



SEP 16 2020

HONOURABLE DIANE THOM
DEPUTY PREMIER
MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION

Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories

I am writing to confirm your mandate as Minister of Infrastructure and Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. You have also been appointed Deputy Premier.

Consensus government in the Northwest Territories depends on a collective commitment by all Members of the Legislative Assembly to work together, within their respective roles, openly and cooperatively. As Premier, I have committed to improving and enhancing the relationship among Cabinet and Regular Members. I expect all Ministers to make effective and regular dialogue with Members an ongoing priority and to work closely and respectfully with Standing Committees at every appropriate opportunity.

Cabinet must work as a cohesive team given the collective nature of Cabinet decision making, recognizing that many of the issues we will be tackling do not exist in silos. Ministers should use the appropriate Committee-of-Cabinet to advance commitments and develop coordinated proposals for Cabinet's consideration. We must conduct ourselves with professionalism and integrity, and maintain confidentiality on all matters related to Cabinet and Cabinet related meetings, discussions and proceedings.

As Cabinet Ministers, we have the collective responsibility to advance the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly by implementing the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, tabled on February 7, 2020. In addition to carrying out all of the duties associated with the portfolios you hold and meeting the provisions of your Department's Establishment Policy, you are accountable for fulfilling the specific Mandate commitments listed in the attachment to this letter and for tracking and reporting on your progress.

As a Cabinet, we have agreed that our decisions will reflect the Guiding Principles we tabled on December 10, 2019. These principles should guide us and our departments in both our assessment of issues and our decision-making. We must lead with courage and compassion in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

A productive partnership between Indigenous governments and the Government of the Northwest Territories is fundamental to the success of our Mandate and the future prosperity of our territory. The decisions we make as Cabinet should always reflect our commitment to reconciliation and the affirmation and advancement of Indigenous rights and self-determination. I expect every Minister to foster constructive and respectful government-to-government relationships with our Indigenous partners and to seek ways to advance reconciliation, recognize and affirm Indigenous rights, and support expanded program and service delivery by Indigenous governments.

Successfully achieving our Mandate commitments will also require a close working partnership with community and municipal governments across the territory. Ministers must also build effective working relationships with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts to foster the strategic government-to-government relationships required to fulfill our shared goals and to leverage support for Northern priorities.

The people of the Northwest Territories want accountable government that is open, transparent and reflective of their interests, in keeping with the principles of our Open Government Policy. I expect the fulfillment of every Minister's mandate to be carried out in meaningful dialogue with all residents and stakeholders, including GNWT staff, the broad business community, and investors. You must also uphold the principles of open, transparent, and evidence-based decisions, solution-oriented service delivery and effective public awareness of government operations and decision-making.

Economic uncertainty, increasing impacts and awareness of climate change and complex social needs create significant challenges for the Government of the Northwest Territories. While decisive action is required, our fiscal situation calls for prudent, publicly accountable financial management. Difficult decisions will be required on the part of all elected leaders to meet the best interests of residents, while ensuring fiscal balance and maintaining future resources. This requires careful financial decision making to support meaningful and effective investments in jobs, in people, and in communities across the Northwest Territories.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed not only the NWT, but the entire world. Cabinet and departments reacted quickly to put essential supports in place. Work will need to continue to support NWT residents and businesses, as the NWT faces potential future waves of the pandemic, but also moves towards social and economic recovery. Ministers will need to work collaboratively with MLAs and each other to determine how best to provide supports, while being mindful of the need to fulfill the GNWT's mandate.

We also must acknowledge the reality that the Northwest Territories is not immune to systemic racism and systemic discrimination. Unconscious bias and discrimination hinder our ability to fully embrace the vibrant diversity of the Northwest Territories, advance our collective priorities, and achieve inclusion and cooperation. It is critical to address the ongoing legacies of colonialism and the devastating impacts it has had on Indigenous people's culture, language, education and health. As Minister, I expect you to support the GNWT in its efforts to build a territory where all persons, including Indigenous people and people of all racial backgrounds, have an equal opportunity to succeed, as well as advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice.

As Minister you must exercise utmost compliance with the *Conflict of Interest Act*, the *Financial Administration Act*, the Respectful Workplace Policy and all other policies and procedures of the Financial Management Board and of Executive Council (Cabinet). The role of Minister demands the highest ethical standards and bears the closest scrutiny. Your actions will be the basis on which this Government is measured for its ethical and respectful conduct, professionalism and impartiality.

Your Deputy Minister is responsible for assisting you to fulfill the responsibilities of your portfolios and the specific Mandate objectives for which you are accountable. You can rely on your Deputy Minister and other skilled public servants as key sources of advice on process and policy and to bring forward comprehensive options for your consideration. You are, however, responsible for providing clear direction to your Deputy, including your expectations for interdepartmental and intergovernmental collaboration.

Our Cabinet brings together diverse backgrounds, fresh perspectives, and a shared dedication to the people of the Northwest Territories. I am certain that, working together with our colleagues in the Legislative Assembly and our Indigenous and other government partners, we will develop innovative solutions to the complex and long-standing issues Northerners face, ensuring a bright future for the Northwest Territories well beyond our own four year term.

I am honoured and excited to be working with you to achieve this.


Caroline Cochrane
Premier

Attachment

Minister of Infrastructure

As Minister of Infrastructure you are responsible for providing services to the Government of the Northwest Territories with respect to the planning, design, construction, acquisition, operation and maintenance of government infrastructure, promoting the development and increased use of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies, and the provision of regulatory safety services to the public.

In addition to the Departmental goals, you will undertake the following to support the achievement of the Government's Mandate:

- Lead, with the support of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Development, the efforts of our government to make strategic infrastructure investments that connect communities, expand the economy or reduce the cost of living by:
 - Advancing the development of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, and the Slave Geologic Province Corridor and supporting the Taltson Hydro Expansion project;
 - Supporting the development of fast and reliable broadband internet services for NWT communities; and
 - Modernizing airport infrastructure.
- Lead the efforts of our government to reduce the cost of power and increase the use of alternative and renewable energy by:
 - Reducing reliance on diesel generation; and
 - Expanding the reach of energy conservation and efficiency initiatives.
- Along with the Minister of Finance, support the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment to lead the efforts of our government to ensure procurement and contracting maximizes benefits to residents and businesses by:
 - Strengthening GNWT procurement policies and practices; and
 - Increasing awareness of GNWT contracting opportunities;

Collaborate with the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources to lead the efforts of our government to strengthen the government's leadership and authority on climate change by:

- Implementing the *2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework* and the *2030 Energy Strategy*;
 - Improving oversight and accountability for Climate Change; and
 - Working with national and international organizations to advocate for the consideration of the unique NWT and northern perspectives on climate change impacts, adaptation, and mitigation.
- Support the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead our government's efforts to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by:
 - Identifying, prioritizing and strengthening key actions to further implement UNDRIP.
- Support the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead efforts to strengthen our government's leadership and authority on climate change.
- Support the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead our government's efforts to increase regional decision-making authority by:
 - Ensuring that GNWT decision-making reflects the full understanding of communities and regions.

In addition to the Mandate objectives listed above, you are also accountable for:

- Undertaking projects that improve the transportation system, connect communities, and address the impacts of climate change, such as the construction of the Tẖchq̱ All Season Road;
- Developing and recommending a governance model and revised organization structure for the delivery of Marine Transportation Services;
- Completing and implementing a 20 Year Master Plan for the Yellowknife Airport that supports and promotes economic development opportunities for the Northwest Territories;
- Developing and implementing a four-year action plan under the *2015-2040 Transportation Strategy*;
- Developing and implementing the next 3-year action plan under the *2030 Energy Strategy*; and
- Completing the implementation of the Digital Integrated Information Management System across the GNWT to support information management and security and protection of privacy.

Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation

As Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC), you are responsible for the generation, transmission and distribution of clean, reliable and affordable energy to the Northwest Territories to enrich the lives of Northerners and encourage living, working and investing in the Northwest Territories.

In addition to the NTPC's goals, you will undertake the following to support the achievement of the Government's Mandate:

- Support the Minister of Infrastructure in efforts to reduce the cost of power and increase the use of alternative and renewable energy by:
 - Reducing reliance on diesel generation; and
 - Expanding the reach of energy conservation and efficiency initiatives.

In addition to the Mandate objectives listed above, you are also accountable for:

- Conducting a NTPC Board governance review with the goal of strengthening accountability and transparency;
- Working with the NTPC Board to develop an annual strategic planning process that supports effective reporting and increased transparency; and
- Working with the NTPC Board on the development of industry-standard major project processes, improved risk management and budgeting, and the integration of innovation into decision making/planning processes for the NTPC.