

News Release

For Immediate Release

IQ and Cultural Immersion Days Directives

IQALUIT, NU (January 31, 2013) – The Government of Nunavut has new concrete ways to incorporate Inuit societal values in its everyday business that will assist in creating a balanced work environment thanks to two recently approved directives relating to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Cultural Immersion Days.

"The Government of Nunavut has been embracing Inuit societal values and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit for a number of years through the *Wildlife Act*, the *Education Act*, and now through actual policy changes," said Monica Ell, Minister of Human Resources. "These new directives provide us with ways to better incorporate these values into all of our work."

The IQ directive is a resource to be used in the creation of a government workplace and service environment that incorporates Inuit societal values in areas such as communication, teamwork and for the creation of a balanced working environment.

For its part, the Cultural Immersion Days directive aims at providing GN employees a hands-on educational experience to learn about Inuit traditional knowledge through different tasks and activities, namely land survival skills and traditional teachings and stories.

"The approval of these new directives by Cabinet will increase and facilitate cross-cultural understanding," said Minister Ell.

Both directives are connected to and support the *Tamapta 2010-2013* goal to "...deliver a system wide human resource strategy that encourages recruitment, supports employee retention and most importantly, provides targeted and effective training opportunities for employees at all stages of the employee spectrum...".

As well, these directives support the objectives of Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and are designed to improve the recruitment and retention practices of the Government of Nunavut.

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Backgrounder attached

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Backgrounder

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Cultural Immersion Days Directives

Nunavut was created through the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement with a vision that governance would reflect Inuit culture in all operations, and would maintain the Inuit lifestyle across all regions of Nunavut.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) is knowledge that has been passed down inter-generationally by Inuit prior to European contact. It is applicable in current governance and can also be used in the evolution of governance in Nunavut. Inuit societal values (ISV) are principles created through this knowledge that can provide guidance. The ISV chosen for application within this directive are reflected in the Cabinet's Tamapta mandate to provide guidance in public service.

The IQ directive provides examples of how Inuit societal values can be applied in every day employment and public service applications.

- In communication: "Speak or write directly, clearly, and with sensitivity to those listening or reading."
- In leadership: "Be modest with accomplishments, allow others to feel encouraged to share their accomplishments and contribute."
- In facilitating meetings: "Make sure all participants feel welcome and included, and that their contribution is valued."
- In cross-cultural awareness: "Broaden your knowledge and understanding of cultural differences to understand the cultural needs of all employees in the workplace."
- In teamwork: "Celebrate the accomplishments of each in the workplace and have a ready willingness to provide praise, encouragement, and recognition to others."

The Cultural Immersion Days directive describes the practice that has occurred within the Government of Nunavut, since its creation, of providing an opportunity for employees to experience Inuit cultural lifestyle on the land.

The directive is designed to ensure that the traditional knowledge learned contributes in building understanding and skills that improve the employee's ability to deliver services to Nunavummiut.

Direction is given that cultural immersion days are organized with consideration to areas such as safety, weather and cross-cultural understanding. Cultural immersion days may include land survival skills, team building activities and learning through elders' teachings and stories.