various other initiatives.

But first, I would like to clarify the role that NBDC plays in Nunavut and the relationship that NBDC has with the QINIQ network.

**NBDC and QINIQ**

NBDC is a not-for-profit corporation established to ensure that people have reliable, affordable access to broadband in every single Nunavut community.

As part of this mandate, NBDC initiated the QINIQ network using funds obtained from the Government of Canada, agencies of the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit land claim organizations. Through a formal public RFP, NBDC selected SSI Micro Ltd to operate the QINIQ network.

**INFRASTRUCTURE II PROJECT - BACKGROUND**

On March 31, 2008 a Business Plan entitled "Managing Bandwidth – Nunavut's Road Ahead" was submitted to Infrastructure Canada proposing additional funding for QINIQ and support for new public broadband services. This plan was approved on July 14, 2008, announced on August 29, 2008 and the related Contribution Agreement was completed in January 2009.

## **QINIQ 2000 PLUS**

When the QINIQ network was launched in May 2005, it was originally funded by the Government of Canada to accommodate up to 2,000 subscribers. The QINIQ network had 2000 subscribers within the first 8 months of operation and continues to grow, with approximately 4500 subscribers today and an anticipated 6800 by 2013. Due to this growth, a major component of the Infrastructure II Project is additional support for the QINIQ network.

Infrastructure Canada invested \$9.33 million for the purchase of much needed additional satellite capacity and \$750,000 for upgrading of the core QINIQ infrastructure for 25 communities in Nunavut. This investment is matched by SSI and customer revenue for a total of over \$18.5 million to be used by June of 2012.

Aside from the additional support for QINIQ, Infrastructure II addresses three key generic needs identified in the Business Plan.

1. **Meet Online:** Audio-Video Conferencing for distance education and training, telehealth consultations, public or private meetings, linking communities to the central justice system, selling products, and sharing Inuit cultural knowledge.
2. **QFile (formerly Time Shift):** Large File Transfer for sharing maps, audio-video files, financial data, training and curriculum materials, and more.
3. **Local Connect:** Networking technology in the largest Nunavut communities to allow different networks to interconnect locally and thus avoid unnecessary satellite traffic.

The Infrastructure II investment also includes \$2.1 million of funding for **Classroom Connect** - dedicated satellite capacity to ensure that classrooms in all Nunavut schools have adequate access to the Internet, a critical need identified by the GN Department of Education.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE II PROJECT - STATUS**

### **Communications to the Public**

In the past year, the public was kept informed of progress on the Infrastructure II project by the following communications initiatives:

*Email Updates* were sent out to over 200 key stakeholders in both July and November.

*NBDC Website Updates* were posted in June, September, November and most recently in this month of February.

*Press Conference and News Release* – NBDC produced a press conference and news release on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the 2010 Nunavut Trade Show for the purpose of launching the generic services QFile and Meet Online. Resulting news coverage occurred in Nunatsiaq News, News North, The Wire Report and on CBC Radio.

*2010 Nunavut Trade Show* – Both NBDC and SSi had booths at the trade show in Iqaluit, where information was distributed, surveys were conducted and the public participated in demonstrations of Qfile and Meet Online. The new services were very well received.

## **New Broadband Services Launched at Nunavut Trade Show**

Two new broadband services developed by SSi Micro under the Infrastructure II project were officially launched in Iqaluit at the Nunavut Trade Show in September. Together with our partners from the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and SSi, NBDC unveiled QFile, the “time shift” application for transferring mega files, and Meet Online, an enterprise audio-video conferencing solution. The Hon. Leona Aglukkaq, Member of Parliament for Nunavut, Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for the North, participated in the press conference from Ottawa via the new Meet Online service.

These new services constitute a combined capital and bandwidth investment of \$15.6 million. The Government of Canada’s contribution is \$7.8 million, which is matched by SSi and customer revenue.

Initial service uptake has been slower than anticipated for a variety of reasons, including an unanticipated technical audit initiated by Infrastructure Canada in the spring of 2010 and a resulting delay in service launch. SSI and NBDC still believe that the needs identified in the Infrastructure II business plan are real and we are working together on a marketing strategy to improve user uptake.

## **Classroom Connect Pilot**

With the cooperation of the GN Department of Education, a pilot project involving six schools ran from January to June 2010. Two communities from each region participated in the pilot, those being Arctic Bay and Sanikiluaq in the Qikiqtani, Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet in the Kivalliq, and Taloyoak and Kugluktuk in the Kitikmeot. Each school provided a minimum of 5 computers for the project

and received a QINIQ modem with a custom service plan as well as wireless networking equipment.

The feedback from participating schools was overwhelmingly positive. Comments from participating schools include:

*Almost every student in the school logs on to the computer network at least once a week and accesses the Internet*

*I can't speak for other teachers, but for myself it has made a big difference for my classroom teaching, for science and media classes. For example I just did a unit on the circulatory system in Science and it was great to be able to take advantage of excellent videos on the internet that demonstrated what I was trying to get across. A tremendous difference maker for the students and I.*

Initially it was anticipated that the pilot would transition to full rollout of Classroom Connect to all of Nunavut's schools in new school year. However, after almost a year of discussions with Nunavut's Department of Education, it has become clear that the department is unable to provide the matching funds required for Classroom Connect. Without Classroom Connect, Nunavut students and teachers could continue to have limited access to the Internet and online learning resources and experience a widening digital divide.

NBDC believes that connectivity to enable distance education and other online learning activities is an important component of Infrastructure II and is pursuing other options for Classroom Connect.

## **Local Connect – change in requirements**

When NBDC issued the RFP for Local Connect, two separate networks were operating in Nunavut's largest communities: the QINIQ network operated by SSI Micro and the GN network, operated by NWTel/Ardicom. Local Connect was meant to interconnect the networks of the NWTel/Ardicom and SSI at the community level to make efficient use of satellite capacity. Since the award of the NBDC RFP, the GN has selected SSI Micro to operate their new network. Given the change in the GN vendor, the original Local Connect solution is no longer applicable as a single supplier (SSI) will operate the two networks (QINIQ and GN), thereby allowing the exchange of traffic within its own premises. However, the timing of the conversion of the GN network is not firm (as of February 2011) and other smaller networks remain to be served. NBDC is in discussions with SSI for a modified Local Connect solution.

## **NBDC ADMINISTRATION**

In last year's report I noted that after a number of transitional years without a full time northern presence, NBDC once again had an active administrative office in Nunavut. By the fall of 2009 NBDC had successfully filled the Executive Director and CEO position and the Northern Project Manager position, both of which are based in Iqaluit. However, in the summer of 2010, NBDC once again found itself needing to recruit.

In June 2010, Patrick Doyle resigned as Executive Director of NBDC. His resignation was accepted by the board, effective immediately. NBDC's Northern Project Manager, Oana Spinu, was appointed Acting Executive Director until the

position of Executive Director was permanently filled. Ms. Spinu carried both responsibilities for almost 9 months. Additional support over this extended management transition period was provided by Dave Smith, Wendy Klinger, and David Veniot (none of whom are strangers to NBDC or the Infrastructure II project).

After an extensive recruitment process involving close to 50 applicants from northern and southern Canada, the USA and abroad, the position of Executive Director and CEO was awarded to Oana Spinu in December 2010 and the position of Northern Project Manager was awarded to Sean Rorison in February 2011.

## **OTHER INITIATIVES and ACTIVITIES**

### **Submission to Industry Canada's Digital Economy Consultations**

NBDC made a written submission to Industry Canada's Digital Economy Consultations. In the submission, NBDC made 6 recommendations:

1. Renewal of existing programs that are ending in 2012-2013
2. Commitment to similar costs, coverage and access for all 25 Nunavut communities
3. Investment in future satellite capacity
4. Explore the feasibility of fibre optic connectivity for Nunavut
5. Enable cell service in all communities and on the land
6. Support for ICT training and education for unique Nunavut circumstances

## **Participation in Canadian Internet Governance Forum (CIGF)**

Long-time board member Adamee Itorcheak participated in the Canadian Internet Governance Forum on behalf of NBDC. The forum was held in Iqaluit on November 15, 2010.

## **Presentation at Northern Economic and Sovereignty Infrastructure Conference**

Ms. Spinu gave a presentation on Information and Communications Technology in Nunavut as part of the Remote and Rural Connectivity – Communications Infrastructure Requirements session at the first Northern Economic and Sovereignty Infrastructure Conference, held in Iqaluit in October.

## **Nunavut Careers in ICT – a shared recruiting project**

This is an exciting time for information and communication technology, or ICT, in Nunavut and we all need to focus first on developing local people and then to attract people we need in Nunavut to deal with the expected expansion of broadband services and related ICT industries.

ICT organizations operating in Nunavut have all spent time, money and energy advertising and collecting resumés, reviewing and hiring local and outside people interested in living and working in Nunavut.

For example, NBDC went through a hiring process in 2009 that attracted hundreds of resumés. Many of the applicants could have been ideal for other ICT organizations in Nunavut, but were not the right fit for NBDC. But there was no mechanism for sharing applicant information for reasons of privacy and mandate.

Most of the organizations involved in Nunavut ICT are mandated to focus on local recruiting first, and to encourage employment of beneficiaries while at the same time drawing on the national market for employees when necessary. Many of the issues in recruiting are common across all the target organizations and sharing can benefit all employers, potential employees and Nunavut as a whole.

The Shared Recruiting Project was initiated by NBDC to bring the needs of ICT employers together, and to work to attract, share and increase the opportunities for hiring the right people for the right job, at the right time in Nunavut. The project currently has four industry members: NBDC, Qikiqtaaluk Information Technology Corporation (QITC), SSI Micro Ltd., and NorthwesTel. Members shared the costs to support the first round of the project's work. The project's main public gateway is the Nunavut Careers in ICT website ([www.nunavutcareers.ca](http://www.nunavutcareers.ca)). The website launched on November 5, 2010 with five job postings: three from NBDC and two from QITC. Over 130 resumes were received by the project members, both for the posted positions as well as shared resumés for potential future positions.

While the shared recruiting project and the Nunavut Careers website met the immediate recruitment needs of project members, NBDC sees great potential for this initiative and will continue to promote it and seek out new project members.

This concludes my President's Report for the 2011 Annual general meeting.

Thank you.

Darrell Ohokannoak  
President  
Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation  
February 25, 2011