



NEWS RELEASE

Broadband is a must-have for digital democracy

In the midst of a major broadband network upgrade across Nunavut, SSi continues efforts before the CRTC to improve connectivity in the North; encourages public support

YELLOWKNIFE, February 1, 2016. Today, the SSi Group of Companies reaffirmed its proposals for significant reform to the “basic service objective” (BSO). The BSO is a policy established by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), to ensure essential and high quality telecommunications services are made available to all Canadians.

SSi’s intervention was made as part of the CRTC’s ongoing review into basic telecommunications services, initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2015-134. The review aims to ensure that ALL Canadians, no matter where they live, have access to a world-class communications system and are able to participate meaningfully in the digital economy.

SSi’s proposed reforms place broadband as the centrepiece of the basic service objective, so that the objective remains relevant for today’s needs and can keep pace with technological advancements of modern society.

The residents of Canada’s remote and outlying communities, and the businesses, governments and other organizations that serve the people living there, need access to a high quality and affordable communications system, innovative services and competitive choice. To accomplish this, changes to the regulatory framework must focus on improving backbone transport and open gateway facilities in those parts of the country where broadband service is either inadequate or unavailable today.

Making major new investments and unprecedented efforts to help bridge the digital divide between North and South, SSi is nearing the completion of significant upgrades to the satellite backbone and last-mile infrastructure across Nunavut. However, the company believes there is a need for even more effort to improve connectivity in the North.

“The new technologies and network infrastructure we are putting in place will provide the foundation for Nunavut’s broadband future, but we still need to do more”, said Jeff Philipp, Founder and CEO of SSi. “Reforms to the policy framework must focus on a better backbone that is made available to all service providers, so that new opportunities and service improvements can be realized across the North.”



As part of the current proceeding, the CRTC has also invited Canadians to share their views on topics such as broadband availability and service pricing.

“We know how important broadband is to the North, and CRTC policy changes can ensure better and more affordable broadband access is made available”, said Dean Proctor, Chief Development Officer of SSi. “For that reason, we strongly encourage consumers to lend their voice of support for reform; the Commission is doing important work, and public input helps form the outcome of a new policy framework.”

To further facilitate public participation, SSi has placed instructions on its website at www.ssimicro.com/bsi_support for how to submit a letter to the CRTC.

For more information, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2015-134 is available at: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2015/2015-134.htm>

SSi’s February 1, 2016 intervention to the CRTC can be found at: <https://www.ssimicro.com/crtc-intervention2TNC-2015-134>

The following SSi News Releases are available at www.ssimicro.com

- *“SSi Announces \$75 Million Investment into Nunavut’s Broadband Future: Nunavut to benefit from long-term satellite capacity and network-wide upgrades”*, Iqaluit, September 23, 2015, and
- *“Broadband is the “NEW BASIC”: SSi proposes a new regulatory framework to deliver better broadband in the North”*, Yellowknife, July 14, 2015.

About SSi: Headquartered in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, the SSi Group of Companies provides broadband and other communications services across Canada’s North. SSi understands first-hand the challenges faced in providing effective and affordable communications services to remote and outlying areas. SSi has launched broadband service into many markets where the Internet previously did not exist, and provides a competitive alternative to the incumbent operator in small and remote markets.

SSi has deployed advanced satellite and local broadband wireless facilities throughout Nunavut and in many communities of the Northwest Territories, an area spanning over three million square kilometres. The network uses state-of-the-art full mesh connectivity and supports broadband Internet, voice and videoconferencing technologies.

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