

## NWT Association of Communities 2018 STANDING Resolutions

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NWTAC Resolutions are divided into the following categories:

**CATEGORY A      Territorial Wide Municipal Issues**

This category will contain resolutions on issues that are of a direct or indirect concern to all territorial Communities.

**CATEGORY B      Issues which Pertain to Regional Concerns Only or Are Not Within Municipal Jurisdiction**

This category will contain resolutions, which are of a regional concern only or are not within municipal jurisdiction. No action is taken on Category B resolutions.

**CATEGORY C      Matters Dealt with by the NWTAC in the Previous Three Years**

This category will contain resolutions relating to specific matters, which have already been considered by the NWT Association of Communities within the previous three years.

# **NWT Association of Communities Policy Breakdown**

## **Standing**

(ST) Refers to a resolution that reflects a standing policy of the NWTAC. The objective may have been achieved once, but may have to be restated because of a change in government ministers or department personnel. It also refers to a resolution not requiring active pursuit for one reason or another.

## **Re-affirm**

(RA) Refers to a resolution whose objective has not been achieved and which should be actively pursued by the NWTAC Board of Directors.

## **Delete**

(DL) These resolutions have been deleted from the NWTAC policy manual.

## **Internal**

(INT) Internal policies are administrative matters.

NB. All active policies are reviewed on an annual basis for discussion / presentation at the Annual General Meeting.

**ST-18-10-09 Community consultation on any proposed changes to electricity delivery**

**WHEREAS** residents of the Northwest Territories are an important stakeholder with regards to how electricity is supplied across the Territory; and,

**WHEREAS** elected officials within communities represent residents at a local level to ensure that their issues and concerns are accounted for especially when decisions are being made which will have a direct or indirect effect on their livelihood;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the NWTAC urge the NT Hydro Corporation, the NT Power Corporation, the GNWT and all other suppliers of electricity within NWT communities to consult with Local Governments on major projects and/or regulatory changes that will have a direct or indirect effect on residents within the NWT.

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

**November 2016 Update:**

On June 14, 2016 MLA (Yellowknife North) Cory Vanthuyne delivered a Member's Statement in the Legislative Assembly on the high cost of power, which included a point about the NTPC replacing its Board with Deputy Directors without any consultation or discussion with the Legislative Assembly. He further noted that if the government is making changes to the Public Utility Board or any changes that will affect the way the NTPC is run and the potential change to costs of electricity, that this must be subject to consultation.

*The formal GNWT response of September 2016 indicated that the GNWT is developing a new Energy Plan in 2016-2017 and will consult with communities on the proposed GNWT approach to energy in the territory.*

The NWTAC continues to participate as an intervenor at the majority of Public Utilities Board filings.

*January 2018 Update*

*GNWT Response dated September 28, 2017*

*The GNWT recently undertook extensive public engagement for the development of a new Energy Strategy. It included six regional engagement workshops, a survey, and written stakeholder submissions. The GNWT is always willing to hear the issues and concerns of communities, local governments and residents on energy projects and policy that might have an impact on residents. It is standard practice for the GNWT to engage with communities on any energy development happening in or around communities.*

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**ST-18-08-02**

**Housing Assessment**

**WHEREAS** the current assessment method used in the NWT evaluates land and improvements at significantly less than the actual value of sale; and

**WHEREAS** the current assessment method is difficult for most home and property owners to understand the benchmark; and

**WHEREAS** Fair Market Value is much better understood by home and property owners which will allow them to better evaluate the values that are set and thus more effectively participate in the appeal process; and

**WHEREAS** most other jurisdictions have moved to Fair Market Value assessment.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the NWTAC urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to move to Fair Market Value Assessment.

**Policy Committee Recommends:** **STANDING**

**November 2016 Update:**

GNWT Response (September 13, 2016)

*MACA assesses land and assets across the whole of the Northwest Territories throughout the Municipal Taxation Authority communities (MTAs) and the General Taxation Areas (GTAs). Property assessment is governed by the Property Assessment and Taxation Act and the Property Assessment Regulations. The Act and the Regulations prescribe the manner in which the values of properties are to be determined for assessment and taxation purposes. A Fair Market Value approach to property assessment is based on there being sufficient sales data from which to develop mathematical models to value properties. In the NWT, there may be sufficient data available in some MTAs to develop a Fair Market Value model for assessing land, but not in all. Additionally, to be effective and accurate with a Fair Market Value, assessments would need to be done much more often, to keep up with the fluctuating markets of the day. Land in the MTAs is assessed using a Fair Market Value approach, as land is subject to far less fluctuations. Improvements in the MTAs are assessed in accordance with the Act and Regulations. Land and improvement valuations in the GTAs are not market-based, but are assessed in accordance with the Act and Regulations. MACA has determined that it is unlikely that a movement to a Fair Market Value approach, applied across the NWT, is feasible in the foreseeable future.*

**January 2018 Update**

No change from GNWT response from 2016

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ST-18-01-07

**Permanent Stationary Placement of a Community Registered Nurse**

**WHEREAS** remote communities in the Northwest Territories are experiencing the deepest impact from the national nurses shortage, often leaving the community with no experienced health care provider; and

**WHEREAS** remote communities in the Northwest Territories already experience health standards far below the national average, the impact of the nurse's shortage has dramatically effected the overall situation in these communities.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Health & Social Services and other relevant governmental bodies to assist in ensuring permanent stationary placement of a community Registered Nurse in all northern communities within the Northwest Territories.

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

**November 2016 Update:**

*On September 13, 2016, the GNWT responded that several challenges arise when striving to provide health care services in small communities and these challenges are not unique to the NWT. IN the past, concerns were raised about the safety of a nurse in a community without support. The practice of stationing one nurse in a community was discontinued several years ago. Healthcare is provided to residents in communities without a permanent nurse through nurse visits and also by the Community Health Representative, Community Health Worker, and/or a Community Support worker who reside in the community. The Department of Health and Social Services is embarking on a restructure as identified in Caring for Our People: Improving the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services System. This plan identifies the need to examine nursing services and access to them.*

**January 2018 Update**

*GNWT Response dated September 28, 2017*

*Several challenges arise when striving to provide healthcare services in small communities and these challenges are not unique to the Northwest Territories. In many of small, more remote NWT communities, there is concern not only with access to routine care, but particularly with the capacity to respond to a medical emergency when such an event occurs. Programs such as Med Response facilitates immediate, around-the-dock access to physician support and emergency services, including medevac services. Through referral processes and medical travel services, all residents of the NWT have access to specialist and allied health services in the larger Regional centers.*

*Healthcare is provided to residents in communities without a permanent nurse through nurse visits and also by the Community Health Representative, Community Health Worker and/or a Community Support Worker who reside in the community.*

*There are additional initiatives to balance scopes of practice for healthcare providers in small communities. One such initiative is the Tsiigehtchic emergency services pilot project, which was organized in response to residents' requests for full-time nursing staff. The Department, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), members of the Beaufort Delta Region, and Tsiigehtchic leaders are working together to explore an approach to emergency health care in Tsiigehtchic that is uniquely suited to Tsiigehtchic. The goal is to develop a new approach to emergency care that is tailored to meet community needs for care and emergency services in communities without resident nurses. The proposed approach incorporates advanced first responder education for community members, and works in conjunction with existing lay providers in the community and visiting professionals.*

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ST-18-01-11

**Permanent Placement of a Community RCMP Officer**

**WHEREAS** several remote municipalities have not had a permanent stationary police officer to effectively, monitor and enforce laws and various legislation; and

**WHEREAS** the absences of proper police protection can sometimes put un-due stress on community residents.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Justice, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other relevant government bodies within all levels of government for a permanent Police Officer in all remote communities within the NWT.

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

**November 2016 Update:**

The GNWT formally responded to this resolution on September 13, 2016 with information that the Department of Justice continues to be committed to working in partnership with the RCMP and community residents on policing services and local justice programming to enhance safety in communities. As a government, we are committed to ensuring each person has access to policing services, regardless of where they live. Although some of our smaller communities may not have permanent RCMP detachments, they receive policing services through regular patrols from adjacent communities, or by having members dedicated to their community who may spend several days per week in that community. Justice and RCMP "G" Division are continuing their efforts to maintain effective communication with the communities. Each community meets with the RCMP to identify annual policing priorities, and the RCMP provides ongoing reporting on the progress of community policing plans.

In the NWT, building one detachment is a 7.5 to 10 million dollar investment, depending on the size. Running it takes a further several million dollars annually. Directing our limited resources toward the health and safety concerns in existing detachments is the current focus of RCMP infrastructure spending.

While the level of policing services in the NWT is jointly determined by the territorial Minister of Justice and the Commissioner of the RCMP, the internal management of the Territorial Police Service remains the exclusive domain of the RCMP. Any plans to establish a new detachment would rely upon a consultative process between the two.

**January 2018 Update**

GNWT response dated September 28, 2017 has no change from 2016 update.

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**ST-18-15-04**

**Power Subsidy and Billing Cycles**

**WHEREAS** the cost of power is a challenge for residents of the Northwest Territories;

**AND WHEREAS** residents of the Northwest Territories are offered a subsidy on the first 1,000 kWh of power they consume from September 1 – March 31 each year and for the first 600 kWh of power they consume from April 1 – August 31st through the Territorial Power Support Program;

**AND WHEREAS** the elected officials within communities are receiving concerns with respect to the Northland Utilities billing cycles over the winter months which at times extends beyond 30 days resulting in customers being billed at full cost if they have reached the maximum subsidy of 1,000 kWh.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Government of the Northwest Territories respectfully add one additional month of subsidy at 1,000 kWh to cover the period with less daylight

**AND FURTHER THAT** the billing cycle readings should be relative to the TPSP subsidy level available during that period.

**Submitted by the Hamlet of Fort Providence**

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

***GNWT Response dated August 20, 2015:***The Territorial Power Subsidy Program (TPSP) is managed by the Department of Finance, Accounting Services. We appreciate that the issue identified by the NWTAC Resolution 2015-04 " Power Subsidy and Billing Cycles" could result in higher costs as a result of the application of the subsidy as described within the resolution. We will investigate any options to address these types of occurrences within Northland Utilities Ltd. Billing system limitations, as well as GNWT financial constraints.

**November 2016 Update:**

The Territorial Power Subsidy Program currently provides a subsidy towards the cost of household power consumption up to 1000 kWh per month for 7 months each year (September 1 to March 31 of the following year). For the remainder of the year the subsidy only applies to the first 600 kWh per month of power consumption. The GNWT last revised subsidy levels in 2012 and considers the current level of power subsidy to be sufficient. The GNWT therefore has no intention to expand or increase the total number of months where the larger subsidy would apply.

**January 2018 Update**

**GNWT Response dated September 28, 2017**

The GNWT provided no new information related to this issue.

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**ST-18-12-07            Reduced Power Rate for Municipalities**

**WHEREAS** the cost of power is a significant portion of all communities annual expenditures;

**WHEREAS** municipalities are continuing to be charged full economic or government rates by the NWT Power Corporation;

**AND WHEREAS** this rate was determined on the premise that municipalities are funded by the GNWT and that this reduction in power rates would consequently require a comparable reduction in transfer payments;

**AND WHEREAS** municipalities generate revenues from other sources such as user fees and taxes and are only partially funded by the GNWT;

**AND WHEREAS** tax based municipalities derive a large portion of their revenue from residents in the form of property tax;

**AND WHEREAS** communities were not notified that they would not be receiving the reduced rates as advertised and therefore assumed that they would be receiving the reduced rates for commercial customers as that is the rate category that they are billed at;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the power rate for municipalities be based on a pro-rated portion of the full economic rate that reflects the portion of their operating revenues that is provided by the GNWT;

**AND FURTHER THAT** the NWT Association of Communities be consulted in the future prior to the establishment of future rate setting of this nature;

**AND FURTHER THAT** the NWT Power Corp. needs to communicate with municipalities when rates are established contrary to those advertised.

**AND FURTHER THAT** the NWTAC ask the GNWT to request, in light of the recent 2012 General Rate Application, that the Office of the Auditor General perform a complete operational review of the NWT Power Corp.

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

The GNWT has not requested an Auditor General's review of NTPC operations. NTPC's request for a rate rider increase due to low water levels has prompted strong negative reaction from communities, including criticism of the lack of contingency plans to deal with low water levels. NWTAC has commented in the application, calling for the rate increase to be refused, and for the referral of NTPC operations to Auditor General of Canada review.

**May 2016 Update:**

In a meeting with the Office of the Auditor General, NWTAC requested the recommended review.

**November 2016 Update:**

On June 9, 2016, MLA (Kam Lake) Kieran Testart delivered a Member's Statement in the Legislative Assembly urging the GNWT to do more to lower the cost of power and rely less on subsidized traditional sources of power for NWT residents. During question period, he went on to ask the Minister Responsible for the NTPC about the subsidies received by the NTPC and why rates continue to increase for consumers, and about the NTPC's plan to deal with continually-rising costs. Minister Sebert answered with information about emerging renewable energy options and the investments required to make this possible in the NWT.

*In September 2016, the GNWT responded that the 2012 response remains applicable, and added that in the fall of 2016 the GNWT intends to solicit public input into the development of a new energy plan as well as a Climate Change Strategic Framework. Discussions will include the future approach to electricity, and the NWTAC has been involved in the Electricity Review. It is anticipated that the GNWT will seek to involve the NWTAC again in discussions with communities, and these can include the approach to community government electricity rates. However, it should be noted that reducing the electricity rates for community governments means increasing the electricity rates for other customers.*

The NWTAC is currently helping to facilitate community participation in regional meetings on climate change, including energy and adaptation, and will also be working in an advisory capacity on this issue.

The NWTAC also continues to participate as an intervenor on all applicable PUB filings. We understand that a letter of objection from our office on temporary increases received considerable credence in the Board's decision to not allow the increases without a full filing.

**January 2018 Update**

**GNWT Response dated September 28, 2017**

*The 2012 and 2016 GNWT response to the Resolution remains applicable. To reiterate, it should be noted that reducing the electricity rates for community governments means increasing the electricity rates for community residents.*

**ST-18-09-06 Training for Community Fire Departments**

**WHEREAS** it is extremely critical that all Fire Departments are appropriately trained and equipped; and,

**WHEREAS** one of the largest areas of risk to municipalities is the Fire Department; and,

**WHEREAS** most Fire Departments in the NWT are finding it challenging to ensure that their Departments are staffed, trained and equipped; and,

**WHEREAS** legislatively it is the Fire Marshal's responsibility to ensure that these programs are in place; and,

**WHEREAS** there are many partners such as the Fire Chiefs Association, NWTAC and municipalities willing to work with the Fire Marshal's office to assist with the implementation of their mandated programs; and,

**WHEREAS** the continued success of the NORCIX program is directly linked to addressing these fire department deficiencies; and,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the NWTAC ask the Fire Marshal's Office to work with the Fire Chiefs Association and NWTAC to open a dialogue regarding the condition of the Departments and how to ensure that training is delivered in an appropriate manner;

**AND FURTHER THAT the NWTAC** request the GNWT undertake a baseline survey to be performed by an external consultant specializing in Fire Service Assessments during which all communities are reviewed;

**AND FURTHER THAT** the NWTAC ask the Fire Marshal to work with the Consultant and the other partners to develop a work plan to address the deficiencies identified in the study.

**Policy Committee Recommends: **STANDING****

GNWT Response: *In 2010-11, the Office of the Fire Marshal worked extensively with community governments to complete fire department assessments and development*

*plans for NWT communities and MACA continues to work with local fire chiefs to implement community-specific development plans prepared through that effort. Information contained in the assessments provided MACA with a good idea of broad gaps and deficiencies that exist in the NWT's community fire protection system. In January 2013, MACA released a discussion paper to help inform the development of a five-year community fire protection plan that identifies activities intended to address broad gaps and deficiencies acknowledged in the community fire assessments.*

- *The Discussion Paper highlighted seventeen recommendations to address the identified gaps and deficiencies, which fall into four categories including equipment, training, governance and operations*
- *The Discussion Paper was distributed to local fire chiefs, Senior Administrative Officers/Band Managers, the NWT Fire Chiefs Association, LGANT and the NWTAC*

*On November 12, 2013, MACA held a workshop involving LGANT, NWTAC and NWTFCFA to identify priority activities that will help support and strengthen community fire protection in the NWT. Through this workshop, a Community Fire Protection Plan was developed, which is a long term strategy involving key partners to ensure good direction and maximum value from limited resources. An NWT fire protection plan will help achieve that goal and encourage effective collaboration between partners. An overview of the Plan was conveyed to community fire officials at the recent May 2014 NWT Fire Chiefs Association AGM.*

*MACA's School of Community Government continues to deliver fire protection and public safety programs designed to train community firefighters and promote awareness of fire protection responsibilities at the community level. Travel support remains available for training hosted outside those communities wishing to participate. New first responder training has been added to the School's course calendar starting in summer 2014-15.*

**Update May 2016:**

The NWTAC has been attending the Fire Chief's Annual General Meeting to make sure that they are aware of the resources and supports that are available from the Association.

**November 2016 Update:**

Members in the Legislative Assembly raised questions on June 24, 2016 in response to the review of MACA's budget, specifically related to communities having appropriate training to deliver highway ambulance services. MLA (Sahtu) Daniel McNeely recognized that there are emergency management funds and fire marshal funds involved in this, and asked if there is any assistance available for smaller communities to ensure that their fire departments are up to standard and will meet the audit outlined in the budget. Minister R.C. McLeod responded that the regional fire marshal will work with communities to identify challenges, and will help design a program to train and build capacity in these areas. He stated that if there is an issue with capital or

equipment, then communities can draw from their funds from MACA to purchase the proper equipment. He went on to indicate that some larger communities have donated equipment to smaller communities, and helped with training on this equipment.

*On September 13, 2016, the GNWT responded formally to the resolution by stating that “in 2014-2015, MACA implemented a work plan to identify short and long term activities with which to support the development and maintenance of community fire protection services for NWT communities. The work plan falls under the authority of the Community Fire Protection Advisory Committee, which consists of the Northwest Territories Fire Chief’s Association, the NWTAC, Local Government Administrators of the Northwest Territories (LGANT), the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission, and MACA.*

*A key priority for the Committee in 2016 is to develop a new community fire department assessment tool to help communities choose a suitable path to achieve their desired level of service, assess whether the desired level has been accomplished, and inform the development of future support tools for the GNWT. MACA does not feel it necessary to undertake a baseline survey using an external consultant given the ongoing nature of this work, and the necessity to perform ongoing assessments to help gauge performance.”*

In an audit released on October 25, 2016, the Auditor General of Canada identified a number of shortfalls in MACA’s support of community governments. Among these was the lack of knowledge of working fire departments in communities, if communities with fire departments are meeting standards, and if firefighters have appropriate training. The report indicated that a full assessment of fire departments had not been undertaken by MACA since the 2010-2011 fiscal year, and recommended immediate action to reassess fire departments as per the requirements under the Safety Act. MACA agreed with this, among other, recommendations.

### **January 2018 Update**

#### **GNWT Response dated September 28, 2017**

*The GNWT continues working closely with the Northwest Territories Fire Chiefs’ Association, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, Local Government Administrators of the NWT, and Workers Safety and Compensation Commission on priority initiatives and activities identified in the NWT Community Fire Protection Plan (CFPP). The CFPP plan was developed to help guide efforts and support Community Governments towards strengthening community fire protection services for NWT residents.*

*These efforts include a fire department assessment which is currently being utilized to evaluate the administrative aspects of community fire services, including training requirements. Upon completing an assessment, the GNWT will work with community governments to identify actions necessary to address gaps and meet a desired level of service.*

*The School of Community Government continues to deliver fire protection and public safety programs designed to train community firefighters and promote*

*awareness of fire protection responsibilities at the community level. Travel support is available for training hosted outside those communities wishing to participate.*

**ST-18-16-01      AGM Locations**

**WHEREAS** The Annual General Meeting of the NWT Association Communities has been growing over the years;

**WHEREAS** There are only three communities in the NWT that have adequate accommodations to host the AGM – Inuvik, Yellowknife and Hay River;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** until such time as other communities have enough accommodation to host the AGM, the AGM be held through a rotation of Inuvik, Hay River and Yellowknife.

**CATEGORY A      CONCURRENCE**

**Submitted by the NWTAC Board of Directors – Resolution Committee**

**Resolution Committee recommends: Deletion**

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**No monitoring is required for this resolution.**