



October 07, 2020

MR. JACKSON LAFFERTY
MLA, MONFWI**Oral Question 336-19(2): Tłı̨chǫ All-Season Access Road Project**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question raised on June 12, 2020, regarding the Tłı̨chǫ All-Season Access Road (TASR) project. My predecessor as Minister of Infrastructure committed to the following:

1. Continuing to ensure that local and northern benefits on the project are maintained.
2. Providing information on the number of recent southern hires, new hires, the positions they were hired for, and the advancements at the TASR construction site for southern hires, as part of the continued commitment to ensure that Northerners are getting meaningful work and training from TASR and similar projects and that, going forward, training components are built in and Northerners are getting meaningful employment.
3. Visiting the TASR camp to speak with the people there.

Local and Northern Benefits

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to ensuring that local and northern benefits on the project are maintained. The Project Agreement with North Star Infrastructure (NSI) identified local business and Tłı̨chǫ construction labour requirements as:

- paying at least 30% of total capital costs to Tłı̨chǫ businesses and Northern businesses with at least 25% going to Tłı̨chǫ businesses;
- paying at least 35% of total construction labour costs to Tłı̨chǫ citizens and/or workers employed by a Tłı̨chǫ business;
- paying at least 25% of annual Operations, Maintenance and Rehabilitation (OMR) costs to Tłı̨chǫ businesses and Northern businesses with at least 20% going to Tłı̨chǫ businesses; and

.../2

- paying at least [55% increasing progressively to 75%] of annual OMR Costs to Tłıchq citizens and/or workers employed by a Tłıchq Business.

NSI is compliant with the Project Agreement.

Hires, Training and Advancement

Since September 2019, 8,891 hours of training have been provided to Tłıchq citizens. This includes training in job readiness, heavy equipment operation, camp cooking, first aid, driver training program, safety, Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), fall protection and ladders, rigging and crane signaling, Designated Operator Program, personal and professional growth training.

From July 13 to August 15, 2020, twelve trainees from the communities of Behchokò, Gamètì, Wekweètì, and Whatì participated in training that is designed to provide participants with the skills necessary to secure employment as heavy equipment operators in construction or road building projects. There is an emphasis on in-seat training in a real work setting. Placement and equipment selection in the field will be based on each trainee's demonstrated aptitude and interests.

As of September 21, 2020, a total of 276 workers were employed on this project, 128 of those workers were either from Tłıchq communities or were northern residents. That works out to 45 percent northern involvement.

The Project Agreement with NSI sets out the employment data that is required for reporting. Advancements are not captured as part of Project Agreement reporting requirements.

TASR Site Visit

My predecessor as Minister of Infrastructure travelled to the TASR site on June 23, 2020, accompanied by yourself and a team of senior officials from the Department of Infrastructure, including:

- David Moore, Assistant Deputy Minister, Asset Management;
- Steve Loutitt, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations;
- Cameron Wilson, Regional Superintendent, North Slave Region;
- Chelsey Digness, Regional Manager, Highways, North Slave Region;
- Ziaur Rahman, Project Manager; and
- Binay Yadav, Project Director.

At the site, the contractor provided an update on progress and local and northern employment. Following the presentation, the group had the opportunity to speak with workers. They also inspected the site up to the first bridge (kilometre 40).

I had the pleasure of touring the TASR project on October 1, 2020, where we drove to La Martre Bridge at km 85.2, which is the longest of the four bridges on the new Road. Thank you for again taking the time to join and talk with departmental staff and work crews.

This strategic project has been a priority for the GNWT and the Tłı̨chǫ Government for years, and I am pleased to with the progress being made.



Diane Archie
Minister, Infrastructure

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Executive and Indigenous Affairs