



For Immediate Release!

The Yukon Chamber of Commerce welcomes Prime Minister to the North, and hopes that concrete outcomes result from his visit.

August 20, 2014.

The Yukon Chamber is pleased that Prime Minister Stephen Harper is making his ninth annual visit to northern Canada and welcomes the attention his visits bring to the emerging importance and opportunities represented by the Yukon and other territories. Rich Thompson, Chair of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce commented, "Prime Minister Harper's annual visits demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of Canada's north and the significant contribution that it makes to the Canadian economy, and underscore the commitment of the Canadian Government to ensuring appropriate development of the north is fully on the Canadian agenda."

As he visits territories we share with him key priorities that business has identified to unlocking future success in the North. Yukon is fortunate to have a long history of entrepreneurs and businesses investing private capital to build the North over past decades, and those businesses hope that their voice is heard in helping to shape the governments objectives. To that end, we encourage Prime Minister Harper and his government to consider the priorities we have identified:

- 1) Investment in infrastructure including roads and paved runways to enhance access to the North. In Yukon a high priority is the upgrading and paving of the Dawson City airport runway. Mining and tourism businesses stand at the ready to provide their input on why this is a high priority and how it might be done in a way to accomplish maximum impact on the Yukon economy.
- 2) Supporting the provision of consistent and affordable energy supplies. Northern businesses toil under both oppressive energy costs, and also an inconsistent energy pricing environment that makes success much more difficult to achieve. Federal government support for investment in Energy distribution infrastructure is also a critical need that is evident across the North, and a priority that the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has also identified and supports.
- 3) Investment and expansion of telecommunications and data infrastructure. Such infrastructure would allow Northern businesses to compete nationally and internationally on a much more level playing field. The Yukon Chamber sees progress, but government efforts to enhance the pace of that improvement would be welcome.
- 4) Continuing programs that support promotion of Northern opportunities and that open the doors to capital and human resource flowing to the North, as well as organizations such as CanNor, which encourages economic development opportunities across the North.

The Yukon Chambers of Commerce would welcome the opportunity to dialogue with the government on the concrete steps that can and should be made now in northern Canada. Visits are most welcome. We hope soon to see the concrete action and results that should be the obvious outcome from the important attention that this government is paying to northern Canada.

Incorporated in 1985, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce is the collective voice of Yukon's Business Community, working to create a climate conducive to a strong private-sector economy by providing leadership and representation on issues and projects affecting business. The Chamber represents the four Community Chambers of Dawson City, Silver Trail, Watson Lake and Whitehorse, as well as over 700 Yukon businesses, through either direct or Community Chamber membership.

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