



News Release

Government of Nunavut requests no further telephone rate increases for
low-income Nunavut residents

IQALUIT, Nunavut (June 13, 2000) – Finance Minister Kelvin Ng presented the Government of Nunavut’s position on the proposal by NorthwesTel to enhance telecommunication services across the North to the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Minister Ng made his presentation to the CRTC meeting in Whitehorse, via videoconference from Pond Inlet last evening.

Northwestel is proposing, in part, to increase the local service rate by five dollars (\$5) per month for all telephone customers. The Government of Nunavut believes further consideration should be given to the proposed increase, which would affect both commercial and residential rates. It is scheduled to come into effect in January 2001.

“Many Nunavut families do not use their telephones to call long distance,” Minister Ng said. “Increasing the monthly rate will jeopardize access to local telephone service for many Nunavut families. The CRTC must take this into consideration when deciding on this proposed increase. Customers who utilize only local telephone service cannot be subjected to any further increases.”

The Government of Nunavut supports, in general, the remainder of Northwestel’s proposal, which will result in lower long distance rates for consumers. If approved, the proposal will also provide enhanced calling features such as call display, and will equip communities with the ability to provide local Internet access.

“We are currently a long way from having cost effective telecommunications services that are most often taken for granted in other parts of Canada,” Minister Ng told the CRTC. “We must be able to communicate amongst ourselves as citizens, businesses, students in a modern education system, and professionals.”

-30-

For more information, contact:

Wende Halonen

Manager, Communications

Government of Nunavut

☎ (867) 979-5822

📠 (867) 979-5833

E-mail: whalonen@gov.nu.ca