

THE HONOURABLE DIANE ARCHIE
MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE

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Marine Transportation Services and Community Resupply

Mr. Speaker, five years after the Government of the Northwest Territories launched Marine Transportation Services, I am glad to announce the completion of a successful fifth sailing season.

Our marine crews delivered a reliable and professional shipping service to Mackenzie River and Western Arctic coastal destinations working with strict COVID protocols to protect our staff and residents of the NWT.

The first scheduled barges departed Hay River in mid-June, and the last ones reached Paulatuk in late-September. A total of 16 trips were scheduled throughout the season, delivering more than 24 thousand tonnes of cargo.

This year MTS extended the Hay River to Łutselk'e route to deliver freight to points throughout the East Arm of Great Slave Lake, including Fort Reliance and Hoarfrost in McLeod Bay. We quickly adjusted our operations as needs arose, to better serve residents and businesses of our vast territory. We are collaborating with the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the NWT Chamber of Mines, and other departments to discuss the possibility of providing this service in future years.

Mr. Speaker, fuel is a large and critical component of the goods delivered throughout the sailing season.

MTS has signed a five-year contract to supply and deliver fuel to the North Warning System radar sites throughout Canada's Western Arctic. We successfully delivered fuel to 18 radar sites along the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut coasts to support the Department of National Defense in Canada's Arctic regions.

Nineteen million litres of fuel were also delivered to eight communities in the North Slave, Sahtu and Beaufort Delta Regions. These communities rely on these deliveries to heat their homes during winter and to fuel their vehicles year-round.

At the season's end MTS quickly pivoted to respond to an urgent request to offload the annual fuel supply destined for the communities of Aklavik, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. MTS tugs and barges retrieved millions of litres of diesel fuel from an ocean tanker near Tuktoyaktuk and delivered that fuel to storage tanks ashore. This quick action to support local private sector fuel distributors mitigated the costs of more expensive transportation alternatives, thereby avoiding greater increases to the price of diesel and heating fuels for these communities this winter.

As always, I want to take a moment to thank our MTS staff on the ground and on the water. Facing challenging weather conditions, maintaining and repairing the boats and keeping their crews safe and well fed are just part of the job for the hardworking men and women of MTS. I had the opportunity to visit the Hay River

marine terminal in August and see the impressive work they accomplish. This year, 157 workers were employed by MTS in Hay River, most of them NWT residents.

Mr. Speaker, this is just an overview of the work MTS accomplished this year. We will continue provide northern employment and economic opportunities while delivering essential goods to remote communities.

Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.