



News Release

Premier Okalik Joins Minister Strahl to Welcome Three New Federal-Territorial Agreements

OTTAWA (March 27, 2008) – Premier Paul Okalik joined the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, today in Ottawa to announce three new federal-territorial agreements under which the Government of Canada will provide Nunavut \$5.1 million.

Through the new agreements, the Government of Canada will provide Nunavut with new federal funding over the next three to five years to assist workers and communities faced by economic difficulties, to expand public transit, and to hire more front-line police officers.

"Our government is taking action to address the unique challenges and opportunities people face in Nunavut," said Minister Strahl. "We believe northerners can realize their true potential in an environment that has economic opportunities. Our government's investments in community development and policing will help improve the quality of life of people in Nunavut."

Premier Paul Okalik agrees. "This funding will contribute to the development of Nunavut by supporting local economic development, and contributing to the health and safety of our communities. I welcome these federal initiatives and the support they will provide to all Nunavummiut."

The Government of Nunavut will receive \$3.8 million over three years from the Community Development Trust. This Trust was first unveiled by Prime Minister Harper earlier this year to help communities and workers deal with economic changes created by instability in world financial and commodity markets.

In Nunavut, the money will be invested to assist communities in dealing with the impact of shifts in the global tourism market, working with community-based outfitters and guides. It will also establish socio-economic monitoring and mitigation committees in areas affected by start-up mining projects, and support initiatives to provide skills training and upgrading for workers impacted by non-scheduled mine closures.

The Government of Nunavut will also receive \$500,000 over two years from the Public Transit Capital Trust to help reduce dust on several of its gravel runways. The Government of Canada announced the Public Transit Capital Trust in Budget 2008 to help communities complete public transit infrastructure projects.

Finally, Nunavut will receive \$800,000 through Canada's Police Officers Recruitment Fund. This fund was also established in Budget 2008 to support the Government of Canada's national effort to recruit 2,500 police officers and provides flexibility to the territories and provinces in hiring additional personnel across the country.

Nunavut has the flexibility to use its allocated portion of this funding to hire additional officers over five years. Provincial and territorial governments are encouraged to report directly to their residents on the expenditures and outcomes on the implementation of this initiative in hiring additional officers.

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