

# Team Effort

*Nunatsiavut Health, Labrador-Grenfell, and Air Borealis collaborate to bring vaccine to North Coast*



## NGC News

Vol. 6 No. 1 March 2021

**Public health nurses employed by Nunatsiavut Department of Health and Social Development celebrate administering the last vaccine shot in the second round of the Moderna vaccine rollout. (L to R) Kim Dicker, Sylvia Doody, Dawn Michelin, Tina Buckle, Sophie Pamak, Jennifer Bull, Marilyn Baikie, and Betty Sampson. (Betty Sampson photo)**

January 11, 2021, dawned earlier for Sylvia Doody than most. She was up nearly four hours before sunrise in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Doody, the Director of Health Services with Nunatsiavut's Department of Health and Social Development was about to lead her team of nurses and support staff in administering the COVID-19 vaccine program in the five Nunatsiavut communities.

"I was up at 4:30 that morning and over at the Labrador Health Centre at ten minutes to six to pick up the vaccine," she says. "I couldn't sleep the night before. There was just so much excitement about having the vaccine and getting people protected. We were in the air on the way to Makkovik before the sun had risen."

### PLANNING THE ROLLOUT

In the lead-up to that first vaccination, another team had been painstakingly planning the logistics of transporting the vaccine and the nurses to administer it. Tom Randell, with 46 years in aviation,

and an advisor to Air Borealis, was chosen to lead the airline's team. "I was contacted by Nunatsiavut Health about how to move people around," says Randell. "We looked at which was the best route. Which community should be first. I took that away and met with our team to draft a plan."

Randell and the Air Borealis team are used to working out logistics. But transporting the vaccine carried special significance. "This one was different because of the worldwide pandemic. It brought extra importance to the job that we had to do. We were handling the vaccine that everyone in the world wanted. And we knew how important it was to get it to people on the coast who would be the first in the province to be vaccinated."

As the Air Borealis team worked out the transportation details, Nunatsiavut's Coordinator of Community Health Nursing was immersed in planning for the arrival of the vaccine. Tina Buckle has worked in Nunatsiavut healthcare since 2003.

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*Air Borealis First Officer Kayla Torarak, a Nunatsiavut Beneficiary from Hopedale, holds a container of the Moderna vaccine to be administered in her home community. (Left to right) Captain Neil Purchase, Cathy Andersen, Tina Buckle, Kayla Torarak, Sylvia Doody, Dawn Michelin, Betty Sampson, Margaret Fry, and Jennifer Bull. (Tina Buckle Photo)*

The rollout required close coordination and collaboration with Labrador-Grenfell Health. "The vaccine supplies came from the province to Labrador-Grenfell Health," Buckle says. "We worked with the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Thomas Piggott and their public health staff. We had to get the right amount for the various communities. There had to be education for staff in how to transport and store the vaccine."

Well before the first person was vaccinated, Buckle and her team had to work through a mountain of other details. "We got a breakdown of each community in terms of age," she says. "We needed that with the Moderna vaccine because people under 18 couldn't be vaccinated. We did this by reaching out to community leaders. We had worked out the details about what time we would arrive in a given community. Once there, the vaccine had to thaw for one hour before it could be administered."

**MAKKOVIK FIRST TO BE VACCINATED**

When Makkovik got the word just after Christmas that residents there would be the first in Nunatsiavut to receive the vaccine, public health nurse Betty Sampson and her team got to work. They drew up a list of everyone 18 and older and called each of them to book an appointment for the vaccine clinic on January 11. The day previous, the team went to the clinic location in the community hall and set up six nurses' stations, a reception area, and a waiting area for people to rest after getting their shot.

Before dawn broke on January 11, Sampson was raring to go. "I was up at 6, even before my alarm went off," she says. "I lit my Moravian Star in the window, had a cup of coffee, and joined our team to go to the airport. I could hardly sleep the night before." Sampson and three DHSD staff members

arrived at the airport at 7:30, twenty minutes before the flight from Goose Bay arrived. The sun hadn't made it above the horizon when the Air Borealis Twin Otter descended into Makkovik. Tina Buckle, Sylvia Doody, Jennifer Bull, and nurses from Nunatsiavut Health were joined on that first flight by Margaret Fry from Labrador-Grenfell Health.

Fittingly, the first vaccine was administered by Sampson, who had returned to her home community as the public health nurse in 2014 after stints in Goose Bay, Forteau, Cartwright, and St.



*Nurse Betty Sampson administers the first vaccine to Makkovik elder Willie Ford. Sampson was also the first nurse in Nunatsiavut to receive the vaccine. (Betty Sampson photo)*

Anthony. Her first patient was elder Willie Ford. "We wanted to go with the oldest person in Makkovik and Mr. Ford agreed to do that," she says. "I do public health and homecare and that job is very important." "But on that day when we could finally administer the vaccine, I felt that my job was so important. People were looking up to us and they were saying 'I'm so glad that you were able to do this.' It was all so positive and upbeat. Through this pandemic, we have managed to stay safe." [conclusion next page...](#)



# Team effort brings vaccine to Nunatsiavut cont'd

Everyone on the Nunatsiavut Health team felt the importance of the moment. "We stepped off the plane and had vaccines in people's arms ninety minutes later," says Doody, who echoed Betty Sampson's comments about the appreciation people expressed after receiving their shot. "I had elders come up to me and be so grateful that we had come with this vaccine. Some were in tears that they had been given priority."

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT A HIGHLIGHT

Once the team was on the ground, Nunatsiavut communities pitched in and supported the vaccination team. "They looked after everything we needed," says Doody. "When we landed, people transported us to the vaccination site. We didn't go hungry or thirsty. People were very appreciative that we had made this happen."

## TEAM EFFORT VITAL TO SUCCESS

The weather cooperated during the first week, with first dosages being administered to 1288 people, representing just over 70 percent of the eligible population. That percentage increased to more than 80 percent when nurses returned with the second dosage in February. Only this time the weather forced a delay of several days. Still, everyone kept their eye on the goal, which was to get all eligible people vaccinated. A highlight during the first week was Air Borealis' decision to have first officer Kayla Torarak, a Beneficiary from Hopedale, deliver the vaccine to the community.

"We actually ran out of vaccine in Rigolet on that second trip," says Doody. "We got in touch with our team at the office in Happy Valley-Goose Bay to get more vaccine and we contacted Tom at Air Borealis and he had a plane in the air shortly after with more vaccine. That was the kind of teamwork we had."

And that wasn't the only time plans had to be adjusted on the fly. "We went into Makkovik for a second dose on a Thursday with the intent to come back out but we had to stay overnight," says Doody. "We all needed a change of clothes. One of our husbands went house-to-house and brought backpacks to the Captain's house. The next morning, Tom sent a plane with more vaccine and a change of clothes and we were off to Nain."

## HIGHLIGHT OF CAREER

"This is one of those career moments that will always be a highlight," says Tina Buckle, as she reflects on the collaboration that it took to make the vaccine rollout successful. "I was here during the H1N1 scare (2009). There was the potential then of a worldwide

pandemic, but it didn't happen. With COVID-19, we set out to vaccinate people and we did it. All the pieces came together. Everyone was on the same page."

Kayla Torarak, the First Officer on the flight that delivered the first dose of the vaccine to Hopedale also sees it as a special moment. "It was great being part of the vaccination clinics for the coast," she says. "I'm glad that almost every eligible person got their shots. It's great to know that our isolated communities were the first to get the vaccine."



**The team used a snowmobile to move the vaccine to the clinic in Rigolet. (L to R) Marilyn Baikie, Rigolet public health nurse, Tina Buckle, and Sylvia Doody. (Tina Buckle photo)**

Betty Sampson was invited to join the Nunatsiavut Health vaccination team as the group travelled to Nain and Hopedale for clinics. But that first day in Makkovik stands out for the feeling she had that the vaccine had finally arrived. "When the pilot handed me the vaccine that morning, it was almost like a relief that it came when it was supposed to with people looking forward to being vaccinated," she said. "After we took the team back to the plane to return to Goose Bay, we returned to the community centre to pick up supplies and return to the office. It wasn't until the next day that I realized how tired I was because the previous day was so exciting."

Tom Randell credits his team's grasp of logistics and the cooperation from the Nunatsiavut Health team as critical factors in getting the job done. His special moment? "That picture of the nurses on the ramp in Hopedale with our flight crew, including Kayla. They are vaccinating their own people and being flown by Air Borealis, an airline that they own one third of. That brought everything together in one beautiful snapshot." 🇩🇪



## **NCI steps up to fill local need for building materials**

Nunatsiavut Construction General Manager Tom Lyall was visiting the Inuit Community Government Town Office in Nain last fall when someone mentioned that the local retail store was discontinuing the sale of building materials.

"My first thought was that maybe NCI could help out," says Lyall. "What people needed were materials to do jobs like minor renovations, repairs, being able to build a komatik."

A few days later, Lyall had a plan. NCI would purchase and ship plywood and lumber to its warehouse in Nain for sale to local residents. There wasn't any time to spare as the coastal shipping season was coming to a close.

"NCI recognized the importance and need for these materials to support the various activities by local residents," he says. "We purchased several lifts of lumbers and plywood and shipped it to Nain on one of the last boats of the season."

How have things turned out? "We are pleased to say that it was the right decision as we have sold quite a bit of our inventory," says Lyall. "Hopefully we will have enough stock to satisfy the needs until freight season reopens in the spring."

## **New Vale Partnership formed**

NGC and Innu Development Limited Partnership have formed a partnership with one of the world's leading diamond drilling companies to pursue work at the Vale underground mine. Negotiations to formalize establishment of Innu-Inuit Foraco LP were completed in February.

Foraco is active in 22 countries. The new partnership is the eighth such venture formed specifically to seek work with Vale.

## **Torngait Services Inc. welcomes new Operations Manager**

Torngait Services Inc. (TSI) announced in mid-February that Frank Brown, former Superintendent of Public Works at the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, was joining the company as Operations Manager.

The Operations Manager is the main link between TSI's office in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and the management team on the ground at the Vale project. With over 200 employees providing support services to the project, the job involves coordination across a range of activities.

The Operations Manager works closely with the on-site team to ensure that issues are addressed and that the Vale team has the resources they need to complete their work successfully. Brown made his first trip to the Vale site to meet supervisors and staff in mid-March.

## Message from President and CEO Chris Webb

In mid-January, in the coldest and deepest part of our winter, we saw a sign of hope and optimism that we have longed for since the pandemic took hold last March. It was the photo of elder Willie Ford of Makkovik getting the first COVID-19 vaccine shot in Nunatsiavut. In the days that followed, nearly 1300 people in Nunatsiavut got their first shot. It was fitting that Nunatsiavut, which 100 years ago was nearly decimated because of the spread of the Spanish Flu, should be the first part of the province to get protection from a virus that has upended our lives and caused so much worry and tragedy.

The vaccine gives us hope that we can finally start to return to the "new normal." It is heartwarming to read in this edition of the newsletter, of the collaboration between Nunatsiavut Health and Social Development and Air Borealis to deliver the vaccine to the people of Nunatsiavut. We pay tribute to all of the people involved.

A bright spot during the pandemic is the story of how the leaders and employees in our businesses pivoted to working with the public health restrictions that were so necessary for our protection. I am happy to say that even in the midst of so many challenges, NGC has turned the corner to profitability. Our business lines are doing better than ever before. While COVID-19 impacted our operations, it did not interfere with our determination to get the job done.

Air Borealis continued providing essential passenger and cargo services. The company added helicopter services to its business lines and recently signed a three-year contract to provide helicopter services to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. New capital investments in Nunatsiavut Construction and Nunatsiavut Marine in 2021 will make both companies more efficient.

TSI continues to hire new employees for the Vale



site and provide training so that Beneficiaries can progress to some of the skilled positions that will open up as the mine goes underground. We have formed a new Vale partnership. Innu-Inuit Foraco will provide diamond drilling services to the mine. NGC's leaders are working toward the future and grasping new opportunities.

On a corporate level, we are focused on the next 5 to 10 years. NGC is developing a business strategy that will map out where our revenue will come from during the next decade. As we do that, we remain committed to our core goals. Creating employment for Beneficiaries. Providing training and developing business to increase opportunity. Conducting our operations in a safe and environmentally sound way.

We are also engaged in a partnership that will explore the viability of developing a sustainable industry around the harvest of harp seals. Protein North aims to use this abundant resource in many applications within Nunatsiavut and other parts of northern Canada, to create health and lifestyle products, and to continue the traditional craft industry. More work needs to be done but we are excited about the potential of this undertaking.

While 2020 was a challenge for all of us, 2021 brings great hope and new opportunity. The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies is ready to embrace those opportunities and continue to create new benefits for the Beneficiaries of Nunatsiavut.

Chris



# New capital investment to improve economics and productivity of NCI quarry operation



A major capital investment by NGC, which gained approval at the LICST meeting in December, will allow NCI to double daily production of crushed rock at its quarry operations. The investment will see NCI replace the current equipment with a new crusher and screening deck.

"We signed the deal in early March," says NCI General Manager Tom Lyall. "Where we could crush 1000 tons a day with our old machine, we will produce 2000 tons a day with the new crusher."

The old crusher had seen its best days and required significant maintenance and expense to keep running in 2020. "Without this investment, we would not be able to have a crushing season in 2021," says Lyall. "We didn't have the equipment to successfully do another season."

The new equipment includes belt and truck scales that will allow NCI to account for every ton of rock that it crushes. "Scales are an integral part of accurately accounting for your production," says Lyall. "It allows you to accurately track production and sales." An added bonus is that Lyall will be able to track daily production through the new equipment's cellular download capacity.

The crusher isn't the only piece of new equipment that NCI is acquiring in 2021. The company is also purchasing a 45-ton float. That will allow it to transport tracked equipment from community to community. NCI will also buy a replacement dump truck this year. "Every 10 to 12 years, we have to invest in new equipment," says Lyall. "With proper care and maintenance and oversight, this new equipment should last longer than that."

## NCI wins Hopedale warehouse tender

NCI was notified in mid-March that it won the tender to build a three-bay warehouse to meet the needs of three NG divisions in Hopedale. NCI General Manager Tom Lyall plans to ship equipment and foundation materials on the first trip of the *Kamutik W*.

Construction of the 2800 square foot building is expected to be complete by the end of September. NCI will do most of the work with its own crew, with the exception of electrical, which will be undertaken by a subcontractor.

The contract also involves installation of a security chain link fence with gates that will enclose an exterior storage yard.

## NCI Happenings....

### NCI passes COR Audit

NCI again achieved a passing grade on its annual COR audit. COR is a Certificate of Recognition that certifies a company has met auditable health and safety standards for their industry. Environment, Health, and Safety Coordinator (EHS) Steve Downey and Office Manager Jennifer Saunders steered NCI through the audit process. Effective health and safety programs help reduce the incidence of injuries and other safety-related occurrences. Having COR status also enhances the competitiveness of companies and it is a bid requirement for many tenders.

### Virtual Training Sessions

NCI's EHS coordinator Steve Downey is preparing virtual training sessions for the company's employees. Training is required for all employees as part of their orientation in each construction season. Employees in Nain will also receive a first aid training upgrade.





## Reefer purchase by NMI adds capacity and protection for perishable cargo

Tom Lyall Photo

It looked like any other tractor trailer pulling into Happy Valley-Goose Bay. But the arrival on March 19 of a 53-foot refrigerated trailer (reefer) from Ontario via the U.S., will bring further improvement for the shipment of perishable goods to and from the north and south coasts.

Nunatsiavut Marine Inc. purchased the reefer as part of its capital improvement plan for 2021. The reefer is a hybrid, meaning its refrigeration system can be powered by either diesel or electricity. NMI General Manager Gary Latimer says the company now owns three reefers. He says they are essential to providing good service to coastal communities.

"This will improve our capability to ship refrigerated products," he says. "That's usually food and produce heading north, and fish coming south from the plant in Makkovik. The reefer has adjustable controls, which means it can be set to keep goods

frozen or it can be adjusted to just keep goods chilled. It will prevent us from having accidentally frozen goods."

As shoreside provider for the coastal marine service, Nunatsiavut Marine is responsible for providing the equipment to load and unload the *Kamutik W*, including providing refrigerated containers for shipping. NMI will further improve its freight handling operation through the purchase of a diesel forklift for the Goose Bay warehouse. Latimer says that will increase the number of forklifts in the fleet, leading to improved loading efficiency.

Yet another investment in 2021 is the planned construction of a 25 by 40-foot Quonset-style shed. The shed will become a maintenance shop and allow NMI's mechanic to be protected from the weather while working on equipment.



# Inside TSI

Piles of nickel and copper concentrate sit in the A-frame structure at the Vale port awaiting shipment. The concentrate is hauled from the mill by employees of Torngait Services Inc. (TSI), who are part of TSI's site services team.

TSI is the biggest employer in the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies. Majority-owned by NGC, the company employs in excess of 200 people, close to 40 percent of them Beneficiaries. Since 2005, TSI has provided site services for the Vale mine at Voisey's Bay.

Working in two-week shifts, TSI employees carry out the work that keeps the site moving. They clear and maintain the roads, load and unload the planes and ships, keep the tanks filled with fuel, haul ore to the dock, and maintain the water and sewer service.

In this edition of **NGC News**, we profile the work of the loading and port crew. In subsequent editions, we will focus on other groups of TSI employees who carry out pivotal support roles for the Vale project. All photos are courtesy of TSI employees.



# Port and Loading Crew



Each night, three truck haulers transport 11 to 12 loads each (1200 to 1500 tons) from the mill to the A-frame storage unit, where nickel and copper concentrate is stored until shipping. **Photo, top left:** a truck loaded with concentrate arrives at the drop-off point. **Middle photo,** the hauler begins to tip its load. **Top right,** the load is dumped and the truck is off to the mill for another pickup. The drivers are part of a nightly crew of six people. One other TSI employee loads the trucks at the mill and two others receive and monitor the unloading of concentrate.

The Vale mine produces nickel and copper. The concentrates are kept in separate piles in the A-frame. Once the night crew concludes its work, the dayshift springs into action and flattens the piles to make room for more concentrate and to keep the material from overheating. Of particular concern are emissions of sulphur dioxide, a toxic gas. Proper storage and ventilation protects workers against this occurrence.



The *Umiak I* arrives at Edward's Cove for its first trip of the 2021 winter season with fuel, and supplies, such as explosives and equipment. It will depart with a load of concentrate. TSI crews load about 10 nickel ships and 4 copper ships annually.

# Port and Loading Crew



It takes TSI crews 18 hours to discharge 7 million litres of fuel from the *Umiak I* and ensure that the fuel lines are emptied. Depending on the quantity of general cargo, it can take another 2 to 5 days to complete that process.

Concentrate is transferred from the A-frame facility on a series of conveyor belts situated inside a pipeline above the port roadway. After loading, a bulldozer is placed in the vessel's hold to level the approximately 29,000 tons of concentrate to prevent shifting during transit.



Containers and equipment that are no longer required on site are loaded on deck for outbound shipment. TSI employees clear up the site and put away tools in preparation for the next ship.



The port crew also offloads cargo from barges that arrive from Quebec City. Integrated Nunatsiavut Logistics (an NGC partnership) carried out 20 total lifts in 2019 and 2020 and will conduct approximately 8 more in 2021.





# Newest Trustee excited to take on role with LICST

- *Special Advisor to President of Memorial University on Indigenous Affairs*
- *Leading development of Memorial University's Strategic Framework for Indigenization/Chair of President's Advisory Committee on Indigenous Affairs*
- *Sits on co-management Board for Mealy Mountain National Park Reserve*
- *BA, MA (Linguistics) Memorial University*
- *Masters in Business Administration, Memorial University*

## **Catharyn Andersen**

Catharyn Andersen is accustomed to sitting on boards, but there's special meaning to her appointment by the Nunatsiavut Assembly on February 2 as a Trustee of the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust (LICST).

"As a Nunatsiavut Beneficiary, the opportunity to be part of an organization whose goal is to create wealth in trust for Beneficiaries and to be Inuit-led, provides me with a new connection to Nunatsiavut and Beneficiaries," she says.

That new connection aligns her with the business interests that LICST oversees. Labrador and Indigenous priorities are top of mind for Andersen, who serves as Special Advisor to the President of Memorial University on Indigenous Affairs.

She spearheads Memorial's Strategic Framework for Indigenization. The process of developing that framework involved holding community consultations in 26 Indigenous communities and listening as people described the type of relationship that they want with Memorial University. "Indigenous people want a respectful relationship with the University," she says. "One of the most significant matters that came across in the community meetings involved the importance of language. People want Memorial to do what it can to support Indigenous communities around language revitalization."

A second important issue that arose in those consultations involved the establishment of a campus in Labrador. Memorial acted on that matter in July, when the Board of Regents approved the establishment of the School of Arctic and Subarctic Studies. The School will allow Memorial to offer undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate

programming. Andersen sees the new Labrador campus as a vital connection between the University and Indigenous students. "Students won't have to travel outside Labrador to get a degree," she says. "We had already heard from Inuit students who did the Bachelor of Education program when it was offered in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, that a key reason for their success was that they could study close to home. That connection to Labrador is a critical pillar of the Indigenization Framework."

## **WELCOMES THE TRUSTEE ROLE**

Andersen will attend her first LICST meeting in April. "I'm excited to get down to work with the other Trustees," she says. "Our companies are built around Inuit values and they are geared to providing opportunity for young Inuit. I would like Beneficiaries in Nunatsiavut to see successful companies run by Inuit and see through those people, opportunities for themselves."

Andersen says it's not just the opportunity to work directly for companies under the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies banner, it's for Beneficiaries to see what's possible. "I would hope that when they see our successful companies, they will get ideas to create their own businesses."

## **GIVING BACK**

Andersen views her appointment as a chance to give back to Nunatsiavut. "I grew up in Makkovik," she says. "In high school and while attending University, I worked for several summers in Nain. All the way through university, the LIA or Nunatsiavut Government assisted me financially through the Post Secondary Student Support Program. I am looking forward to giving back and helping a new generation of Beneficiaries achieve their goals." 🇮🇶

# THE TRUST

*The role of the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust*



Members of NGC's executive team and the Trust participate in the December 2020 meeting of the LICST. Trustees Natan Obed and acting chair Garry Best appeared by video conference. All of the Trust's meetings in 2020 were held in physically-distanced surroundings that included online presentations by members who were unable to come to the province because of public health travel restrictions. (Janice White Photo)

## EVOLUTION OF THE LABRADOR INUIT CAPITAL STRATEGY TRUST (LICST)

**1973**

Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) formed

**1982**

Labrador Inuit Development Corporation (LIDC) established as economic development arm of LIA with three Inuit shareholders.

**2005**

Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement completed. LIA dissolved.

**2006**

LICST established to oversee economic development. LIDC shares transferred to LICST.

**2011**

Nunatsiavut Group of Companies established to become the for-profit business operation of LICST. LIDC dissolved.

In late November each year, leaders of the various entities in the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies compile their budgets and plans for the coming year. Those documents are prepared for a meeting of the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust (LICST), the group that oversees NGC's operations. In that

Government (NG's senior civil servant Isabella Pain and Economic Development Director Kristy Sheppard). The remaining three Trustees are appointed by the Assembly on the recommendation of the Trust (acting Chair Garry Best, Natan Obed, and Catharyn Andersen).

***We have successfully evolved from a social enterprise to a 'for-profit' company while still remaining true to our vision to operate successful businesses with Inuit leadership."***

**Garry Best**  
Acting Chair

meeting, NGC President and CEO Chris Webb explains the plans, answers Trustee's questions, and supports any capital investment plans coming from companies such as Nunatsiavut Construction or Nunatsiavut Marine. The Trust has the final say on budget approvals and investment plans for the coming year. (Partnerships such as TSI and Air Borealis report to their own Boards of Directors, where NGC is represented).

The Trust is comprised of five members. Two are appointed directly by the Nunatsiavut

### SETTING UP THE TRUST

Wyman Jacque, who is now General Manager of TSI, was an NG deputy minister in 2005 and one of three senior officials who set up the Trust. "NG understood the importance of having economic development in the region," he says. "They were also aware that LIDC was having some financial struggles and that a change of direction was needed to ensure future viability. The Trust was a mechanism to put things on a solid business footing, yet still be answerable to the Assembly through the LICST."

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## ***The Role of the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust cont'd...***

### **TRUST OVERSEER, NOT MANAGER**

The Trust operates as the Board of Directors. While it approves budgets and matters such as investment plans, day-to-day operations of NGC are in the hands of Chris Webb and company leaders. "We do all the due diligence and consider the risks of making business decisions," says Webb. "We give the Trust recommendations on how we feel the companies can be best operated and they give us their blessing. Challenges like operating during the pandemic obviously increase the risk but we work closely with the Trust so that we can successfully manage those risks."

Acting Chair Garry Best and the Trustees navigate that balance. The Trust exercises its responsibility to provide guidance and oversight while leaving the

operational work to Webb and the leaders of the various companies. "We are all focused on continuous improvement and that drives our discussions at both the strategic and operational levels," says Best. "We have successfully evolved from a social enterprise to a 'for-profit' company while still remaining true to our vision to operate successful business with Inuit leadership. And we remain aware of our social responsibility to Beneficiaries."

And Best likes what he sees at NGC. "NGC is in the best financial position in its history," he says. "The company is highly respected in the business community and we can boast of having exceptional management talent and depth. That bodes well for the future of NGC." ❖



## **NCI substantially completes Gander DND build ahead of schedule**

***NGC's won a \$600,000 contract to build a warehouse for 9-Wing Gander for DND.***

An on-time start, cooperative weather in the fall and winter, and a dedicated workcrew were all factors that allowed NCI to substantially complete a building project for the Department of National Defence in Gander two weeks early. All that remains to complete the warehouse for 9-Wing is asphalt and landscaping. That will be undertaken when warmer weather arrives in the spring.

"I'm very pleased with the Gander project," says NCI General Manager Tom Lyall. "It's a tribute to the workers. Their work attitude and dedication to seeing the project completed got that job done. And of course, it never hurts to have the weather cooperate. The fall was mild and they didn't have much to contend with in the way of snow."

The Gander project is the outcome of a business

strategy that NCI hopes will make the company a year-round operation in construction. NCI has been primarily a six-month-a-year operation with activities focused on the relatively short Nunatsiavut construction season. Competitive bidding for a finite number of projects in the region can produce big swings in activity from one year to the next. In order to profitably sustain its Nunatsiavut operation, NCI has pursued opportunities outside the region.

A major achievement in the 2020 season was the company's success in obtaining work in Upper Lake Melville and in Newfoundland, with the Gander project. By the fourth quarter of 2020, the strategy to expand NCI's footprint had produced positive results, with nearly \$1 million in new work outside Nunatsiavut.



## Company introduces online cargo tracking system



Air Borealis has launched an online tool that allows customers to track packages and other cargo that have been delivered to the airline for shipment to and from the coast. Once a package is checked in

for shipment, a waybill is created. The waybill can then be used to track the shipment online through Cargo Tracker at [airborealis.ca/cargo/cargo-tracker](http://airborealis.ca/cargo/cargo-tracker). "Our cargo section is extremely busy and it's not always easy to reach someone by phone to check on a shipment," says Air Borealis Director Travis Barbour. "This provides the customer an additional option to track a package much the way you can with courier companies. By using Cargo Tracker, the customer will be able to know if the package is in the warehouse, or if it's on the way and which flight it's on. We continue to look at other options that will make it easier for customers to do business with Air Borealis." 📱



Photo: Wayne Younge, TSI

### Air Borealis signs 1-year contract to provide Vale bulk fuel

Several times a year when the *Umiak 1* docks at Voisey's Bay, the vessel is carrying about 7 million litres of fuel to power the fleet of vehicles, heavy equipment, and other facilities that keep the site moving. The logistics involved in acquiring the fuel and delivering it to the vessel when it's docked at Quebec City, is the responsibility of Air Borealis.

In November 2020, the company signed a one-year contract with Vale to continue providing the service. Air Borealis and its predecessor companies have provided this service in a less formal arrangement since 2000. In 2020, approximately 45 million litres of fuel were delivered to the Vale site.



Photo: Air Borealis/Facebook

### COVID protocols remain but traffic and employment levels nearly back to normal

The decision to return the province to COVID Alert Level 5 in February was a jolt to Air Borealis, but with not nearly the same impact as when restrictions came into effect a year ago. "We implemented a modified schedule and had a few layoffs," says Air Borealis Director Travis Barbour. "But it was a much more positive story this time. With the decision in mid-March to shift to Alert Level 3 outside the Avalon, traffic started to build. Our cargo shipments remained strong. We're rehiring people."

Something that's not likely to change however, is the approach to public health measures. "Mask-wearing will be required for a long time yet," he says. "And we will continue to rigorously clean our aircraft and our other facilities."





# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE

NGC and several of its partners promote education and opportunity through annual scholarships. With application deadlines approaching, Beneficiaries are encouraged to investigate requirements and submit their application.



NGC supports 4 scholarships annually worth \$1250 each. Deadline to apply for 2021 is May 31, 2021. Details and application package are available online at [ngc-ng.ca](http://ngc-ng.ca).



*PiKalujak Fisheries Limited*

PiKalujak Fisheries supports 2 scholarships in each of the fall and winter semesters at Marine Institute, worth \$1250 each. Apply through the Marine Institute.



Air Borealis awards a \$1000 annual scholarship, renewable for up to 3 years to a Nunatsiavut Beneficiary. Application deadline is April 30 at 5 pm. For additional details and application, email [scholarships@airborealis.ca](mailto:scholarships@airborealis.ca).



Torngait Services Inc. awards five \$1000 scholarships annually to high school students in each of the Nunatsiavut communities and one scholarship to a student in Upper Lake Melville. Apply through your high school principal.



Bird Heavy Civil Limited awards a \$1500 annual scholarship to a Nunatsiavut Beneficiary. Applications are due by May 30. Details are available at Bird Heavy Civil Limited, 95 O'Leary Avenue, St. John's, NL A1B 2C7 **Attn: Boyd Humby**



Photo: Kyle Fraser

*Air Borealis A-Star B2 helicopter in Labrador, November 2020.*

## ***Air Borealis signs 3-year contract with NL Hydro to provide helicopter services***

Air Borealis has signed a three-year contract to provide flying services for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, with an option for two additional years. The company has already completed some flights, having flown a crew to Black Tickle to work on hydro facilities there and completing a powerline job in the Goose Bay-Churchill Falls area. In addition to the NL Hydro work, Air Borealis assisted a mineral exploration company mobilize their field camp. It was also involved in recent search and rescue missions.

Services are currently being provided with a single aircraft leased from Custom Helicopters. As business grows, Air Borealis will be able to lease additional aircraft.



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

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