

NUNAVUT NEWS

SSi Micro/Qiniq warns of higher internet charges if federal subsidy doesn't resume

by **Derek Neary**
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The rates that Nunavummiut pay for internet through SSi Micro/Qiniq are on the verge of climbing “considerably” if a longstanding federal subsidy doesn't return, the Northern internet service provider warned on Thursday.

The federal contribution toward broadband service had been in place since 2005 but it ran out in July and SSi Micro has been carrying the full cost of providing service in Nunavut since then, according to David Veniot, SSi Micro's manager of communications.

To date, the company and the federal government have invested more than \$150 million into community infrastructure, satellite capacity and local jobs, Veniot said. That partnership ensured every Nunavut community had access to affordable internet plans, he added. Sixty-seven per cent of households outside of Iqaluit subscribe to the Qiniq service, SSi Micro stated.



A federal subsidy that lowered the price of internet in Nunavut disappeared in July, according to SSi Micro, which warned that higher rates are inevitable without the federal

SSi Micro had been hoping that a funding decision from Ottawa would be made by now but “appeals for help have gone unanswered,” according to Veniot, who declined to reveal how much rates will increase if the subsidy is not restored.

funds.
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“This is sad and frustrating. We have solutions to ensure Qiniq services can continue and improve, but without support from the federal government – support that we will match with our own investment – the costs of internet for most Nunavummiut will be too high,” said Jeff Philipp, CEO and founder of SSi Mirco. “We are truly sorry to share such terrible news, but we are out of time. We continue to work aggressively to find solutions for the thousands of households dependent on QINIQ service, but without immediate support we will be forced to take truly unwanted actions.”

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DEREK NEARY

Derek Neary has been reporting on developments in the North for 18 years. When he's not writing for Nunavut News, he's working on Northern News Services' special publications such as Opportunities North,... [More by Derek Neary](#)

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