

**THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WAWZONEK  
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND INVESTMENT**

**Procurement from Indigenous-Owned and -Operated Businesses**

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by the Member for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh on October 29, 2020, regarding procurement from Indigenous-owned and operated businesses.

The Member asked for the percentage of capital expenses were spent with Indigenous-owned and -operated businesses. The Government of the Northwest Territories or GNWT, does not currently report based on Indigenous-owned and operated business. Rather, it reports on whether the company is Northwest Territories-owned and whether the company has Business Incentive Policy or BIP status. We acknowledge that this is something we need to look at and will be included in the scope of the Procurement Review.

The Member asked what steps has the GNWT taken to identify and remove barriers for Indigenous businesses to participate in the modern economy. The GNWT works every day to support entrepreneurs, Indigenous business and other organizations in driving economic development across our territory. Through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, the GNWT develops, promotes and sustains an environment in which Northwest Territories or NWT entrepreneurs, small business owners are encouraged to invest, take risks and prosper. We do so with targeted policies, programs and funding initiatives; such as the Support for Entrepreneur and Economic Development Policy; and in partnership with organizations such as the Business Development and Investment Corporation, Community Futures Organizations, Chambers of Commerce and through our regional offices.

The Member asked what incentives or programs does the GNWT have in place for the purchase of goods and services from Indigenous owned and operated businesses. Currently the GNWT does not have any incentives or programs specific for the purchase of goods and services from Indigenous-owned or operated businesses. The GNWT supports the creation and growth of competitive businesses as a foundation for the NWT economy when purchasing goods, services or construction through the BIP. The BIP is an economic policy that provides an incentive to Northwest Territories-based businesses in a manner that recognizes the higher cost of operating businesses and manufacturing products in the NWT, encourages Northwest Territories-based businesses to create employment and develop necessary experience and business skills, and complies with any intergovernmental agreements to which the GNWT must adhere.

As outlined above, we acknowledge this as something we need to look at and will be included into the scope of the Procurement Review.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.