

Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link Project

Torys acted as counsel to the Government of the Northwest Territories as the public authority for the C\$82 million Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link PPP project to design, build, finance and maintain a new fibre optic communication system.

State: Northwest Territories

Country: Canada

Procurement Model: DBFM - Design Build Finance Maintain

Government Level: Provincial

Value: \$82,000,000 CAD

Client Name: Government of the Northwest Territories

Client Role: Public Authority

The communication system is a complex undertaking that will span over 1,400 km along the Mackenzie Valley corridor, connecting Northern communities, resource industries and the Inuvik Satellite Station Facility to high-speed fibre optic networks in southern Canada.

Connecting to the network's southern terminus in High Level, Alberta, the project will use existing infrastructure starting at McGill Lake (90 km south of Fort Simpson) and then from there, bury 1,115 km of high strength, armoured fibre optic cable between Checkpoint Junction and Inuvik to account for geological challenges presented by intermittent permafrost along the proposed corridor.

Following the completion of the all-weather Inuvik-Tuk highway, an additional 140 km of cable will be added to extend the system to Tuktoyaktuk, located on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, at the uppermost edge of Canada.

On November 3, 2014, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) announced that it signed a contract with Northern Lights General Partnership (Northern Lights)—a consortium comprised of Leducor Developments Ltd. and Northwestel, a wholly owned subsidiary of BCE Inc.—in connection with the project.

The new fibre link is a significant step in creating an alternative network path for communication services in the case of accidental fibre cuts. It is also a key component of the GNWT's commitment to provide improved delivery of health, education and social services to remote communities in the Mackenzie region.

Torys represented the Government of the Northwest Territories with a team that included Mark Bain, Dan Ford and Christie Kneteman.
