

**KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE**

NWT Centre for Geomatics/the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link/Northern Canadian  
Centre of Excellence for Remote Sensing

**Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review  
Dept. of Lands—February 23, 2017**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate and thank the deputy minister for his response. I didn't really hear what the relationship is between the Centre for Geomatics, the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link, and then this Northern Canadian Centre for Excellence for Remote Sensing.

I recall seeing the business case for the NWT Centre for Geomatics. It looked very compelling. I thought it was a good business case where we could start to generate some revenues as well and sell some technology and so on. If we have the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link being finished this year, hopefully, and offering high speed access to the Mackenzie Delta and data highway and all those sorts of things, why are we not going ahead with this Centre for Geomatics at the same time? What is this Northern Canadian Centre for Excellence for Remote Sensing? What is the relationship between all these initiatives? Thanks, Mr. Chair. Sorry. If they don't have the answer now, I am happy to get it in writing within a reasonable period of time, but this is all rather murky, and I am trying to understand this. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Mr. Speaker, this hydra-like question has many heads and I am going to ask the deputy minister to attempt to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** The establishment of the WACG in Inuvik, it was suspended as a start-off, to start at the beginning of your request, as a result of departmental phase 2 reduction of proposals. However, the Northwest Territories Centre for Geomatics and Aurora research are still committed to strengthening the investment in the Inuvik satellite facility and the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link to enhance geomatics and remote sensing services to support strategic planning and decision making. There is still a link like he mentioned to the WACG; there is still that link in the other Centre for Geomatics and Aurora Research Institute. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I am getting a little bit more information. We will spend \$85 million on this fibre link and it is going to end in Inuvik and that is it? We are not going to take advantage of having the fibre link? We are not going to have this NWT Centre for Geomatics? We have one guy now who is going to fly a drone around, that is great, but I just don't sense there is any urgency. I think we are going to miss an opportunity if we have to wait until 2021 for an investment to pull together these initiatives. Can't we do this any quicker or sooner? This is clearly an area that we should be investing in to help diversify our economy. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Of course, Mr. Chair. I am sorry. This is an important area. I take that comment of Mr. O'Reilly under consideration. I don't think we are missing the boat on this yet. Financial restraint, perhaps, has caused us to not move ahead as fast on certain projects as we would have wished, but that is where we are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I almost heard a commitment from the Minister that he is going to get back and provide something in writing to help clear up this murky water between the NWT Centre for Geomatics, Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link, and the Northern Canadian Centre for Excellence for Remote Sensing. Am I correct that he is going to get back to me in writing within a reasonable period of time? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I think we could do that. I am wondering if Mr. O'Reilly might be able to put the question in writing. It might make it easier to respond to it, to make sure that we properly and fully answer the question because it somewhat complex. I am simply asking that he put it in writing to us. That being done, I think we could undertake to respond in writing. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I can do that, but I don't think it is going to be any more complicated than something like, "Please explain what the relationship is between the Northwest Territories Centre for Geomatics, the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link, and the Northern Canadian Centre of Excellence for Remote Sensing and the timing of those initiatives." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. O'Reilly said he would put that in writing for the Minister, or you could check Hansard tomorrow. Does that suffice, Minister?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I am sorry. Could you repeat that, Mr. Chair, so that I am certain what undertaking I might be making?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Will you provide an answer in writing to Mr. O'Reilly's question, Minister?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. I only ask that he put his question in writing to us so that we could fully respond. I want to make sure that we do make a response to him that answers fully his question. We have heard his oral question. We will attempt to make a response. However, it might be in all of our best interest to have him write to us a detailed question. That is my simple submission on this, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly, will you put the question in writing for the Minister?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes.

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I will do a cut and paste from Hansard.