



Intergovernmental Council  
of the Northwest Territories

# ANNUAL REPORT IGC SECRETARIAT

## 2017 – 2018

June 18, 2019

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The Secretariat to the Intergovernmental Council (IGC) presents this activity report to the IGC for the period of September 2017 to August 2018.

## **2.0 Background**

The following parties are signatories to the *Northwest Territories Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resource Management* (the “Agreement”):

- Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT),
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC),
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NWTMN),
- Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated (SSI),
- Gwich’in Tribal Council (GTC),
- Tłıchǫ Government (TG),
- Denínu Kúé First Nation,
- Acho Dene Koe First Nation,
- Salt River First Nation, and
- Kátł’odeeche First Nation.

The Agreement is a schedule to the 2014 *Devolution Agreement*, with a purpose to “formalize the government to government relationships among GNWT and the Indigenous governments for cooperative and coordinated Management of Lands and Resources.”

## **3.0 Administration**

The Agreement established the IGC Secretariat (IGCS), and mandates that it possess appropriate technical, professional and administrative expertise and capacity to fulfill its duties. The IGC approved the Secretariat’s Terms of Reference, which further outlines IGCS roles and responsibilities and created the position of IGCS Coordinator.

The IGCS Coordinator position provides administrative support to the IGC and IGCS, and currently has a home in the Aboriginal Consultation and Aboriginal Relations division of the GNWT’s Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs.

## **4.0 Activities**

Since September 2017, the Secretariat advanced the following activities:

- compilation of organizational profiles to facilitate work on the IGC Strategic Plan between October 2017 and March 2018,
- participation in a March 2018 IGC Strategic Plan workshop,
- receipt and review of the first draft of the IGC Strategic Plan by April 2018,

- participation and review of the Arctic Policy Framework between January and May 2018,
- review and analysis of large amount of material related to GNWT legislative proposals,
- three teleconferences to advance IGC business (October 2017, February 2018 April 2018),
- for 2017-18, a total of \$7,425,698 has been distributed to IGC Indigenous Parties,
  - *Retained Amounts* for 2017-2018 totaled \$1,362,472.

## **5.0 Intergovernmental Council**

The fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Council took place on December 15, 2017 in Yellowknife. The IGC heard a summary of work in the preceding year, and gave recommendations for future work by approving the following meeting outcomes:

- Leaders approved the 2016-2017 Intergovernmental Council's annual report.
- Leaders direct Aboriginal Government Capacity Working Group to continue with their mandate for the upcoming year and to report back to the Intergovernmental Council in 2018.
- Leaders direct the IBA Working Group to continue with their mandate for the upcoming year and to report back to the Intergovernmental Council in 2018.
- Leaders direct the IGC Secretariat to complete the long term strategic plan and present it for approval in the new-year. The strategic plan should include timelines, indicators and required resources.
- Leaders direct the IGC Secretariat to establish a working group tasked with developing a formal government to government working relationship.
- Leaders direct that the 2018 work plan include preparation for MVRMA review assuming federal amendments occur.
- Leaders direct the IGC to meet twice in 2018.
- Leaders agree to work together on how best to collaborate and maximize federal government Indigenous funding programs.
- The GNWT commits to work collaboratively with Indigenous governments to develop a northern approach to the Arctic Policy Framework, including the NWT chapter.
- The GNWT commits to working towards hosting a Northern Summit on economic development with Indigenous governments and further directs the IGC secretariat to jointly develop an agenda. A broad group will be invited to attend the summit, including industry and the Government of Canada.

## 6.0 IGC Secretariat

The Agreement creates the IGC Secretariat (IGCS) to support the IGC, and operates under the September 2014 IGCS Terms of Reference. The Terms mandate that the Secretariat consists of one senior official from each IGC member government.

The Secretariat held three teleconferences since during the reporting period:

- the October 2017 teleconference discussed dates and logistics for the December 2017 IGC meeting,
- in the February 2018 teleconference, the Secretariat discussed outcomes from the December 2018 meeting, received updates on legislative initiatives, and began preparations for a Strategic Plan workshop. The IGCS also appointed a new chair, Bertha Rabesca-Zoe.
- In April 2018, the IGC received a presentation on the Strategic Plan from its contractor, received updates on legislative initiatives, and spoke with the Deputy Secretary for EIA of the potential and approach for a Government-to-Government working relationship. The IGCS also discussed the potential for an economic symposium.

## 7.0 GNWT Legislative Initiatives

The GNWT's three lands and resources departments are:

- Lands,
- Industry Tourism and Investment (ITI), and
- Environment and Natural Resources (ENR).

These departments remain jointly responsible for fulfilling Mandate commitment 1.3.2 to develop or amend the following pieces of legislation:

- *Mineral Resources Act* (ITI),
- *NWT Mining Regulations* (ITI),
- *Oil and Gas Operations Act* (ITI),
- *Petroleum Resources Act* (ITI),
- *Territorial Parks Act* (ITI),
- *Commissioner's Land Act* (Lands),
- *NWT Lands Act* (Lands),
- *Environmental Protection Act* (ENR),
- *Forest Management and Protection Act* (ENR),
- *Protected Areas Act* (ENR),
- *Waters Act* (ENR),
- (*Environmental Rights Act* (ENR) \*Amendments to the ERA are being advanced with amendments to ENR's 4 legislative initiatives to realize funding efficiencies and to seek equivalency with the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* Part 9).

Between October 2016 and April 2017, the GNWT and IGC explored approaches for IGC involvement in legislative initiatives. GNWT and IGC applied these approaches during the reporting period, including over several days of meeting for seven legislative proposals. These meetings advanced these legislative proposals, towards the goal of achieving assent as legislation prior to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

## **8.0 IGC Working Groups**

To advance multilateral progress on specific IGC-member-government issues, the Intergovernmental Council directed the establishment of IGCS Working Groups, including for:

- Finance,
- Aboriginal Government Capacity,
- Impact Benefit Agreement/Benefit Plans (IBA/IBP).

Neither the Aboriginal Government Capacity nor IBA/IBP working groups met during the reporting period.

## **9.0 Report on the Intergovernmental Council's Priority Items**

The following list outlines progress on outcomes that the IGC created at the December 2017 IGC meeting.

- Leaders approved the 2016-2017 Intergovernmental Council's annual report.

**Update:** N/A.

- Leaders direct Aboriginal Government Capacity Working Group to continue with their mandate for the upcoming year and to report back to the Intergovernmental Council in 2018.

**Update:** The working group did not meet during the reporting period.

- Leaders direct the IBA Working Group to continue with their mandate for the upcoming year and to report back to the Intergovernmental Council in 2018.

**Update:** The working group did not meet during the reporting period. Meetings related to the *Mineral Resource Act* represented a potential avenue to meet this aspect of the Intergovernmental Agreement.

- Leaders direct the IGC Secretariat to complete the long term strategic plan and present it for approval in the new-year. The strategic plan should include timelines, indicators and required resources.

**Update:** IGCS reviewed the first draft of the plan and recommended that the contractor re-work the draft.

- Leaders direct the IGC Secretariat to establish a working group tasked with developing a formal government to government working relationship.

**Update:** GNWT and IGCS continue to discuss various methods for achieving this outcome, including during the April 2018 teleconference. The IGCS Coordinator produced a Terms of Reference for this work in May 2018, and regular discussion continues.

- Leaders direct that the 2018 work plan include preparation for MVRMA review assuming federal amendments occur.

**Update:** IGCS anticipates that amendments to the MVRMA will likely have introduction in the House of Commons during next reporting period. No review or preparations for a review have taken place during the reporting period.

- Leaders direct the IGC to meet twice in 2018.

**Update:** IGC only met once during the reporting period as leadership availability and scheduling was difficult to coordinate.

- Leaders agree to work together on how best to collaborate and maximize federal government Indigenous funding programs.

**Update:** No update for the reporting period.

- The GNWT commits to work collaboratively with Indigenous governments to develop a northern approach to the Arctic Policy Framework, including the NWT chapter.

**Update:** The framework is still under development, and IGCS received regular updates. Indigenous governments provided feedback on the GNWT's positions during the reporting period.

- The GNWT commits to working towards hosting a Northern Summit on economic development with Indigenous governments and further directs the IGC secretariat to jointly develop an agenda. A broad group will be invited to attend the summit, including industry and the Government of Canada.

**Update:** The IGCS continues preparations for this event with planning underway for an October 2018 meeting.

## **10.0 Recommendations**

The IGCS recommends the following to the IGC for the reporting period:

- IGC approve the Annual Report for 2017-2018.

## **11.0 Conclusion**

The IGCS has commenced work to fulfill the commitments of IGC leaders. There still remains a lot of work that the Secretariat is continuing to do to complete these commitments.

During the reporting period, the IGCS and GNWT departments had a large workload with the GNWT's legislative initiatives, the draft IGC Strategic Plan, and continuing discussions on a government-to-government working relationship.