

November 14, 2018

Dear Inuvialuit:

As you may have seen in the news and on social media recently, a couple questions of significance to all Inuvialuit have been raised. I would like to take a moment to try and clarify our understanding of these issues in order to promote an open and informed dialogue.

First, we heard some questions relating to our Inuvialuit governance and decision-making structures. For these kinds of questions, I always go right back to the foundation - our Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA).

In the IFA, it says that the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) is to be governed by the Inuvialuit community corporations, which are defined as Aklavik, Ulukhaktok, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. These Community Corporations are the “Members” of the IRC. The IFA states further that the Community Corporations are to be controlled by Inuvialuit who are resident in those communities.

During the negotiations of the Land Claim, Inuvialuit determined that a corporate structure was the best structure to implement the Inuvialuit Final Agreement therefore IRC was established as a not-for-profit corporation with each of the community corporations holding a membership seat. Consequently, the IFA stipulated that the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation was to be a corporation without share capital. This is why the IRC is incorporated pursuant to Canada’s *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*. This Act contains several rules about how directors and officers are elected and appointed.

Finally, the IRC By-laws, which reflect the Act and the IFA establish the framework for governing the IRC. These bylaws were drafted and approved by the IRC Board of Directors and confirmed by the IRC Members (which are each of the six Inuvialuit community corporations).

In our case, the Members have the authority to elect the directors, including the Chair, of the IRC. To give the broadest possible input within the framework established by the IFA and the Act, all 42 Directors of the Community Corporations (6 x 7) elect the IRC Chairperson for a three (3) year term.

All three (3) governance measures determine oversight of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation.

Second, we have heard some questions about the Programs and Services that are available to Inuvialuit who are resident to the region. The staff at IRC work very hard with different levels of government and using the limited funds we can obtain to ensure that Inuvialuit – wherever they may reside – have opportunities that other Canadians enjoy. IRC recognizes the growing population of Inuvialuit residing in Southern Canada and elsewhere. IRC continues to advocate for the Urban Inuvialuit population during meetings with Federal and Territorial leadership and officials. This is a trend among all Indigenous groups across the country as more people gravitate to urban areas.

Using the charitable and foundational funds established - the Inuvialuit Education Foundation (IEF) and Inuvialuit Harvesters Assistance Trust (IHAP) are two examples of programs offered to all Inuvialuit. Other programs and benefits offered to all Inuvialuit include but are not limited to: scholarship & bursary

opportunities through the IEF and Designated Amount Fund (DAF) Trust, funeral assistance through the Funeral Assistance Program, annual disbursement of Dividends to all shareholders of the Inuvialuit Trust; and an Elders distribution in December. Also, assistance in registering your child in the Inuvialuit Enrollment Database system and enrolling in the Inuvialuit Trust through the Deputy Registrar of Enrollment. We also provide support for Inuvialuit to understand and access Health Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefits through a Health Systems Navigator located in our offices.

All newsletters, magazines and annual reports are distributed to all Inuvialuit households no matter where they reside. The Legal Department also provides counsel on Inuvialuit hunting rights and produces Jay Treaty letters when requested.

The Inuvialuit Cultural Centre has Inuvialuktun dictionaries, books and many resources available. ICRC has developed Inuvialuktun App's in the three (3) dialects for anyone interested to upload in their devices. Another great resource is the Inuvialuit Digital Library Network that can be accessed from any location; listen to stories, see photos and access many culture resources on the network.

In addition to these core aids, IRC delivers programs that are funded through federal and territorial contribution agreements. These agreements stipulate where and how programs can be delivered and where and how monies can be spent. Many of these are designed to target the population in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Using Statistics Canada census, both the Federal and Territorial government allocate Inuvialuit-specific funds to the Region.

Such programs including health and wellness, Inuvialuktun revitalization, labour market training and development, prenatal nutrition programs and early childcare programming are targeted specifically to the Inuvialuit Settlement Region for policy reasons that are outside of the control of the IRC. We know that availability to programs and services is a factor as Inuvialuit residing in the most remote isolated communities are the most challenged with access.

We are hopeful that beneficiaries in the South recognize (and recall) the high cost of living in the ISR, which is about twice the cost of living in Yellowknife, let alone further south.

Many of these programs are offered to improve the life of Inuvialuit households and to revitalize Inuvialuit culture and heritage.

The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation does not wish to separate or cause division amongst Inuvialuit. Many times, IRC offers a certain program to ease the access to services to those that live in the most isolated remote parts of the Arctic.

We hope that all Inuvialuit wherever they may reside, join IRC in all efforts to promote our culture and heritage so it's strong and sustainable for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Duane Ningaqsiq Smith,
Chair and Chief Executive Officer