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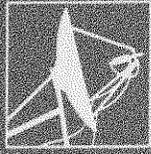
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BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Y U K O N · 2 0 0 0

A Communications Policy for the Yukon



HIGHLIGHTS

The Yukon Government will play a more active role in communications matters at the territorial and national levels. A Communications Unit has been established within the Department of Community and Transportation Services with a mandate to ensure increased availability and improved quality of broadcasting and telecommunications services at affordable rates and to participate in federal policy-making and regulatory processes on communications matters affecting the Yukon.

Under the new policy the Government will:

- act immediately to upgrade the quality and reliability of the Community Radio and Television System in those communities where this is a problem;
- replace the VHF Mobile Radio System to provide an improved level of mobile communications for the operational and safety requirements of government departments and agencies using the system; this will be done in a manner that allows Northwestel to extend basic telephone and other communication services to a number of rural areas not currently serviced;
- extend the CBC radio signal to cover all major Yukon highways for the safety and protection of the travelling public;
- participate in federal policy-making forums and regulatory processes to ensure that Yukon's interests and concerns are represented;
- work with local providers of communications services to improve the availability and quality of telephone and television services at affordable rates; and
- monitor new communications technology to identify opportunities for use in the Yukon to support economic development and meet distance educational and training needs.

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Foreword

Like other Canadians, Yukoners need to keep in touch with each other, with the rest of Canada and with the world. The provision of high quality and affordable communications links within the Yukon and between the Yukon and other regions is essential if we are to survive in an information-based society.

The Government has responded to Yukoners demands for better communications services by developing a communications policy specifically tailored to the needs of the territory. We have a rather special situation here in the Yukon where great distances exist between sparsely populated areas making distance communications one of our greatest challenges. We have therefore made accessibility, reliability and affordability the by-words of our policy.

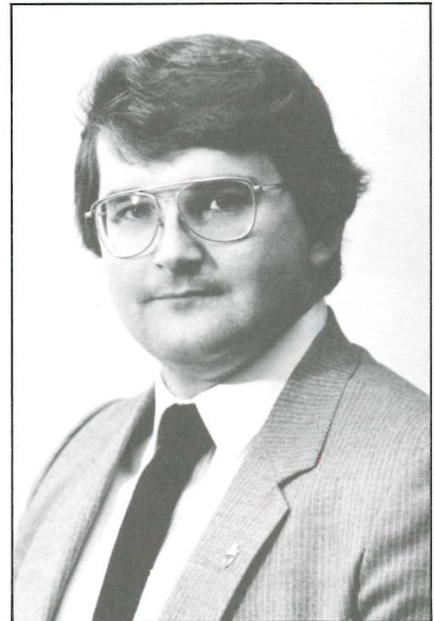
We heard from many Yukoners throughout the policy development process. The results clearly indicate that Yukoners want their government to play a more active role in communications matters. A major overriding concern is the need for a strong, effective voice in federal communications policy-making and regulatory forums. This is not surprising when you realize that it is these forums that decide the costs for and level of communications services in the Yukon.

Another major concern was the inequity in service levels throughout the territory, particularly in respect to the CBC television and radio signals. Under the new policy, the Government will replace the mountaintop rebroadcast television translator equipment with satellite receive antenna. This means that the communities of Burwash Landing, Carcross, Destruction Bay, Ross River and Tagish will have the same quality of CBC television reception as other Yukon communities serviced by the Yukon Government and the same opportunity to share this equipment to deliver a second television channel. The new policy also provides for extended coverage of the CBC radio signal along all major Yukon highways. This is particularly important for the safety of the travelling public.

We all know that the availability, quality and cost for basic telephone service is of particular concern for rural Yukoners. This is a key area in which this Government will represent Yukon interests before federal regulatory bodies. Communications staff will also work closely with the local telephone company to identify methods for extending service. In fact, the Government has already taken steps to include telephone service under the Rural Electrification Program and implementation of the new VHF System will also serve to facilitate extension of basic telephone service to a number of rural areas not now serviced.

These are just a few of the key elements in the new policy. I think the main point is that the policy recognizes communications as an essential tool in creating a modern infrastructure for the continuing development of the territory.

I want to thank everyone who participated in helping to develop this policy. I am sure you will agree with me that it gives the Yukon a sound foundation on which to build for the future as technology develops and needs change.



Piers McDonald

Piers McDonald, Minister
Community and
Transportation Services
May 1988



Background

Communications policy is a new area for the Yukon Government. In the past, the Government's involvement was limited to operating the VHF Mobile Radio System and the Community Radio and Television System. A number of factors have combined over the course of the last two years that caused the Government to re-examine its position on communication matters.

The requirement to replace the Government's mobile radio communications system acted as the major catalyst by drawing attention to the changing communications needs of the territory and provided the opportunity for the Government to use it to help extend service to the general public. At the same time, public interest and demand for improvements to communications services throughout the territory increased. In January 1986 the Association of Yukon Communities passed a resolution calling for the Government to provide an improved level of television service to all Yukon communities. A number of public complaints were also made by residents and businesses, particularly highway lodge owners, about the availability of basic telephone service in rural Yukon. Numerous motions on communications matters have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly during the last two years including: the need for a report on the options and costs of expanded television service for rural Yukon; complaints about the inequities in the availability of the CBC television broadcasting services; calls for increased availability and better quality telephone and related telecommunication services in rural Yukon; extension of the Rural Electrification Program to cover telephones and the suggestion that the proceedings of the Yukon Legislative Assembly be extended so rural ridings can gain access to the events of the Legislature.

Major federal initiatives during the last two years have placed particular emphasis on the involvement of the provinces and territories in formulating national communications policies. This provided impetus for the Yukon Government to become actively involved in federal/provincial/territorial negotiations on the development of a national telecommunications policy and in the federal review process established to develop a set of new national broadcasting policies and legislation. The new policy frameworks that are established in these areas could have a direct impact on the costs for and the level of telecommunications and broadcasting services available to business and residential consumers in the territory.

A major northern initiative got underway in January 1987 when the two territorial governments, the six northern native communications societies and the CBC Northern Television Service met to discuss the feasibility of a dedicated television service for the North. This initiative resulted in the development of a proposal for a northern television network. The proposal was submitted to the federal Minister of Communications in July 1987 for consideration and funding support. An initial response on the extent of federal funding is expected in June 1988.

Two major regulatory issues arose in 1986 which directly impacted on communications services in the Yukon. These included Northwestel's September 1986 application for a telephone rate increase and the CBC's 1986 application for renewal of its television network licences. The Yukon Government made formal interventions in both applications. In respect to Northwestel's application, the Government's intervention focused on the need to improve service quality and

availability at affordable rates and maintenance of existing employment levels. On 26 February 1987 the CRTC approved a rate increase of only six percent rather than the nine percent asked for by the Company. A major aspect of the Government's submission concerning the CBC's television licence renewal application was the need for an equivalent regional service for the North. In its 23 February 1987 decision the CRTC identified the need for the CBC to establish a regional service for the North including a daily newscast.

The Yukon Government's planning process "Yukon 2000" has recognized the role played by communications as a key element in building a modern infrastructure for the social and economic development of the territory.

The most recent communications issue to affect Yukoners is the announcement by Canadian National Railways (CNR) on 04 December 1987 to sell Northwestel. The Yukon Government recognizes the very important role played by Northwestel in the Yukon economy and is assessing the impact that the sale of Northwestel could have on the territory as well as looking at options available to it in order to protect the public interest.



Definitions

cable distribution system: a system which uses co-axial cable to distribute television and radio services in the local community; only those homes which are connected may receive the programming.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC): an independent federal regulatory agency that licences broadcast undertakings and regulates certain telecommunications companies including Northwestel.

CANCOM (Canadian Satellite Communications Inc.): a company licensed by the CRTC to deliver television and radio channels via satellite to remote and underserved communities throughout Canada; CANCOM is licensed to distribute four Canadian television services (two independent television stations, a CTV affiliate and a French language television package), four U.S. television services (CBS, NBC, ABC & PBS) as well as eight Canadian radio signals.

common carrier: a company such as Northwestel which is responsible for the provision of telephone and data telecommunication services to all users without discrimination.

Community Radio and Television System (CRTS): a series of mountaintop and community located broadcast facilities operated by the Department of Community and Transportation Services providing CBC radio in three locations and CBC television in fourteen locations.

distance education: can involve the use of television, radio, telephone and satellite-linked computers to teach and train students who live in remote communities.

microwave: a communication transmission medium which uses radio frequencies to transmit voice, data or video from one place to another; operates only on a line of sight basis.

multi-departmental mobile radio system (MDMRS): a VHF mobile radio system that permits integration of radio communications to the telephone network.

public long distance telephone network: the long distance network provided by telephone companies which allows any telephone customer to call any other telephone customer.

rate rebalancing: the idea that local telephone rates should increase and long distance telephone rates should decrease.

rebroadcast translators: a receiver/transmitter that receives a signal on one frequency, converts it to another and retransmits it.

satellite: a communication relay platform located in orbit around the earth; it receives a signal from the earth, changes its frequency and rebroadcasts it back to earth covering a wide area.

satellite receive antenna: a dish shaped antenna designed to receive television and radio signals from a satellite.

system interconnection: occurs when one telecommunications system connects its lines to another for the purpose of permitting communication between systems.

telecommunications carriers: the companies who provide telecommunications services and who, by law, may transmit and receive but not alter or originate traffic.

underserved community: an area where two or fewer English-language television channels are available to the viewer.

VHF Mobile Radio System: a radio system providing voice links between mobiles, work camps and headquarters using Very High Radio Frequencies.



Process

In October 1986 the Department of Community and Transportation Services prepared a Green Paper on Broadcasting and Telecommunications Policy Options. The document was made up of a Background Paper and a Discussion Paper.

The Background Paper described the current communications environment in Canada and in the Yukon in terms of the types of services provided and in terms of the policy and regulatory situation. The Discussion Paper set out a range of policy options from maintaining the status quo to defining and implementing policies designed to achieve a higher level of broadcasting and telecommunications services in the territory. Each option described the course of action required, the order of magnitude costs and the impact on the public and private sectors.

The documents were made public on 12 February 1987 by the Minister of Community and Transportation Services. At the same time, the Department began an extensive public consultation process from February 1987 to August 1987. This consisted of:

- full distribution of the documents throughout the Yukon;
- encouragement of written submissions from Yukoners respecting the proposed policy options;
- public meetings in every Yukon community;
- private meetings with industry, business and interested groups; and
- a Communications Symposium held on 12 and 13 June 1987 focusing on the direction and shape of a communications policy for the Yukon.

In August 1987 the Department of Community and Transportation Services completed an assessment of the views and concerns expressed by the public during consultation meetings and at the Communications Symposium.

Results from the consultation meetings and the Communications Symposium indicate that a large number of Yukoners support a more active role by the Yukon Government in the communications environment. Specifically, key findings show that Yukoners would like:

- increased local television programming;
- improved signal quality and increased coverage of the CBC Northern Radio and Television Services;
- increased access to a choice in television and radio channels;
- improved telephone and telecommunications services at reasonable rates particularly in rural areas;
- an improved VHF mobile communications system;
- Yukon Government involvement in federal regulatory processes and national policy-making forums on communications issues affecting the territory;
- regular consultation with communities, business and industry representatives on communications matters;
- technologically-based delivery mechanisms to assist in meeting the educational and training needs of Yukon students where practicable;
- a northern television network that could provide educational and general knowledge training for Yukoners; and
- monitoring of advances in communications technology.

Objectives

There are seven major objectives to the Government's comprehensive communications policy. They are designed to ensure the provision and improve the level of communications services available to residents of the territory and to further the economic and social well-being of all Yukoners. They are:

1. ensure a satisfactory level of broadcasting and telecommunications services for Yukoners;
2. generate new employment opportunities, and support and encourage local economic activity through the continuing development of a communications industry in the Yukon;
3. support and strengthen the Yukon business environment through enhanced availability and quality of communications services;
4. use emerging communications technology in the most appropriate manner for individuals, businesses and communities in the Yukon;
5. preserve and enhance local and native culture;
6. support improved access to fundamental government services such as education; and
7. organize, maintain and operate an integrated communications network to meet the communications needs of the Government of the Yukon and other public agencies operating in the territory.



Components

There are seven components to the Government's comprehensive communications policy. They were developed in recognition of the need to work with other jurisdictions to establish national communications policies that are sensitive to regional concerns and to pursue territorial policies and programs that are unique to our own jurisdiction.

1. BROADCASTING

This is a specialized form of telecommunications involving the transmission of information intended for the general public. It includes television and radio operations such as the CBC Northern Services, CHON-FM, CKRW and the local cable company.

2. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

This consists of the transmission of voice, data and video by electronic means through the use of radio frequencies, land-based wires or glass fibre. Telecommunications services in the Yukon are provided by Northwestel and other private suppliers.

3. VHF MOBILE RADIO SYSTEM

This is a mobile radio communications system that is owned and operated by the Department of Community and Transportation Services. While originally intended as a means of increasing safety for remote work crews, the system has evolved into an important communications link and is used by a number of territorial and federal government departments and agencies. For example, the Highways Maintenance Branch of the Department of Community and Transportation Services is dependent on the system for the communications requirements involved in the operation, maintenance and construction of Yukon highways. It forms the backbone communications system for the territory's volunteer ambulance service and the RCMP rely on the system for law and order enforcement throughout the Yukon. It also serves as a valuable tool for the Department of Renewable Resources in parks management and wildlife law enforcement. More recently, the federal Department of Emergency Preparedness Canada identified the system as a key element in civil emergency and disaster management in the territory.

4. FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL CONSULTATION

In recent years, both the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and the Minister of the federal Department of Communications (DOC) have placed particular emphasis on provincial and territorial government participation in the federal regulatory process and in the development of national policies on telecommunications and broadcasting. The Yukon Government will want to ensure that any national policies that are developed reflect the special needs and interests of Yukoners.

5. INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY LIAISON

This involves regular discussions between the Government and members of the communications industry as well as with community organizations. The primary purpose is to monitor the types and level of services being provided by the local industry to ensure that these services are meeting the communications needs of Yukoners.

6. DISTANCE EDUCATION

This refers to any educational delivery technique which provides off-campus instruction. Most distance education operations provide for the delivery of instruction by some combination of printed materials, a human support system and a technologically-based delivery system. They often make use of such technologies as telephone, radio, television and satellite-linked computers to teach and train students who live in remote communities.

7. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

This refers to the monitoring of new and emerging communications technology. The Yukon Government will want to pay particular attention to the development of new technologies that will address the needs of Yukoners living in the more rural areas of the territory.

CULTURE

Communications policy is often seen as including the area of culture. The delivery of Yukon Government programs related to culture is currently the subject of a separate review process. The Department, therefore, considered it would be inappropriate to include culture as a major component of a Yukon communications policy at this time.



Principles

The Government is committed to participating in decisions affecting communications services at the territorial and national levels. This commitment is based on the need for Yukoners to have access to reliable and effective communications services at affordable rates. The Yukon Government will be guided by twelve principles in its comprehensive communication policy. These principles address the key findings of the public consultation process, meet the seven objectives of the Government's communication policy and encompass all of the components. They are:

1. participation in all consultative forums and policy-making and regulatory processes on communications matters affecting the Yukon as deemed appropriate;
2. regular consultation with the local communications industry, business, community groups and organizations on communications matters;
3. access for all Yukon communities to CBC television and radio services, with improved signal quality and coverage in locations where this is not currently satisfactory under the Community Radio and Television System;
4. sharing of the Community Radio and Television System with local community organizations authorized to provide an additional licensed television broadcasting service available from Canadian satellites;
5. participation as a member of the working committee in the Television Northern Canada proposal;
6. development of local community broadcast undertakings by providing technical advice and information on funding sources and training programs;
7. work with the local telephone company to increase the availability of and improve the quality of telephone and telecommunications services in the Yukon at reasonable rates; the primary responsibility for providing such service will continue to rest with the local telephone company;

8. replacement of the VHF Mobile Radio System;
9. monitoring of advances in communications technologies so that opportunities for contribution to communications policy objectives and other government goals can be identified;
10. examination of emergency use communications services for the safety and protection of Yukoners;
11. examination of the use of technologically-based distance education delivery systems wherever practicable to meet the identified educational and training needs of Yukon students; and
12. participation in special projects such as "Yukon 2000" as deemed necessary.



Organizational Structure

A Communications Unit has been formally established within the Department of Community and Transportation Services. It is responsible for three broad program areas. They are: broadcasting, telecommunications and special services. Diagram I outlines these areas and the program activities under each area.

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT Program Areas and Activities

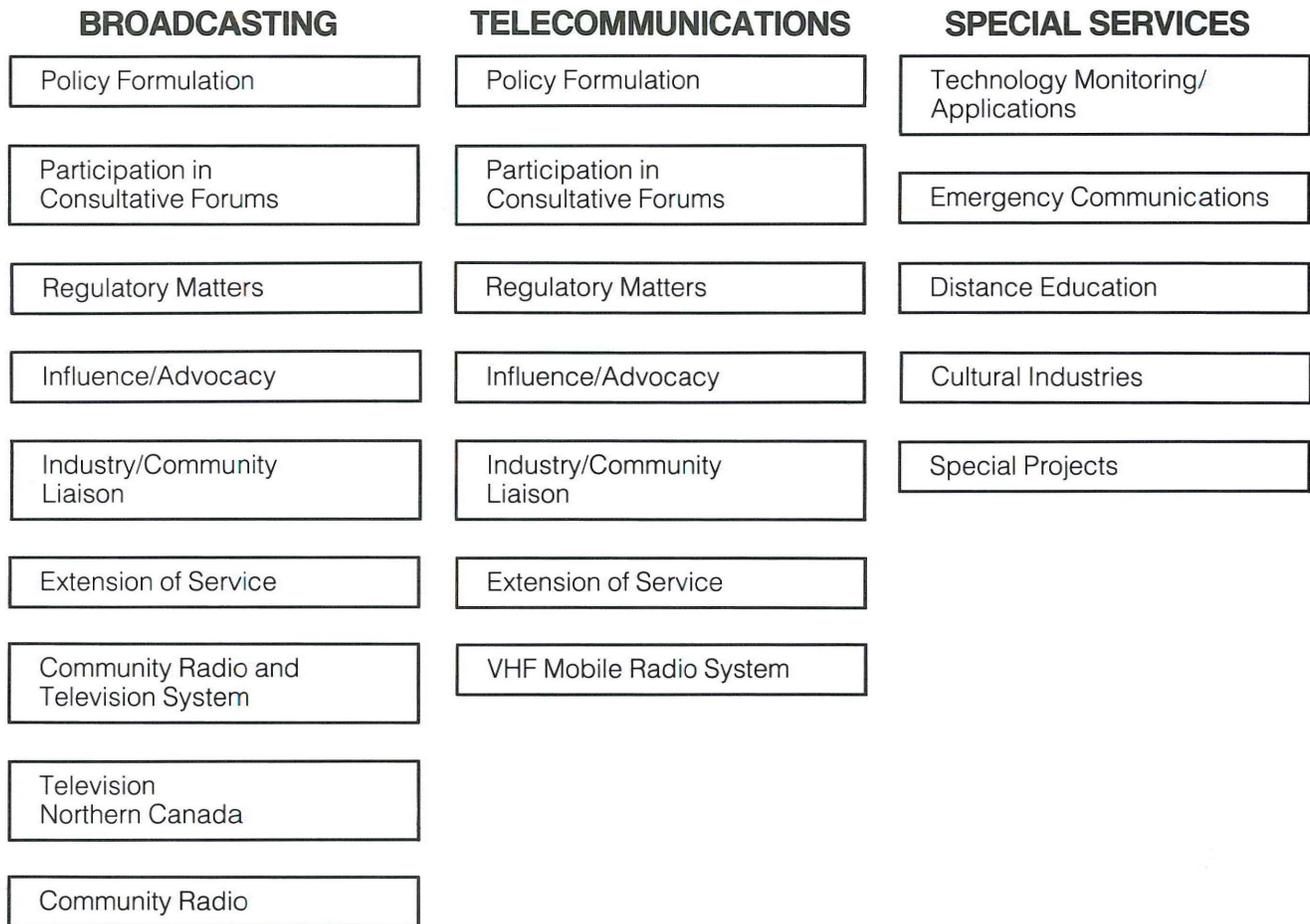


Diagram 1

Programs

1. POLICY FORMULATION:

This involves the development of Yukon Government positions on broadcasting and telecommunications policy matters which take into account the interests of Yukon residents, businesses and industries. For example, two key issues currently being considered at the national level include: the rebalancing of local and long distance telephone rates and competition in the provision of public long distance telephone service. These matters are of particular importance to the territory given Northwestel's greater reliance on long distance revenues than other telephone companies in Canada and given that the average monthly telephone bill for residential subscribers in the Yukon is \$60.00 to \$70.00

2. PARTICIPATION IN INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATIVE FORUMS:

This involves the participation of the Yukon Government in intergovernmental consultative forums to ensure that Yukon's interests are addressed in national broadcasting and telecommunications policy developments that may impact on services in the territory. Communications staff currently participate in three formal national forums. They are:

1. talks on the development of a national telecommunications policy;
2. study on the impact of telecommunications on regional economic development; and
3. examination of competition in the provision of public long distance telephone service.

Agreements reached in the first forum could affect future governmental roles and responsibilities for telecommunications matters as well as the type of and terms and conditions for the interconnection of one telecommunications system with another.

The second study should help to identify and quantify the contribution of telecommunications to national and regional economies including the Yukon.

The investigation on competition in the provision of public long distance telephone service will identify the extent to which certain telephone companies and their customers would be affected by competition. Northwestel is among several of the independent telephone companies that has been separately identified in the study. While the study is based on fairly broad averages, the identification of Northwestel for study purposes should provide the Yukon Government with sufficient information to know whether such competition would benefit the Yukon.

3. REGULATORY MATTERS:

This consists of the identification of all relevant regulatory issues involving the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission and the establishment of appropriate responses to facilitate increased availability, improved quality and affordable rates for broadcasting and telecommunications services throughout the territory. Interventions may range from a simple letter supporting or opposing a particular application to the CRTC to full involvement in the interrogatory process and formal appearance at public hearings. Over the last two years Communications staff have handled a wide range of interventions including full



participation in Northwestel's 1986 telephone rate application and the CBC's application for renewal of its television network licences. The Government was successful in influencing the decision of the CRTC in both instances to benefit the Yukon.

4. INFLUENCE/ADVOCACY:

This involves the presentation of positions to federal government departments and agencies, parliamentary standing committees and other bodies involved in communications matters in order to influence federal legislation, regulations and policies. The federal government currently has jurisdiction and regulatory control over broadcasting and telecommunications matters in the Yukon. One way to ensure that Yukon's views are made known to the federal government is through an influence program directed at the Government of Canada. An example of this was the Yukon Government's submission in May 1987 to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Culture respecting our concerns about the federal Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. The Yukon Government's submission emphasized the need for increased access to alternative broadcasting services and an improved level of CBC services.

5. INDUSTRY/COMMUNITY LIAISON:

This involves regular consultation with the local communications industry, businesses and community organizations on communications issues. Consultation could focus on the availability, quality and costs of services throughout the Yukon. For example, during the past year Communications staff assisted in resolving service problems respecting the delivery of CBC and CHON-FM/CKRW radio in the Little Salmon/Drury Creek area and were instrumental in solving telephone service issues in the Carmacks industrial subdivision.

6. EXTENSION OF SERVICE:

This involves extension of the availability of communications services for the benefit of residential and business users throughout the territory.

Radio Coverage of Yukon Highways

The travelling public is not able to receive the CBC Northern Radio Service signal on a consistent basis along major Yukon highways. This has implications for safety and civil emergency situations. A study has been completed and while results show higher costs than anticipated, it may be possible to reduce these costs. If this can be done the project could get underway in 1989.

Additional Television Channels

Yukon communities receiving only the CBC Northern Television Service signal would like to receive more television channels. The Government supports the provision of additional licensed television channels available from Canadian satellites through sharing of the Community Radio and Television System's facilities and through encouragement of private sector initiatives.

Community groups operating in the public interest may purchase and attach equipment to the CRTS satellite receive antenna that is used to deliver the CBC television signal. The benefitting group must be willing to pay all capital costs and CANCOM fees. The capital costs of sharing the CRTS satellite receive antenna for community rebroadcast of one channel are in the order of \$10,000 to \$12,000. Costs associated with this method are substantially less than if the benefitting group was to install a separate satellite receive antenna independent of the CRTS facilities. The capital costs for rebroadcast of one television channel using separate facilities are in the order of \$50,000.

Two Yukon communities, Haines Junction and Carmacks currently provide additional licensed television channels by sharing the use of the Government's facilities under the Community Radio and Television System. Annual CANCOM fees vary depending on the number of subscribers in the viewing area. CANCOM fees in Haines Junction, for example, are in the order of \$1,200 per year. These fees are often financed through raffles and other community fund-raising initiatives.

On 17 June 1987 Northern Television Systems Ltd. of Whitehorse publically announced plans to expand cable television services to many rural Yukon communities. The Government is strongly supportive of this private sector initiative for providing multi-channel television reception and will be following the company's progress in this regard with interest. In the event that the cable company is unable to carry out its plans, the Government is prepared to consider the provision of a second television channel for those communities currently in receipt of only one channel.

Rural Electrification Program

Territorial legislation was amended during the 1987 fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly to permit inclusion of telephone service under the Rural Electrification Program. The program is administered by the Community Services Branch of the Department of Community and Transportation Services. Communications staff perform a liaison and technical advisory role to the Community Services Branch. The inclusion of telephones under this program is an example of a positive initiative that the Government can take at little cost to facilitate the extension of basic telephone service by Northwestel to residents living in unorganized areas.

7. COMMUNITY RADIO AND TELEVISION SYSTEM:

This involves the provision, operation and maintenance of television and FM radio transmitters delivering the CBC Northern Broadcast Services in those communities not serviced through CBC owned and operated facilities. Community groups operating in the public interest may share the use of this system to provide alternative licensed broadcast services available from Canadian satellites. The system is operated by the Department of Community and Transportation Services and provides CBC Northern Radio Service in three locations: Old Crow, Pelly Crossing and Stewart Crossing and CBC Northern Television Service in 14 locations: Beaver Creek, Burwash Landing, Carcross, Carmacks, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction, Old Crow, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Stewart Crossing, Tagish, Teslin, Upper Liard and White River.



In the communities of Burwash Landing, Carcross, Destruction Bay, Ross River and Tagish services are provided by mountaintop rebroadcast translator equipment. Reception from this equipment often is of poor quality due to adverse weather conditions at the site. These same weather and access conditions result in high maintenance costs. Remaining communities receive service from Yukon Government owned and operated satellite receive antenna. Service from these facilities is normally of high quality and ongoing maintenance costs are minimal.

Translator Conversion

The Communications staff will take direct steps to improve the quality and level of the CBC Northern Television Service in the communities of Burwash Landing, Carcross, Destruction Bay, Ross River and Tagish through replacement of the mountaintop rebroadcast translator equipment with satellite receive antenna. These antenna are capable of receiving the CBC signal directly from the satellite and will be located closer to the community where road access and electrical power is available. Replacement of the translator equipment with satellite receive antenna in these locations is expected to be completed by 30 September 1988.

It is important to note that those residents who currently receive the CBC Northern Television Service signal from Yukon Government rebroadcast translator equipment will continue to receive service from any new facility that is installed under the CRTS in the future.

8. TELEVISION NORTHERN CANADA:

This involves the participation of the Yukon Government on the working committee responsible for development of the proposal for the provision of a separate educational and cultural television service for the North. The Yukon Government will assess its future role in the network once the level of federal funding is known.

9. COMMUNITY RADIO:

This refers to volunteer, not-for-profit community radio operations designed to fulfill social and cultural needs not being met by the traditional broadcasting system. An example is the Dawson City community radio station. Yukon Government activity in this area will consist of the provision of technical advice and information on funding sources and training programs. Compilation of an index of current programs will be carried out by the Communications Unit in August 1988.

10. VHF MOBILE RADIO SYSTEM:

This involves the provision, operation and maintenance of the Government's VHF Mobile Radio System. The current system will be replaced to provide an improved mobile communications network for the operational and safety requirements of federal and territorial government departments and agencies using the system as well as to help extend public telephone service to a number of rural areas not currently serviced. The new system is based on an adaptation of the Multi-Departmental Mobile Radio System - a proven system used province-wide by the Government of Alberta. The Yukon system will provide voice and data transmission to serve government mobile and portable units throughout the territory including all high-

ways, heavily used waterways and off-road areas and all communities and built-up areas. The system will provide an integrated emergency response network as well as user access to the public telephone system.

Northwestel won the public tender bid to supply and manage the new system. This will result in the creation of approximately 25 new temporary and three new permanent jobs with the Company in the Yukon and will inject about \$1,900,000 into the Yukon economy in the form of local service contracts. In addition, Northwestel will spend a further \$7,500,000 on infrastructure expansion over the course of the next several years which will facilitate extension of public telephone service to rural businesses, residents and industries in a number of areas including:

- the Haines Road and South Canol Road;
- the Klondike Highway between Stewart Crossing and Dawson City as well as the Clinton Creek area;
- the Dempster Highway; and
- the Robert Campbell Highway and North Canol Road to MacMillan Pass.

11. TECHNOLOGY MONITORING:

This involves the monitoring of new communications technology to determine its applicability for possible use in the Yukon. It could also involve participation in research and development projects to advance communications technology that could benefit the Yukon. Direct financial benefits and new jobs in the Yukon could result from such projects. Communications staff are currently examining possible participation in two federal research projects.

12. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:

This refers to the use of emergency communications to support civil emergency and disaster management in the Yukon.

Yukon Regional Emergency Telecommunications Committee (RETC)

The emergency activities of the federal Department of Communications in the Pacific region are coordinated through two Regional Emergency Telecommunications Committees, one in British Columbia and the other in the Yukon. This committee has been established to help meet obligations under the federal government's Emergency Preparedness Act, 1988. In the Yukon, the Regional Emergency Telecommunications Committee meets twice yearly and provides a forum for information exchange on emergency planning. The committee is made up of representatives from all federal and territorial government departments and agencies having responsibility for emergency communications planning and management in the Yukon. This includes such federal departments as National Defense, RCMP, Transport Canada, Communications, etc., and territorial representation from the Department of Community and Transportation Services (Communications and Protective Services). The participation of Northwestel is also an integral part of the committee.



Yukon Steering Committee

A smaller steering committee was set up in February 1987. It was agreed by members of the RETC that agreements on territorial priorities and initiatives could be more effectively addressed by a local steering committee made up of representatives from the territorial government Department of Community and Transportation Services and the federal government Departments of Communications and Emergency Preparedness Canada.

Yukon Government participation on these two committees provides for the cooperation between the federal and territorial levels of government in effective civil emergency preparedness and disaster management in the Yukon.

13. DISTANCE EDUCATION:

This involves examination of the use of technologically-based distance education delivery systems wherever practicable to meet the identified educational and training needs of Yukon students. Communications staff perform an advisory function and support role to the Department of Education.

14. SPECIAL PROJECTS:

This includes participation in special projects which may be established from time to time such as "Yukon 2000" and other initiatives that could involve communications.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Communications Unit of the Department of Community and Transportation Services is located on the second floor of the Main Steele Building at 212 Main Street in Whitehorse. For further information on the Government's Communications Policy and Programs you may call the Communications Unit at 667-3592 or 667-5404. Outside Whitehorse call toll free 1-800-661-0408.

