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News Release

May 26, 2005

NUNAVUT LAUNCHES THE “ LARGEST, COOLEST HOT SPOT ON EARTH ”

RANKIN INLET, Nunavut - Residents of Nunavut are celebrating the launch of “QINIQ” – Nunavut’s new wireless broadband network in Rankin Inlet today.

The QINIQ Network connects 25 Nunavut communities to each other and the Internet backbone via satellite. Within each community, every building can connect to the satellite dish using a broadband wireless system.

“The smallest, most remote communities have the fewest basic services, such as banks, colleges, libraries, stores and other resources of all kinds. So broadband is actually the most critical to the smallest communities. We made sure that every resident living in any Nunavut community – no matter how small or remote – will be able to access broadband services at the same quality and the same price” explains Patrick Tagoona, Chairman of the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation (NBDC).

With full connectivity within communities that are spread across one-fifth of Canada’s land mass, the QINIQ Network is a significant engineering feat in the world of wireless connectivity. The launch of the QINIQ network makes Nunavut the “largest, coolest hot spot on earth.”

“The Government of Canada is pleased to be a part of this promising initiative. We know that broadband service will open up a world of opportunities to Nunavut residents, such as improved access to education. It will also improve Nunavut’s economy and help improve the quality of life in communities through this network,” says Member of Parliament Nancy Karetak-Lindell, on behalf of John Godfrey, Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities) and David L. Emerson, Minister of Industry. “This is the New Deal connecting with Nunavut communities.”

There are no roads to any Nunavut communities, and the ground is permanently frozen, so the operation of the network relies on satellite connectivity. Satellite connectivity provides the high speed ‘road’ on which Nunavut residents can travel for education, commerce, family connections, and more. NBDC Project Manager Lorraine Thomas explains, “Without the financial support provided by the Government of Canada, this service could not have been made available to Nunavut residents at affordable prices.”

“QINIQ” is the Inuktitut root word for “to search.” The introduction of broadband means people can connect to each other, and communicate orally and visually – more in keeping with Nunavut culture than text-only English Internet formerly available through slow dial-up services. Eighty-five percent of the population in Nunavut are Inuit.

The Government of Canada is contributing close to \$12 million in support of the QINIQ network. Through the National Satellite Initiative (NSI), the Government of Canada is contributing \$ 7.83 million over 8 years, from the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund, to help defray the costs of satellite delivered connections. The goal of the NSI is to make available affordable satellite capacity for broadband services in communities in the far to mid-North, and in isolated and

remote areas of Canada, where satellite technology is the only practical solution. This is the first NSI project to receive funding under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund.

The Government of Canada has also contributed \$3,884,850 for the QINIQ network through the Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program (BRAND). This has meant helping 25 communities across Nunavut to develop business plans and build satellite receiving stations. This program was created to help provide high speed Internet access to northern, rural and First Nations communities. It has been successful in engaging partners across the country through a community driven approach and will be providing service to more than 880 communities.

The Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, a not-for-profit corporation, is responsible for putting the finances together to launch QINIQ. SSI Micro designed, built and maintains the network, and local Community Service Providers in each Nunavut community deliver the service to local residents. For more information about the QINIQ network visit www.qiniq.com, or for more on Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, see www.nunavut-broadband.ca.

Since 1993, the Government of Canada has committed over \$12 billion to infrastructure priorities across Canada. Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities, an additional \$5 billion will flow to communities across Canada over the next five years, including \$37.5 million to Nunavut. The national figure will be \$2 billion per year thereafter.

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Updated : 2006-10-02



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