



NEWS RELEASE

SSi Micro applauds budget plan to bring broadband and skills training to all of Canada – Crucial investments must be properly directed

YELLOWKNIFE, March 20, 2019. SSi Micro Ltd. is supportive of the 2019 Federal Budget, which outlined a multi-year plan to ensure all Canadians have access to broadband internet by 2030, and essential skills training to support local talent and local development.

“The announcement will bring essential investments to help close the digital divide isolating many parts of the country,” said Jeff Philipp, Founder and CEO of SSi. “We share the government’s vision to ensure all communities, regardless of size or geography, have access to high quality broadband at affordable rates.”

In 2005, SSi became the first, and is still the only provider of broadband services in all 25 Nunavut communities, under the QINIQ brand. In 2018, SSi launched 4G mobile service throughout Nunavut, with Gjoa Haven being the last community of many to receive cellular for the first time. “The government has recognized the need for much more investment in remote-area broadband infrastructure and skills training - but we have to ensure investments are properly directed,” said Philipp.

In 2018, the Industry Committee Report on Rural Broadband strongly recommended that the Government develop “ways to increase the accessibility of funding programs for small providers, non-profit providers and non-incumbent providers.” Public investment in broadband must also must support developing local talent – the people that Mary Simon in her 2017 Arctic Leadership report called “local champions”. SSi believes this funding should be conditional on three key principles: i) competitive and technology neutrality; ii) a focus on funding gateway and backbone infrastructure; and iii) open access for all service providers to those same facilities.

Since 2005, SSi has co-invested with the Federal Government over \$150 million into Nunavut communications infrastructure. “In recent programs, not all funding recipients are respecting the obligation for other service providers to have timely and open access to subsidized capacity” added Philipp. “As a result, we’ve seen competition and innovation undermined - *that can’t be allowed to continue with this round of funding.*”

“We look forward to working with the government to ensure roll-out is delivered smoothly and independent providers are engaged,” Philipp added. “This is important: young people in Canada’s North can be tomorrow’s innovators if they have access to the same tools and support systems that exist in the south. However, if we don’t address the critical infrastructure shortfall in the North and other remote areas, then Canada as a leading innovation nation will leave people behind – and particularly those in our most at-risk communities.”

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Headquartered in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, and with a satellite teleport and network operations centre in Ottawa, SSi designs, builds and operates state-of-the-art communications networks around the world. With 29 years of operating experience, SSi is a leader in delivering advanced satellite, broadband and mobile wireless solutions. SSi understands first-hand the challenges faced in providing effective and affordable communications services to remote and outlying areas. SSi has been advocating the “Qimirluk” solution, a holistic concept of a shared backbone and open access to community gateway infrastructure for many years. For more information on SSi Micro, SSi Mobile, QINIQ and Qimirluk, visit www.ssimicro.com, www.qiniq.com, and www.qimirluk.com

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