

Q 2: *Reference the response to GNWT(CRTC)7May15-1 which describes the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link (MVFL), “a 1,250 km backhaul fibre system providing connections between remote communities in the Northwest Territories, along the Mackenzie Valley.” Provide First Mile Connectivity Consortium’s views on how this initiative may address the concerns raised in First Mile Connectivity Consortium’s first comments respecting access to backbone transport to communities in the North.*

Response:

1. FMCC believes that regional fibre backbones can be part of the solution to improving broadband access in remote areas.
2. The Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link (MVFL) is an example of how regional networks could help to address the need for greater capacity in the North.
3. We understand that the Government of the NWT is investing \$82 million, and that a consortium led by Ledcor Developments Ltd., LTS Infrastructure Services Limited Partnership and Northwestel Inc¹ has been selected to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the MVFL.² It appears that there is no Indigenous or community participation in ownership or operation of the MVFL.
4. However, there is not sufficient publicly available information on the MVFL for the FMCC to provide a detailed response. For example, we need additional information on:
 - The governance structure;
 - Community involvement, including any opportunities for ownership, governance, management and operations of the network;
 - Whether the network is open access: is resale available, and if so, on what terms?
 - Capacity of the network;
 - Pricing of wholesale and retail capacity;
 - Training and employment of community residents.

¹ Government of the NWT. “Selection of preferred proponent advances Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link project.” July 30, 2014. Accessible at: <http://news.exec.gov.nt.ca/selection-of-preferred-proponent-advances-mackenzie-valley-fibre-link-project/>

² Government of the NWT. “Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link: Inuvik Community Presentation”, January 16, 2015. Accessible at <http://gwichin.nt.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2014/02/InuvikCommunity-PresentationJan-16.pdf>

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