

Date: 10 January 2018

Comment from the Internet Society on the  
Government of Canada's  
**Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislative Review**

The Internet Society is pleased to submit these comments in response to the Government of Canada's *Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislative Review*<sup>1</sup>.

The Internet Society<sup>2</sup> is a global not-for profit organization committed to the open development, evolution and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world. The Internet Society works in partnership with our global community, comprised of 50,000 members, 136 chapters and special interest groups, and 149 organizational members. It is also the organizational home of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)<sup>3</sup> and the Online Trust Alliance (OTA)<sup>4</sup>.

In October 2018 the Internet Society, in partnership with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Town of Inuvik, University of Alberta, and the First Mile Connectivity Consortium, hosted the second Indigenous Connectivity Summit in Inuvik, Northwest Territories. This landmark event gathered nearly 140 Indigenous network operators, leadership, policy makers, community members and other concerned stakeholders to identify solutions to ensure Indigenous communities across North America can connect to fast, affordable, and reliable Internet.

The participants at the 2018 Summit identified 10 important recommendations for the Panel to consider in light of Section 1 (Universal Access And Deployment) of the Terms of Reference for the Act Review:

1. Ensure governments consult with Indigenous communities to develop universal connectivity strategies that benefit everyone.
2. Build universal service strategies that include the flexibility to adapt to technological advances.
3. Consider different technological solutions for different connectivity realities and challenges.
4. Ask open questions about connectivity needs to avoid justifying a specific agenda.
5. Demand open access to data from telecommunications companies that can help inspire solutions.
6. Make funding opportunities accessible to all kinds of providers, large and small.
7. Prioritize connectivity solutions to the hardest places to connect first.
8. Encourage respect when developing solutions for service in tribal, treaty, and land claim areas.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/110.nsf/eng/home>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.internetsociety.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ietf.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://otalliance.org/>



9. Consider different models of connectivity to best serve individual geographic locations.
10. Free up more spectrum from companies who hold a license without using it.

In particular, the Internet Society calls on the Panel to give strong consideration to Community Networks as a connectivity solution for many rural and remote Indigenous communities. Community Networks, communications infrastructure built, managed and used by local communities, were widely recognized by Summit participants as an ideal solution to enable many rural and remote northern communities to connect themselves to the Internet on their own terms.

The Internet Society appreciates the opportunity to share the views of the participants at the Indigenous Connectivity Summit with the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislative Review Panel. The report from the 2018 Indigenous Connectivity Summit, *Empowerment through Connectivity*, is attached for consideration.