



FOR RELEASE
February 14, 2013

Directorate being developed to support ICT sector and telecommunications infrastructure

WHITEHORSE—Economic Development Minister Currie Dixon is responding positively to two reports discussed today on the information, communications and technology (ICT) sector, and telecommunications development in Yukon.

The Yukon Information Technology and Industry Society (YITIS), with the Business Development Bank of Canada have compiled an ICT sector strategy report and the Department of Economic Development has commissioned and released a telecommunications development report.

"Information, communication and technology services are essential for Yukon residents and businesses, and the sector has incredible potential as an important contributor to the diversification of Yukon's economy," Dixon said. "The Government of Yukon recognizes the importance of this industry and is willing to take action to create the enabling conditions for growth."

Speaking at an event hosted by the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, Dixon committed to working to implement the recommendations outlined in the two reports. This included a commitment to provide annual core funding to YITIS and to establish a new directorate within the Department of Economic Development to co-ordinate and focus government activities related to the ICT sector.

Dixon committed that the new directorate will undertake a bankable feasibility study on an alternate fibre-optic link to Juneau through Skagway, Alaska. An alternative fibre connection to Alaska could provide redundancy and increased bandwidth for Yukon customers and businesses. Money for the new position is available within the government's existing budget.

"The Yukon government is interested in exploring the possibility of electrical grid connection with Skagway, Alaska and including telecommunications infrastructure in that conversation makes good sense," Dixon added. "By creating a new directorate to coordinate Yukon government's activities, and providing support for YITIS to coordinate ICT businesses, we have strengthened our ability to pursue projects like an alternative fibre connection, implement the recommendations outlined in the reports released today, and create the enabling conditions for growth in this important sector."

For more information visit www.economicdevelopment.gov.yk.ca.

-30-

Contact:

Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

Matthew Cameron
Communications, Economic Development
867-456-6529
matthew.cameron@gov.yk.ca