NGC News

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NMI accepts the first freight delivery of 2023 at the Goose Bay terminal. In 2022, NMI handled more than 15,000 tons of freight for coastal ports. (NMI photo)

Efficiency and Renewal are Key as NMI Improves Freight Handling for Coastal Ports

It was a busy off-season for Nunatsiavut Marine Inc. (NMI), now entering its fifth year as contractor of shoreside services for the coastal marine service. General Manager Gary Latimer and his team spent much of the winter sourcing equipment and containers for shipping freight and cargo to the coast.

"Many of the 20-foot sea cans that we use for transporting general cargo were showing their age," says Latimer, who spoke to ***NGC News*** from Goose Bay, as the *Kamutik W* was being loaded for the first trips of the season. "We bought 17 of those this year, so that is a very significant improvement."

The Coastal Marine Service is an essential one for communities in Nunatsiavut. Approximately 15,000 tonnes of freight, including perishable food is shipped during the season, which runs from June to early December. It's vital that food be stored and shipped properly to avoid spoilage. NMI made new investments this year to enhance that part of the service.

"We have six reefers at the port in Goose Bay to hold perishable food until it can be shipped," says Latimer. "We purchased three new units this year to replace three of the older ones. We also upgraded the electrical service and that means we can run nine reefers on electrical power, rather than on diesel generators. Those investments allow us to continue to deliver high quality service to the coast."

NMI carried out other initiatives this year that will improve service to the coast, and, at the same time, bring more efficiency to the loading and unloading process.

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***NGC** News is a publication of the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies.*

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Torngait Services Inc.

TSI Adopts new Provider for Employee Assistance Program

As of May 1, employees of Torngat Services Inc. (TSI) have a new provider for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), one that will deliver enhanced benefits.

The new provider is HumanaCare, a company that bills itself as Canada's leading EAP provider. HumanaCare offers an integrated mental and physical wellbeing program, and includes several services:

Professional Counselling
Child/Eldercare Services
Financial/Legal Services
Life Coaching
Trauma/Crisis Support
Free 30-minute Legal Consultation

A significant part of the new EAP is a 24-hour call centre, where nurses with a mental health background are involved in the intake process. Nurses will set clients up with professional counselling within days of contact with the centre.

"This is a program that's available to all of our employees and their families," says TSI General Manager Wyman Jacque. "It's a very good program and there's no cost for using it. I would encourage everyone to become familiar with what the EAP offers."

EAP CONTACT NUMBER
1-800-661-8193

NMI Improves Freight Handling for Coastal Ports

cont'd...

Two 53-foot trailers in NMI's yard at the Port of Goose Bay are part of the investment the company has made to improve the efficiency of its freight and cargo handling. (NMI photo)

"We purchased two 53-foot trailers," says Latimer."One is for dry shipments like packaged food and beverages and the other is a reefer to carry chilled and frozen products. A 53-foot trailer allows us to make maximum use of the deck space on the ship. The trailer actually takes up the same deck space as two 20-foot containers and it can hold more cargo. That improves efficiency both in clearing up freight in the terminal and in loading and unloading."

"We've had a stable crew with pretty much the same employees for several seasons. They know their jobs. They know how to pack containers and load the ship so that we make the best use of deck space. They're a good team and they're committed to doing the job well and safely."

From Latimer's perspective, many initiatives contribute to the culture of continuous improvement at NMI.

NMI photo

George Eldridge photo

At left, some of the 17 new sea cans that NMI purchased this year, as part of a significant investment to renew infrastructure. At right, NMI staff weigh a cargo shipment. The company purchased an additional digital cargo scale in 2023 to bring further efficiency to the freight handling operation.

An additional forklift is being purchased, as well as another digital cargo scale to assist with receiving and weighing incoming pallets of cargo.

STAFF A MAJOR PART OF NMI SUCCESS

Gary Latimer states that employees have played a major role in the ongoing effort to increase efficiency. There are 39 employees on the payroll this year.

"It's the continuous focus on small improvements that make the difference. The equipment renewals, our commitment to continue to make NMI a good place to work, and the dedication of our staff to providing this essential service, all of those things combine to make NMI efficient and productive. Everyone here knows what their job is and they know their role within NMI. That makes for an effective organization."

Message from NGC President and CEO Chris Webb

Chris addressing the Expo Labrador conference in 2022. (Becken Photography)

As we begin another busy summer season with our group of companies, we must keep safety at the forefront of our thinking and in our actions. Our companies have an excellent safety record and we all have a part to play so that we can continue to work safely.

NGC is actively recruiting a Health and Safety Advisor to fill that key role. While the search continues, dedicated people in our organization are assisting with our health and safety needs.

Whether it's the morning toolbox talks, recurrent training for existing staff, or training for new employees, we all have a role in ensuring that each employee goes home safely at the end of the day. Wear your PPE at all times on the job, go through your safety checklists before starting each new task, and ensure that your jobsite is safe. If you see a safety issue, tell someone so that it can be addressed.

EXPLORING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies is coming off another solid financial performance in 2022. In order to remain successful and create additional opportunities, we continue to look for new roads to success. Some of those opportunities are being found close to home in existing operations such as aviation, construction, marine services support, and potential land sales at our Town Centre property in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

We continue to work closely and successfully with our partners in the Vale operation at Voisey's Bay. There is even more potential for close working relationships with rare earth mineral development at Strange Lake. While that project depends on close collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Government and the province, NGC is ready to play a part. I spoke to that potential and the opportunities it presents at the recent Expo Labrador conference in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

NGC is involved with our Inuit economic development partners through Nasittuq Corporation in the operation and maintenance of the North Warning System (NWS), which stretches across the country from the Yukon to Labrador. In the past year, Nasittuq won long-term contracts to provide support to the NWS and to Canadian Forces Station Alert. There will be even more room for our involvement and additional job opportunities for Beneficiaries as Canada and the United States work to strengthen North American air defence.

CELEBRATING OUR INUIT IDENTITY

On June 21, NGC took part in National Indigenous Peoples Day. It was a day to celebrate the history, heritage, resilience, and diversity of our country's Indigenous population. It was also a time to look back on the path we've taken and to take stock, and look toward the future. Our vision is to be Inuit business leaders who create wealth and opportunity for Nunatsiavut Beneficiaries.

NGC's leadership team and our dedicated employees are determined to lead the way to fulfill that vision in the interest of all Beneficiaries.

Chris

Photos: Ryan Snow, NCI

Work Underway on Nain and Hopedale Seniors' Apartment Units

It will take in excess of 30 trailers to transport them and more than 2000 kilometres of travel by road and boat, but by early fall, four seniors apartments (11 units) will be on the ground in Nain and Hopedale, and ready for occupancy by next spring. The project was tendered by the Nunatsiavut Government last fall and awarded to Nunatsiavut Construction Inc. (NCI).

NCI subcontracted the building of the units to NL Modular in Mount Pearl, a company that specializes in modular construction. Work got underway this spring. Shipments to the north coast will begin in July and continue until the last unit arrives in November.

Construction is taking place at NL Modular's indoor facility in Mount Pearl.

NCI will undertake the site work in Nain and Hopedale, including grading, foundation, and water and sewer connection.

"The water and sewer connection will take place this fall and the units are expected to be ready for clients to move in sometime in March," says NCI Construction Manager DJ Elliott."These units will help meet the housing needs of seniors in Nunatsiavut. NCI is proud to be associated with this important project."

Collaborating with a company that owns an indoor construction facility brings major benefits.

"This is something new and innovative for Nunatsiavut," says Elliott. "The north coast construction season begins in July and buildings have to be weathertight by November. This arrangement allows us to get a two-to-three month jump on the construction season. That's a major leap forward."

Photos: DJ Elliott

NCI Awarded Contracts to Supply Mini Homes

Nunatsiavut Construction Inc. is fulfilling two contracts to supply mini homes, one for the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) and the other for Labrador Grenfell Health (LGH).

The NG contract also involves installation of the mini home in Nain, while the contract for LGH required the home to be delivered to Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

NCI Completes Site Work for Makkovik Regional Education Building

NCI has completed site preparation for the Nunatsiavut Regional Education Office Building that will be constructed at Makkovik.

The work included general clearing of the site, the removal of tree stumps and other vegetation, trenching, rough grading, and water and sewer connection.

The two-story building will be 7,200 square feet. NCI completed site preparation in late June.

NCI Photo

Photo: thetorngats.com

Base Camp to Open Soon

Base Camp, located next to Torngat Mountains National Park, will open for the 2023 season on July 19. The season will conclude on September 6. Operation of the facility is a collaborative venture between NGC Solutions Inc. and Air Borealis.

Interest is high again this season, with nearly all available spaces booked.

Air Borealis Sets Summer Passenger Schedule

Air Borealis photo

Air Borealis has set its summer and early fall passenger schedule which will run until the end of Daylight Savings Time in early November.

The airline will operate four flights a day from Monday to Friday between Goose Bay and all coastal communities, with an additional direct flight each weekday between Goose Bay and Nain, and between Goose Bay and Natuashish.

On Saturday and Sunday, the airline will have one flight each day between Goose Bay and coastal communities.

Air Borealis' outfitting season officially gets underway with the lifting of one of its Twin Otters into the float plane base at Otter Creek. (Air Borealis photo)

Outfitting Season Underway

The Labrador outfitting season got underway in early June, and again this year, Air Borealis is playing a major role.

"All 21 of the lodges that we do business with have full occupancy for the season," says Air Borealis Vice President and Executive-in-Charge Philip Earle. "This is looking to be the busiest season since before COVID."

The season began on June 4 and will continue into September.

Robust Mineral Exploration Year Good News for Air Borealis

From the search for uranium, to the effort to find rare earth elements that are vital to the future of the low carbon economy, mineral exploration has returned in a big way to Labrador. And Air Borealis, with its Twin Otter and helicopter fleet, is in an ideal position to partner with the exploration companies.

"We are working on six projects this year," says Air Borealis Vice President Philip Earle. "We started flying exploration crews and their equipment in the winter and the work will continue for some time through the summer and into the fall."

Spending on exploration activity in Labrador reached about $50 million in 2022, the largest investment since 2015. It's forecast to reach even higher levels this year.

"We're seeing a very robust exploration program in 2023," says Earle. "We have a dedicated aircraft on some of the projects, on others, it's amounting to a substantial amount of flying time. It's quite a turnaround from where we've been with exploration in the past seven or eight years. It's good business for Labrador and for Air Borealis."

Photo: dfo.mpo.gc.ca

Air Borealis Successful in Right Whale Flight Bid

Air Borealis will again support the federal government's right whale monitoring program. The contract was tendered this spring after the previous contract ended in 2022. This will be Air Borealis' sixth season with the program. The right whale is endangered, with DFO estimating there are fewer than 350 remaining.

Another Busy Year Ahead for Helicopter Operation

After starting with one helicopter under lease from Custom Helicopters in 2019, Air Borealis' rotary operation continues to grow. The service operated nine aircraft at various times in 2022. The outlook for this year is also looking positive. "We will have two aircraft stationed permanently at Goose Bay," says Air Borealis Vice President Philip Earle. "We will use another for Base Camp, one at Vale, two others are devoted to mineral exploration, plus there are other prospects."

Kyle Fraser photo

SPRING TRAINING

Nunatsiavut Marine Inc. staff train on a telescopic boom lift at the freight yard in Goose Bay. The lift is used to keep employees safe while completing overhead jobs. (NCI photo)

Spring is a busy season for the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies. NCI is gearing up for a busy construction program, NMI crews are hired back for the coastal shipping season, and NSI and Air Borealis are making preparations to welcome guests back to Base Camp at Torngat Mountains National Park.

A major part of getting ready for a new season is ensuring that employees have the required safety training to do their jobs.

"We want every employee to be safe and to work with the most up-to-date safety standards," says NGC Human Resources Coordinator, Barbara Stickley. "Training builds employees' education and it provides the knowledge to do their jobs well."

NMI and NCI work off a matrix that keeps track of the training that's required for new employees and the recurrent training needs for existing staff.

Some training is specific to the types of jobs that employees hold. For example, NMI training includes fall protection and working with lift trucks, forklifts, and the reacher and stacker equipment used for moving freight containers. Employees at NCI get trained in areas such as scaffolding on rough terrain, as well as trenching and excavations safety. Other types of training, such as working around powerlines and first aid, are common to both groups.

Says Stickley,"proper training allows employees to work safely and to go home to their families and loved ones at the end of the day."

Safety is practiced in all aspects of the job. At left, NCI employees complete work on a project for a private company in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. At right, NMI employees undergo safety training. (NCI/NMI photos)

TSI remains busy as Vale expansion project moves toward conclusion

Photo: ATCO

You'd think that with the anticipated completion of the Vale Mine Expansion project just months away during the first quarter of 2024, there would be a slackening in demand for the site services provided by Torngait Services Inc. (TSI). However, that has not been the case. TSI hired an additional 14 employees in June and expects to have approximately 250 employees on site this summer.

"Vale has made it clear that they want to pull out all the stops to complete the underground expansion," says TSI General Manager Wyman Jacque. "We've been asked to provide the services and people to help get that work done. This will ensure that TSI has a busy year ahead. We're ready for the challenge."

Employee numbers may increase even more in early fall when the crew is recalled to carry out crushing operations for Vale.

"TSI is providing a vital service to Vale and its contractors," says Jacque. "Our job is to help Vale get this important project over the finish line. Our employees are dedicated and productive and have done a stellar job. They are doing the work safely and efficiently. We are very proud of them."

WILL DISCUSS OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

TSI signed a 5-year contract in August 2022 to continue to provide site services that will extend into the operational phase of the underground mine. In the coming months, TSI will work with Vale to determine their needs once construction of the underground mine is complete.

"We're looking forward to the next phase of the Voisey's Bay mine," says Jacque. "We are pleased to be playing a role in the long-term viability of this project. TSI has been here since the beginning of this mine, going back to the exploration phase. We are prepared to continue assisting Vale as things move forward."

TSI staff are involved in a range of activities at the Vale site, including port and stone crushing operations. (INL and TSI photos)

Involvement Key to Successful Relationships at Vale Mine

TSI Operations Manager Frank Brown

TSI Operations Manager Frank Brown onsite at Voisey's Bay. (Craig Mitchell photo)

We're not long into our conversation with Frank Brown about his role with Torngait Services Inc. (TSI), when he makes it clear why his job as Operations Manager is so fulfilling.

"TSI has exemplary onsite leadership at both the construction and operations sites at the Vale mine," he says. "Our employees do high quality work and they have an excellent safety record. When I visit, I make sure to tell them that senior leadership in our company appreciates that. And we really push the idea that Beneficiaries should take advantage of opportunities for industrial and equipment training. These can be important career building moves."

COMING TO TSI

Brown had careers in forestry, with Nalcor, and as Superintendent of Public Works with the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay before being hired as Operations Manager by TSI in February 2021. At that time, COVID-19 travel restrictions placed severe limits on who could travel to the Vale site.

"As Operations Manager, I wanted a good understanding of operations. I wanted to be able to see with my own eyes the work that people were doing. I didn't want to do that via email."

Travel restrictions made that kind of contact a challenge in the early months of his job, especially since the Vale site is divided into north (operations) and south (construction) camps."

"Because of COVID, there was very little intermingling between the camps," he says. "If I went to the south camp, which supports the mine expansion project, I worked with that crew and their leadership. On the next trip, I would work with the north camp. It was a challenge, but everyone involved - our teams and the Vale team - made it work."

VISITING THE SITE

Ideally, Brown gets to the site once a month, preferably Monday to Wednesday. But things don't always work as planned.

"It's always weather permitting," he says. "The longest layover because of bad weather was about five days. But I don't expect any pity from our staff onsite. They've all been impacted by weather delays. It's just part of the job when the only way in is by air." *continued next page...*

Involvement Key to Successful Relationships *cont'd...*

Near the airstrip at Voisey's Bay. (ATCO photo)

Those trips to site provide the opportunity to have the person-to-person contact that is essential to doing his job properly.

"I meet with TSI's leadership in both camps," he says. "I meet with our work crews and go to their morning safety talks and speak about a safety-related issue. And then I take questions. It's important for the people on the ground to put their questions to a senior leader of TSI. The support that we provide for mine expansion will end when that project is complete, so the people on the construction side will often ask about the timeline for their employment. They have to think about their next job. Most of our permanent employees on the operations side have been with us for many years and as a result, they usually have fewer questions."

"I wanted to be able to see with my own eyes the work that people were doing. I didn't want to do that via email."

The trip to site also gives Brown the opportunity to meet with Vale's project leaders.

"We have strong relationships with Vale's coordinators onsite. Our own onsite supervisors speak with them multiple times a day, so everyone is quite aware of any issues or concerns that might arise. Meeting the Vale onsite people also allows us to promote TSI's capacity and to have them consider us for other scopes of work."

That approach has benefited both TSI and Vale.

"We have assembled crews to support a number of activities, including aggregate production and warehouse operations. We are currently recruiting 14 people to work on an underground support project for the next several months. TSI has the capacity to do good work and do it safely. We are one of the 'go to' contractors for Vale."

When he's not on the job, Frank keeps busy at his cabin and the seasonal outdoor activities that are common in Upper Lake Melville.

"Our cabin is on a pond and my wife and I put in a lot of time there. We snowmobile in the winter and kayak in the summer. The cabin life is what we enjoy."

Nain hosts Prime Minister, Ministers, and Inuit Leaders for ICPC Meet

Photos: ITK (Twitter) top; Prime Minister (Twitter) top right; Stephanie Angnatok (bottom right)

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and eight of his ministers met Inuit Tapariit Kanatami President Natan Obed, and Inuit leaders from across the north, including Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe, in Nain on May 12 for a meeting of the Indigenous Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC). It was the first-ever visit of a sitting Prime Minister to Nunatsiavut.

The ICPC was a recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It's intended to be a direct Crown-to-Indigenous body to advance work on shared priority areas between Inuit and the federal government.

During the session in Nain, the leaders endorsed a report that recommends making the ICPC a permanent body and putting staff and management in place to deliver on its work. The Committee reported making progress in several priority areas, including health and wellness, economic development, Inuit revitalization, sovereignty, defence, and security. The leaders added homelessness as a new priority area.

The event was held at the Illusuak Cultural Centre. The Centre's cafe provided catering services.

"We were pleased to host the Prime Minister and the entire ICPC delegation in Nain," says NGC Chief Operating Officer Sarah Leo. "As operator of the Cafe Illusuak and gift shop, NGC Solutions Inc. provides a high level of service at the Centre. We are growing our catering business and it was an honour to cater on this important occasion."

During his visit to Nain, the Prime Minister did a community walkabout and took part in a feast. He's pictured above with Cafe staff, Harriet Kalleo, Stephanie Angnatok, and Nancy Winters.

Career Days

Photos: Air Borealis/Twitter

Grade 9 students from schools in Nunatsiavut were hosted by Air Borealis during this year's career days.

Pilot Brianna Ricketts and Aircraft Maintenance Technician Jamie Baikie talked about the various careers in aviation.

Students were given tours of the Twin Otter, one of 10 that Air Borealis uses to serve north coast communities.

Aviation at Air Borealis also includes the helicopter service. The airline operates the helicopter service under a lease agreement with Custom Helicopters Ltd.

The trip to Goose Bay was sponsored by the Nunatsiavut Government, in coordination with the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District. The focus was on career options, and included presentations from the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies, Labrador Grenfell Health, Serco, CNA, and the RCMP.

NG Education Advisor Amalia McNeill described the trip as "very rewarding" for students and "a positive exposure" to careers.

Janice White photo

NGC Scholarship Program Revamped

Deadline: July 31

New requirements in place for 2023 scholarship awards

NGC has revamped its scholarship awards program in an effort to make the program available to a broader range of applicants, including high school students who have been accepted into an accredited post-secondary institution or an approved apprenticeship program. The new requirements are effective with the 2023 awards.

"The program as we originally designed it was restricted to post-secondary students," says NGC Chief Operating Officer Sarah Leo. "The new requirements will make scholarships available to students entering the first part of their study period and that is a big help when you consider the cost of renting an apartment and other expenses."

The program will continue to offer four annual awards, valued at $1250 each. One award each will be made to a student in business, marine, and construction trades. A fourth scholarship will be awarded to a woman studying in either of those fields. The deadline for applications is July 31 and Leo says that timeframe will also benefit students.

"We can award the scholarships earlier than previously and that will provide certainty to students as they begin their year of studies."

The scholarship program doubles as an investment in youth and in Nunatsiavut itself.

"It's a very special thing to recognize young people furthering their education and improving their own career choices," says Leo. "And we hope many of them will come back to Nunatsiavut. People from here who come back tend to stay longer. In Nain, for example, the principal and vice principal of the school are from here and so is the head nurse at the clinic. There are excellent career opportunities in Nunatsiavut and we're proud to support that."

Eligible Fields of Study for the 2023 NGC Scholarship Program

Business

Must be enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution in the field of Business Administration, Science, Law, Engineering, or Computer Studies.

Marine

Must be enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution in the field of Marine Engineering, Marine Navigation, or other marine-related programs.

Construction Trades

Must be enrolled in a recognized program, skilled trades, and/or technology program: Includes full-time certificate or diploma programs and apprenticeships (ie. on-the-job training).

Eligible fields of study: Carpenter, Pipefitter, Electrician, Welder, Plumber, Machinist, etc.

Full scholarship program details are available online at ngc-ng.ca. Click on the "In Our Community" tab and select "Scholarship Application."

Community Open Houses to be Rescheduled

Poor weather conditions interfered with planned open house community meetings for Nain, Postville, and Makkovik in early June. NGC will reschedule those meetings for this fall and include Rigolet, Hopedale, and Upper Lake Melville. The meetings are an opportunity for Beneficiaries to hear what NGC is involved in and to provide feedback to the company's leaders. Monitor NGC's Facebook page for updates.

Grow With NGC!

NGC's Janice White (L) and Barbara Stickley promoted careers within the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies at a Career Fair at College of the North Atlantic Happy Valley-Goose Bay Campus on May 11. The Fair was sponsored by the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce and was open to the public. (NGC photo)