



## 1. Statement of Policy

The Government of the Northwest Territories will establish a Department called the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations under the direction of a Minister.

### **Mandate**

The mandate of the Minister and Department is to protect, develop and promote the interests of the territorial government and the residents of the Northwest Territories in the negotiation and implementation of land, resource and self-government agreements that address Aboriginal rights in the Northwest Territories; participate in the political and constitutional development of the Northwest Territories; and ensure that mutually respectful intergovernmental relations between the territorial government and Aboriginal, provincial, territorial, national and international governments are developed and maintained.

## 2. Principles

In directing the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations to carry out its mandate, the Minister will adhere to the following principles:

- (1) Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories have rights, which should be defined, recognized and protected in a variety of forums.
- (2) The interests of the residents of the Northwest Territories should be best served by a negotiated resolution of Aboriginal rights, including land, resource and self-government agreements, and the political and constitutional development of the Northwest Territories.
- (3) Political and constitutional development, including the resolution of Aboriginal rights, should promote greater self determination for the Northwest Territories and develop forms of public and Aboriginal government that reflect the interests of the residents of the Northwest Territories.



- (4) A comprehensive approach to the political and constitutional development in the Northwest Territories should be followed.
- (5) The negotiation and implementation of land, resource and self-government agreements and political and constitutional development should be coordinated with the negotiation of agreements respecting the transfer of provincial-type powers and the management and ownership of public lands and resources.
- (6) The Government of the Northwest Territories' relationship with Aboriginal, provincial, territorial, national and international governments should be managed in a coordinated and coherent manner for the benefit of the Northwest Territories' residents, economy, governments and environment.

### **3. Scope**

This Policy applies to all employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

### **4. Authority and Accountability**

#### (1) General

This Policy is issued under the authority of the Executive Council. The authority to make exceptions and approve revisions to the Policy rests with the Executive Council. Authority and accountability is further defined as follows:

#### (a) Minister

This Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (the Minister) is accountable to the Executive Council for the implementation of this Policy.

#### (b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (the Deputy Minister) is



accountable to the Minister and responsible to the Minister for the administration of this Policy.

(2) Specific

(a) Executive Council

The Executive Council may approve a change to the mandate of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations.

(b) Minister

The Minister is:

- (i) responsible for carrying out the mandate of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and shall preside over the operation of the Department; and
- (ii) authorized to carry out the duties described in this Policy in a manner the Minister deems appropriate for the efficient and economical fulfilment of the Department's mandate.

(c) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister is:

- (i) responsible for the management of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations including the planning, administration and other functions necessary to further the Department's mandate; and
- (ii) accountable to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations for the proper conduct of the business of the Department.



## 5. Provisions

### (1) Mandate Establishment

Pursuant to the Government Organization Policy, the mandate, including the authority, responsibilities and functions, of the Minister and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations is established in this Policy.

### (2) Duties of the Minister

The Minister shall develop and carry out programs and services in the Department as may be appropriate to fulfill the mandate of the Minister and the Department.

The Minister shall have charge of and be responsible for:

- (a) Coordinating the Government of the Northwest Territories' approach to intergovernmental relationships with Canada, the provinces, the territories, Aboriginal and international governments.
- (b) Informing and influencing federal, provincial, territorial and international governments and publics, including representing the Government of the Northwest Territories in related intergovernmental forums, regarding Government of the Northwest Territories' general interests and positions in the fields of political and constitutional development, Aboriginal and treaty rights, including land, resource and self-government agreements.
- (c) Fostering sound decision-making at the ministerial and Executive Council levels in the fields of political and constitutional development, Aboriginal and treaty rights, including land, resource and self-government agreements and Aboriginal relations taking into account the comprehensive approach to the Northwest Territories' political and constitutional development.



- (d) Promoting the interests of the residents of the Northwest Territories through the participation in the negotiation and implementation of land, resource and self-government agreements, intergovernmental initiatives, and through the development of associated policies and objectives.
  - (e) Promoting a positive relationship with the Aboriginal leadership to ensure Aboriginal interests are fully considered in Government of the Northwest Territories policy development and program delivery.
  - (f) Ensuring the negotiation and implementation of land, resource and self government agreements and constitutional development is coordinated with the devolution of provincial type jurisdiction over Northern Resources and other government initiatives to facilitate an orderly and beneficial evolution of public government.
  - (g) Providing financial and administrative support to other government agencies or secretariats when required.
- (3) Administration

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations shall be administered in such a manner as to ensure that government requirements as expressed in statutes, acts, agreements, regulations, policies and directives are satisfied.

## **6. Prerogative of the Executive Council**

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or take action respecting the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations outside the provisions of this Policy.

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Premier and Chairman of the  
Executive Council