

## **Minister McLeod's Discovery Air Speech (March 2)**

Ladies and gentleman, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today — a day that I think is a very good one for Discovery Air and for the Northwest Territories.

And it is a good day because the grand opening of Discovery Air's headquarters in Yellowknife can be summed up in one word: opportunity.

The opportunity for the Northwest Territories comes in the form of the 12 new positions Discovery Air's headquarters represents for our territory. There has been much focus recently in the Legislative Assembly on factors that are affecting people's desire to either remain in the Northwest Territories or move here.

But today, I'm pleased we are focusing on an event where people are choosing to stay or move to our territory and are choosing to live here and work here.

While 12 new jobs might not seem like much on the surface, the fiscal impact of those positions is that that new jobs and new residents — no matter where they are in NWT — translate into dollars that help fund GNWT programs throughout the territory. As for the economic impact of these 12 positions, it will be felt as well.

It will be felt in the homes the employees occupying these jobs buy and the apartments they rent. It will be felt in the restaurants they and their families eat in and the stores where they buy their groceries and clothes. It will be felt in the many other businesses they will use during their time living and working in the Northwest Territories. These jobs will play a part in injecting dollars into our NWT economy, keeping northern businesses healthy and providing opportunities for our businesses and our economy to grow.

But the opportunity here is not just for other NWT businesses, it is also for Discovery Air. By placing its headquarters in Yellowknife, the company is recognizing the enormous potential for growth that exists in the NWT. It also signals its commitment to our territory.

Having its headquarters in the NWT also benefits Discovery Air by bringing its staff closer to a region where it hopes to grow its business. With its head office staff working closely with three of its core businesses that are based in the NWT — Great Slave Helicopters, Discovery Mining Services and Air Tindi — and the regional joint ventures those three companies are involved in throughout the territory, the Discovery Air and its staff will be better able to capitalize on the business opportunities available in the North.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of Discovery Air's board of directors and management team for locating its headquarters in Yellowknife. This demonstrates your company's strong commitment to the NWT. I have no doubt it is a move that will benefit Discovery Air, your 500 employees across the NWT and Canada, and the territory now and in the years to come.

I'll end my remarks there, but I'd like to congratulate Discovery Air on what it has achieved today. I'm also confident this is only the beginning for your company and that it is just the first of many achievements we will see from Discovery Air in the NWT.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the ceremony.

