



NIRB File No.: 18UN050
NPC File No.: 148937

December 20, 2018

Jean-Francois Bouchard
Government of Nunavut – Community and Government Services
PO Box 1000, Stn 700
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Sent via email: jbouchard@gov.nu.ca

Re: Notice of Screening for the Government of Nunavut's "Undersea Fibre Optic Cable Installation" Project Proposal

Dear Jean-Francois Bouchard:

On December 3, 2018 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received a referral to screen the Government of Nunavut (GN)'s "Undersea Fibre Optic Cable Installation" project proposal from the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC or Commission), which noted that the project proposal is outside the area of an applicable regional land use plan.

Pursuant to Article 12, Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.4 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 87 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB has commenced screening this project proposal and has assigned it file number **18UN050** - please reference this file number in all future related correspondence.

INFORMATION REQUEST

On December 3, 2018 the NIRB requested that the Proponent complete the online application form through the NIRB's public registry system and ensure, pursuant to s. 144(1) of the *NuPPAA*, that the information provided be sufficient to determine the scope of the project activities being proposed and that sufficient information has been provided to commence screening.

On December 19, 2018 the NIRB received the required additional information and commenced the screening pursuant to Part 3 of the *NuPPAA*.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Scope:

The proposed “Undersea Fibre Optic Cable Installation” project is located within the Qikiqtani region, involving an undersea fibre optic cable from Nuuk to Iqaluit, Kimmirut and Cape Dorset, and a separate cable from Sanikiluaq to Québec. The Proponent intends to conduct a cable laying/installation, and construction of shore landings. The program is proposed to take place from May 2019 to December 2020.

According to the project proposal, the scope of the project includes the following undertakings, works or activities:

- Laying of a main-trunk submarine cable from Nuuk to Iqaluit, Kimmirut, and Cape Dorset, with infrastructure to allow later expansion up the east coast of Baffin Island and into Hudson Bay;
- Laying of a submarine cable from Sanikiluaq to the Kativik Regional Government system in Nunavik;
- Transportation of light cargo material via air and heavier cargo material via sealift;
- Installation of cable via self-contained vessels;
 - Plough burial of cable or jetting of cable below sea bed and may include clearing obstacles;
 - Use of cables ship to install cables with up to 80 personnel;
 - Use of two (2) or more shallow draft vessels or barges for shore-end cable installations at landing sites;
- Construction of landing sites in Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Cape Dorset, and Sanikiluaq;
 - Construction of concrete vaults to support cable tie-in points;
 - Rock cutting or drilling as required;
 - Use of vehicles for construction and personnel transport;
- Operation and maintenance of the submarine cable to include:
 - Transmission of light (data) and electrical power;
 - Use of maintenance vessels during ice free conditions to repair and/or replace any damaged cables;
- Anticipated in-place abandonment of cable at end of 25- to 30-year project lifespan; and
- Use of accommodations and local infrastructure.

Inclusion or Exclusion of Scoping List

At this time, the NIRB has identified no additional works or activities in relation to the project proposal. As a result, the NIRB will proceed with screening the project based on the scope as described above.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

All documents received and pertaining to this project proposal can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125425.

The documents received include:

- *NPC Screening Referral and Conformity Determination*
- *NPC Application and Conformity Questionnaire*

- *NIRB's Online Application Form*
- *Non-technical Project Proposal summary in English, Inuktitut and French*
- *Maps noting the proposed cable routing*
- *Maps and Diagrams showing the proposed landing areas in Iqaluit, Cape Dorset, and Kimmirut*
- *Detailed project description*
- *Letter of Support from Nunavut Tunngavik*

The NIRB will copy you on screening process related correspondence and upload related documents to the NIRB's online registry for public access. The NIRB may request additional information at any time during the process.

The NIRB is copying parties and municipalities potentially affected by the GN's project proposal with this letter, and we invite interested parties to comment directly to the NIRB by **January 16, 2019**.

The NIRB would like parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the project proposal is likely to arouse significant public concern; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse eco-systemic or socio-economic effects; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is likely to cause significant adverse impacts on wildlife habitat or Inuit harvest activities; and if so, why;
- Whether the project proposal is of a type where the potential adverse effects are highly predictable and mitigable with known technology, (and providing any recommended mitigation measures); and
- Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your comments to the NIRB via email at info@nirb.ca, via fax at (867) 983-2594 or via the individual project dashboard for this assessment on the NIRB's online public registry at www.nirb.ca/project/125425.

If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact the undersigned at (867) 983-4617 or at kmorrison@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Keith Morrison
Technical Advisor II
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Distribution List
 Robert Chapple, Government of Nunavut – Community and Government Services
 Ken Waylyshen, Government of Nunavut – Community and Government Services
 Joe Adla Kunuk, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
 Sean Joseph, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
 Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
 Tineka Simmons, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
 Agnes Simonfalvy, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
 Tracey McCaie, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
 Mark D’Aguiar, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
 Ryan Calvery, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Enclosures (6): Public Notice of Screening (English, Inuktitut, and French)
 Comment Forms (English, Inuktitut, and French)