

Online Service Improvements

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made a commitment in its mandate to increase online accessibility to driver and motor vehicle services as well as commercial permitting services. I'd like to tell Members today about work the Department of Transportation has done to fulfill that commitment.

Over the past four years, residents and businesses of the Northwest Territories have been able to access a number of secure online driver and motor vehicle services, such as vehicle registration renewals, driver abstracts, driver testing appointment booking, rescheduling, or cancelling, access to commercial permits and much more.

Mr. Speaker, more and more people are taking advantage of these online services. I am happy to say there have been over 185,000 online services performed to date. Due to the recent additions, such as commercial vehicle permitting, the use of online services has grown by 90 per cent from a year ago.

The Department of Transportation recently completed a successful soft launch of new services for driver licence and general identification card renewals. Residents from the communities of Inuvik, Norman Wells, Tuktoyaktuk, Fort Smith, Hay River and Yellowknife participated in the soft launch by applying online for their driver's license or NWT identification card. This process allowed the Department of Transportation to work out any issues with the new services beforehand in order to ensure a successful future official launch. We are now ready to roll this service out more broadly, along with online accident reporting and personalized license plates.

This will allow residents to access even more services from the comfort of their homes.

The new services will reduce the need to travel for people living in communities without a local Driver and Motor Vehicle Office. The services will also decrease wait times at all offices, making for a more enjoyable client service experience.

Businesses, meanwhile, will have online access to commercial fleet management for upgrading or downgrading vehicle weights and self-managing tolling transponders for the Deh Cho Bridge.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has budgeted \$1.2 million in capital to continue improving online driver and motor vehicle services over this fiscal year, and we continue to pay \$350,000 for the program's operation and maintenance. The online services have also achieved operational efficiencies, enabling the Department to discontinue services provided by southern contractors, which now saves the GNWT \$360,000 annually.

Online service delivery is part of our government's Service Innovation Strategy, which supports effective and efficient government. The Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring these services are accessible for as many residents of the territory as possible under its 25-year Transportation Strategy. I'm proud to say that residents from all NWT communities have now subscribed to online services. The Department has also provided training to community Government Service Officers so they can help Elders and other clients use our online services in their communities.

Our achievements in delivering online motor vehicle services affirms our government as an industry leader among other jurisdictions. None of these innovations would be possible without the commitment of our staff. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the GNWT employees involved with this project. The Department of Transportation looks forward to continuing the success and improvement of online driver and motor vehicle services to ensure residents get the services they need from anywhere with internet access.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.