

THE HONOURABLE DIANE ARCHIE
MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE

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**2022 FLOODING – DEPARTMENT OF
INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSE AND RECOVERY**

Mr. Speaker, for the second consecutive year, several communities throughout the Northwest Territories were impacted by flooding. That flooding caused significant damage not only to homes and properties of residents, but also to the roads, buildings, airports and ferry landings they use regularly.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories' response to the devastating impacts of this spring's flooding, particularly in the South Slave, Dehcho and Beaufort-Delta regions, required effort from several departments.

As the Department of Infrastructure is responsible for the operation and maintenance of public buildings and transportation infrastructure and systems, today I want to highlight the Department of Infrastructure's tremendous efforts to respond and assist in the NWT's recovery from the flooding. Many of the department's staff were responding while their own properties were being affected.

Air transportation is vital in the NWT. During this spring's flooding, the Merlyn Carter Airport in Hay River saw extensive flooding to its main runway, which led to erosion and damage to airfield lighting and the slope along the runway. Crews and contractors worked hard for six weeks to restore the main runway to active service. Maintenance staff were able to quickly get the secondary gravel runway open so emergency flights and air traffic could continue operating while repairs were made to the main runway.

Mr. Speaker, GNWT buildings and infrastructure were also repaired as quickly as possible in Hay River and Kát'odeeche First Nation. This work included repairs made to the

damaged Kát'odeeche pump house to keep water pumps operational and ensure the community had access to water.

Inspections staff inspected gas, boiler and electrical systems in homes, schools, pump houses, regional offices and other flood damaged GNWT properties within Hay River and Kát'odeeche First Nation during and after the flood. These inspections were conducted regularly to ensure these systems were operating normally and that properties were safe to the public.

Highway crews worked around the clock pumping water across flooded highways, keeping our highway systems open for safe travel, controlling traffic and escorting vehicles. Efforts included working with the Town of Hay River to build an access road to Paradise Gardens, restoring access through Vale Island in Hay River and Escarpment Creek on Highway No. 1, and dealing with significantly flooded sections along the Dempster Highway. Highway Transportation Officers provided control at highway entrances to affected communities so that anyone entering these communities did so safely, understanding the risks.

Infrastructure staff also did outstanding work to restore and maintain ferry and highway operations, removing ice blocks at the Tsiigehtchic ferry crossing, at the Mackenzie River ferry crossing and at the Liard River crossing. Staff rebuilt and fortified washed-out ferry landings, several times, and actively monitored river conditions for debris and high-water levels, to ensure ferry operations could resume as soon as it was safe.

Marine Transportation Services staff in Hay River were able to clear the Terminal Basin and Synchro Lift waterways of silt so that barges and boats could safely be lifted and loaded in-and-out of the water. After the flood, Marine Transportation Services crews successfully retrieved a sunken barge, and cleaned up the shipyard and terminal yard of debris.

Mr. Speaker, this spring's flooding presented numerous challenges for the GNWT, residents and our communities. At this time, I want to recognize all the GNWT staff and first responders, who did their jobs under demanding conditions in response to the flooding the

Territory experienced. Their efforts ensured residents could continue to access critical infrastructure, supplies and services during a difficult time. I would also like to thank the NWT residents; some of whom had to leave their homes and possessions for safety. You showed tremendous resilience, courage, compassion, and patience during a difficult time.

Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.