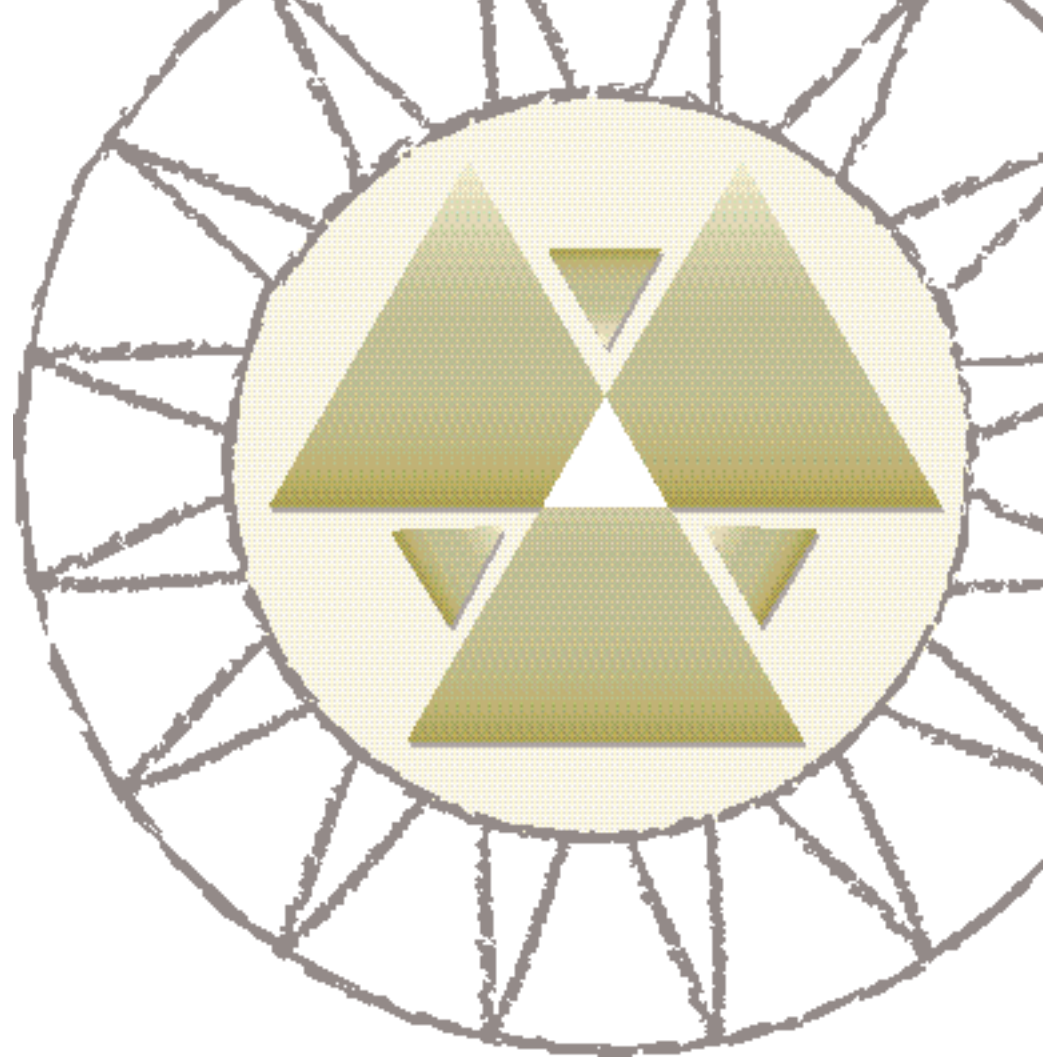


1998.1999 ANNUAL REPORT
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**The James Bay
and Northern Quebec
Agreement
and
The Northeastern
Quebec Agreement**

CREE • INUIT • NASKAPI

Canada



Information note

Reports on the JBNQA and the NEQA were required to be tabled in Parliament until 1998 in accordance with the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Claims Settlement Act*, which specified that Reports would be based on the calendar year, while the federal government can only properly account for expenditures on a fiscal year basis. Starting with the present Report, activities described and financial information provided will both be based on the fiscal year from April 1 to March 31. Given this transition, the 1998-1999 section of this Report covers only activities that took place from January to March 1999, since the previous nine months of 1998-1999 (April to December 1998) were covered in the 1998 edition.



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Minister's Foreword



As the Minister responsible for the co-ordination of all activities related to the fulfilment of the federal obligations established by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement (NEQA), I am pleased to present the annual reports for 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 on the implementation of these agreements. The reports also account for activities and expenditures made on behalf of the Cree, Inuit and Naskapi of Quebec under other federal programs.

In March 1999, the Crees of Waskaganish, the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), Quebec, and Canada concluded an agreement worth \$45 million for the construction of an access road to Waskaganish. Canada's financial contribution to this project amounted to \$24 million. In accordance with intentions established at the Cree-Canada Round Table in June 1998, progress was made at sectoral tables for environment, justice, and policing. In 1999-2000, one particularly important table, chaired by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), was established to reach a comprehensive agreement on the delivery of regular HRDC programs as well as special training programs required to meet obligations under Section 28 of the JBNQA. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) provided \$2.6 million, in 1999-2000, to purchase fire protection equipment for Cree communities. Negotiations continued towards multi-year agreements to fund the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association, and the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association, while a one-year agreement was reached to fund the Cree Trappers Association.

With respect to the Inuit, major progress was made concerning housing in Nunavik. In March 1999, a \$10-million interim agreement was signed between Quebec, Canada and the Makivik Corporation to construct and maintain 43 new prefabricated houses, with Canada contributing \$5 million. During 1999-2000, the parties undertook intensive research leading to negotiations, with the expectation that a long-term agreement on housing in Nunavik would be signed shortly. In the summer of 1999, the first project under the \$30-million 10-year Marine Infrastructure agreement between Makivik and Canada was completed in Kangiqsualujjuaq. Later in 1999-2000, through INAC, an additional \$4.9 million was provided to finance the purchase of equipment to accelerate the Marine Infrastructure work.


In November 1999, Canada, Quebec and the Makivik Corporation signed a Political Agreement to establish a Nunavik Commission, whose purpose would be to propose a form of government for Nunavik. Since the start of Commission proceedings, INAC has closely collaborated with commissioners in preparing and holding the first public hearings in Nunavik.

With respect to the Naskapi and the NEQA, a new five-year agreement on funding for capital assets of their community was concluded in July 1999. This agreement provides for building a free-standing fire station, building a new residential sector, constructing a warehouse, and expanding the band office. Negotiations continued concerning the operation of power facilities in Schefferville and the acquisition of hydraulic rights from Newfoundland.

As described in this Report as a whole, the two years under review have seen steady progress in implementing aspects of the JBNQA. The existence of Implementation Agreements with the Inuit and Naskapi has proved beneficial in ongoing relations and in facilitating problem resolution.

The Cree-Canada Round Table process launched a number of initiatives which will bring important benefits to Cree communities. However, the process of arriving at agreements through negotiation can be difficult and frustratingly slow, to both observers and participants. Both parties are intent on progress, but different understandings, priorities and expectations still affect our ability to advance.

Federal departments and organizations have worked together to make permanent contributions to strengthening Cree, Inuit and Naskapi communities as contemplated in the JBNQA and NEQA. The Government of Canada will continue to build on that progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Nault', written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Robert Nault, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development