

THE HONOURABLE DIANE ARCHIE
MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE

NO.: 124-19(2)
DATE: March 2, 2021

Acknowledgement of Engineering and Geoscience Week

Mr. Speaker, professional engineers and geoscientists play an essential role in the growth and development of the Northwest Territories. They help address our society's needs and solve our problems. Their work is evident all around us – in our buildings, highways and airports; in our safe drinking water; in our power and communications; and in our mapping and resource development in the North, to name a few.

These professions play an important role in achieving our priorities under the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories 2019 – 2023, such as making strategic infrastructure investments that connect communities, and investing in alternative and renewable energy.

Mr. Speaker, professional engineering is at the core of the Department of Infrastructure. Engineering and Geoscience Week is an opportunity to express appreciation to the professional engineers and geoscientists who work hard every day, often in challenging environments, to protect public interest and safety, and to improve our quality of life.

The Northwest Territories and Nunavut Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists, or NAPEG, will be celebrating their annual Engineering and Geoscience Week from February 27 to March 6, 2021. Normally, youth engagement, networking and professional development activities would be taking place in person, but this year, the venue has shifted to a virtual space. The focus is to improve public awareness of the important role that these professionals have in the North.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure recently took over responsibility for the administration of the Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act from the Department of Justice. This will allow for the legislation to be administered by a department that has the

knowledge and experience with the work of professionals to whom the legislation applies. We look forward to working with NAPEG and other stakeholders to review the Act to see what changes may be required so that it is responsive and reflective of the current needs of the public, the professions, and the industry.

Mr. Speaker, later this sitting, I will be tabling the Good Building Practice for Northern Facilities 2020 manual.

The 2020 Good Building Practice manual is an extensive update to the 2009 edition, and incorporates 10 years of research and development in new codes and standards, which many NWT Registered Engineers and technicians contributed to. It adds new sections for environmental regulations; climate change; and civil, environmental, geotechnical, and hazardous building material assessment considerations. It contains updated recommendations for more sustainable development, improvements in energy conservation, accessibility, as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation for northern buildings.

Managing the full lifecycle of infrastructure in the North requires a deep awareness and understanding of the unique challenges and risks arising from harsh climatic conditions. The new edition of the manual illustrates the complexities that may be encountered when planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining infrastructure in remote cold regions.

This manual supplements the objectives of national codes and standards and presents a compilation of best practices and requirements developed over many decades of experience designing and building in cold regions. It also incorporates new technologies and methods for northern infrastructure and is expected to benefit a broad range of stakeholders beyond the Government of the Northwest Territories, such as owners, developers, planners, designers and builders, as well as suppliers, building maintainers and operators.

In preparing the updated Good Building Practice manual, the GNWT has drawn upon the expertise of numerous individuals from within the Department of Infrastructure, other GNWT departments, and private sector agencies. Many of them contributed technical writing and comments to this guidebook. We hope this kind of shared learning experience and cooperative effort can continue during the production of future editions.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to recognize the Northwest Territories' past and present engineering and geoscience professionals. Their curiosity and creativity have led to the countless contributions that we enjoy today, and will undoubtedly play an important role in solving the challenges to come.

Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.