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**YUKON COMMUNITIES MOST CONNECTED IN CANADA, PANEL HEARS**

WHITEHORSE - Yukon government representatives shared the territory's success in bringing high speed internet to Yukoners with members of a federal telecommunications policy panel in Whitehorse today.

"The Yukon government and its partners in business and the community are recognized as leaders in the provision of telecommunications infrastructure and services to the public," Economic Development Minister Jim Kenyon said.

"The Yukon has the highest rate of access to high speed internet services in Canada. Over 99 per cent of Yukon's people and businesses have access to broadband, an accessibility rate that makes us the envy of many jurisdictions around the world."

Yukon government representatives are participating in the Telecommunications Policy Review Panel forum to discuss issues of reliable and affordable telecommunications for all parts of Canada. It began today and will continue on-line until Sept. 16.

One of only two meetings across the country, the forum is an opportunity to help shape federal policies concerning access to high speed internet in Canadian communities that are under-serviced as well as those without service.

"Modern telecommunications services and infrastructure provide Yukoners with vital services in sectors as diverse as health, education, business and entertainment," Kenyon added. "It is crucial that Yukon's unique geographic and market situation is reflected in future telecommunications policy and activities."

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