



## **New CRTC funding kick-starts final drive to installing high-speed fibre-optic in all 14 Northern Villages**

**Kuujuuaq, Quebec, July 31, 2024** — The recent announcement by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) of \$79.4 million funding for the Kativik Regional Government's (KRG) EAUFON network means the dream of connecting all 14 Northern Villages to affordable, high-speed fibre optic internet will soon become a reality.

CRTC funding targets completion of the third and final phase of the Eastern Arctic Undersea Fibre Optic Network (EAUFON); involving a 933-kilometre, subsea connection of Ungava Bay communities from Quaqtaq to Kangirsuk to Aupaluk to Tasiujaq and, finally, to Kangiqsualujjuaq.

When completed, the EAUFON fibre network will ring Nunavik, the entire northern part of Québec, from Kuujuaraapik (Whapmagoostui) on the southeast shore of Hudson Bay to Salluit at the top of Québec on the Hudson Strait to Kangiqsualujjuaq on the eastern shore of Ungava Bay – a network stretching close to 2,800 kilometres.

In announcing the funding, the CRTC highlighted the overwhelming support for the project demonstrated by letters of endorsement from Makivvik Corporation, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, and Air Inuit, among others.

Until now, residents in Nunavik communities not connected to the EAUFON network have had to rely on satellite technology to connect to high-speed internet. This technology is more expensive and continues to experience broadband limitations. A fibre-optic network throughout Nunavik, offered to residential and business customers through the KRG's Tamaani Internet, will be considerably less expensive, offer download speeds far superior to satellite, and feature unlimited bandwidth capability.

The launch of EAUFON-3 activity is expected to get underway within the next few months. The KRG, meanwhile, is finalizing funding support from the Government of Québec, which has split funding of previous phases with the Government of Canada through the CRTC.

The previous EAUFON-2 phase involved a 675-kilometre fibre-optic connection from Akulivik on the Hudson Coast to Ivujivik and Salluit on the Hudson Strait, and opening up an overland link to Kangiqsujuaq. EAUFON-2 communities were activated earlier this year. EAUFON-1 connection has been live since 2022, and involved 1,175 kilometres of subsea fibre-optic cable connecting Hudson Coast communities from Chisasibi to Puvirnituk, as well as connecting Kuujuuaq to a fibre-optic network in development with the Naskapi community of Kawawachikamach.

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Quote:

“This is tremendous news for the people and businesses of our 14 Northern Villages who depend on reliable, high-speed internet for the well-being of their families and enterprises. Within the next two years, we will eliminate the digital divide, and fully share in the internet experiences enjoyed elsewhere in Québec and the rest of Canada. I look forward to the advancements we will make in the delivery of vital services to all Nunavimmiut, and the progress we will achieve in making community systems such as education, telehealth, telemedicine and tele-justice more responsive to the needs of our people.”

– Hilda Snowball, Chairperson

The Kativik Regional Government delivers comprehensive public services to Nunavimmiut under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (1978). KRG is governed by a 17-member Council of elected municipal representatives from 14 northern communities in Nunavik, an elected Chair and Vice-Chair, and the chief of the Naskapi First Nation of Kawawachikamach.

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