

Ottawa, August 10, 1948.

Flying Requirements for Health and
Educational Establishments in N.W.T.

The minutes of the meeting of the Transportation Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development held on July 2, 1948, in Item 13(a) (ii) call for a report by the Northwest Territories Administration on the possibility of the increased use of aircraft as a result of the establishment of nursing stations in the Northwest Territories by the Indian Health Services of the Department of National Health and Welfare which is charged with responsibility for the medical care and hospitalization of Indians and Eskimo. It had been suggested at the meeting that some of these nursing stations might be used as centers from which to extend a measure of education to those Eskimo who because of their isolation and widely and thinly dispersed population had, so far, not been reached by regular teachers. In order that the picture of air transportation requirements in the field of education and medical health may be complete, it is necessary to set down a fairly complete statement of the health and educational facilities in existence or contemplated within the next ten years.

Mackenzie District

Aklavik.

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.

R.C. Mission hospital) operated by respective missions with
Anglican Mission hospital) Eskimo, Indian and indigent patients
paid for by the government.

R.C. Mission residential school) for Indian and Eskimo pupils whose
Anglican Mission " " tuition and board are paid for by
A proposed day school, Northwest) the Government.

Territories Administration.)

(Probable date of completion 1949).

Tuktoyaktuk -

A 2-room day school, Northwest Territories Administration.
(Completed 1948).

Coppermine -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services. (Material already delivered,
erection 1949).

2 room day school, Northwest Territories Administration. " "

Fort McPherson -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services. (To be completed 1948)
2-room day school, Indian Affairs.

Arctic Red River -

2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (Materials already delivered,
erection 1949).

Fort Good Hope -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services. (To be completed 1948).
2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (Materials already delivered,
erection 1949).

Fort Norman -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services. (To be completed 1948).
2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (To be completed 1948).

Fort Franklin -

2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (Materials already delivered,
erection 1949).

Fort Simpson -

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.
R.C. Mission hospital.
2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (Proposed for erection 1949).

Fort Liard -

Proposed 2-room day school, Indian Affairs, if survey shows sufficient pupilage to justify.

Fort Providence -

R.C. Mission Residential school.

Hay River -

4-room day school, Indian Affairs. (To be completed 1948).

Fort Resolution -

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.
R.C. Mission hospital.
R.C. residential school.
2-room day school, Northwest Territories Administration. (Proposed for erection 1949).

Fort Rae -

R.C. Mission hospital.
2-room day school, Indian Affairs.

Rocher River -

2-room day school, Indian Affairs. (To be completed 1948).

Yellowknife -

Modern public school.
Modern Red Cross Hospital.

Fort Smith -

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.
R.C. Mission hospital.
4-room day school, Northwest Territories Administration. (To be completed 1948).

Surface transportation and freight requirements for the government institutions above mentioned have been included in estimates and graphs submitted to the meeting on July 2.

In the matter of air transport of patients and personnel, the policy in force at present is to employ local commercial air transport where possible. Under a contract arrangement Mr. A.M. Berry at Fort Smith maintains two light planes on stand-by duty for forest fire patrol and the use of government departments. At Aklavik Mr. M. Zubke has agreed to give government departments first call on one light plane. The determination of priorities for the use of these commercial planes by government departments rests with the Northwest Territories Administrative Officer at Fort Smith and Aklavik. In emergencies where mercy flights are required, the R.C.A.F. may furnish the air lift. This is particularly the case where patients are flown from Cambridge Bay.

The majority of these settlements have a monthly or more frequent air service. In order to overcome the isolation, and to attract suitable personnel to settlements which are not so served and to provide a means of bringing out patients requiring hospital treatment, it is suggested that consideration be given to supplying a minimum of a once a month plane service to Rocher River, Fort Liard, Fort Franklin, Coppermines and Tuktoyaktuk.

Eastern Arctic

Chesterfield -

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.
R.C. Mission hospital where Eskimo patients are paid for by Indian Health Services.

Eskimo Point -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Igloolik -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Fort George, Que.-

Nursing station, Indian Health Services.
R.C. residential school) where tuition and board for Indian and Anglican residential school) Eskimo pupils are paid for by the government.
R.C. Mission hospital) where Indian and Eskimo patients Anglican " ") are paid for by the government.

Fort Harrison, Que. -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Wakeham Bay, Que. -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Fort Chimo, Que. -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Cape Dorset -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Lake Harbour -

Nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Frobisher Bay -

U.S. air base medical officer and emergency hospital.

Pangnirtung -

Medical Officer, Indian Health Services.
Anglican hospital where Eskimo patients are paid for by Indian Health Services.

Pond Inlet -

Proposed nursing station, Indian Health Services.

Surface transportation and freight requirements for the government establishments, above, were included in the estimates and graphs submitted to the meeting on July 2 but apparently the requirements for the Roman Catholic mission hospital at Chesterfield were overlooked. This is estimated at 75 tons per year. No estimates were made of the freight requirements of the U.S. Army health set-up at Frobisher Bay.

During the past two years numerous patients have been flown from the Eastern Arctic to southern hospitals. A number of these patients were flown from Frobisher Bay to Goose Bay by courtesy of the U.S.A.A.F. The R.C.A.F. has brought out and returned patients on routine flights, but, in addition, has made numerous special mercy flights to bring out patients. With the exception of the occasional flight to Port Harrison, no commercial planes have been used in the Eastern Arctic. It is not anticipated that the introduction of nursing stations will mean that more patients will have to be flown to the outside. Rather it may be expected that all but the serious cases will be cared for at the nursing stations to which they will be taken by boat in the summer and by dog sled in the winter.

The plans for educating the Eskimo of the Eastern Arctic have not been finally formulated as yet. A proposal which meets with some degree of approval is to use the nursing stations as educational centers. The personnel of the nursing station would consist of a nurse and a teacher-companion. Probably the ideal arrangement would be a married couple with necessary combined qualifications. The nursing station would then become a center for health, education and social service.

Owing to the isolation of Eastern Arctic points, the barren nature of the country and the very long winters, it will be difficult to attract suitable personnel for the nursing stations. It is, therefore, believed that a once-a-month plane service should be attempted to these stations to carry in mail and small parcels and bring out any patients who need hospitalization outside. At certain seasons the service might have to be reduced to a visit every two months. If it is found impracticable for economic reasons to establish regular flights as indicated and if flights must be confined to emergency calls only, the Indian Health Services estimate that a minimum of 200 flying hours per year would have to be provided for in the Eastern Arctic.

The methods by which the most efficient plane service can be provided for Eastern Arctic points will have to be worked out by those familiar with flying operations. It may be considered that here is a good opportunity for the R.C.A.F. to gain northern experience. Attention is, however, called to the possibilities of the Southampton Island air base which is still being maintained as a jumping-off place for planes to the Arctic Islands. This air field is within 600 miles of most of the settlements in the Eastern Arctic. It might be found advisable to base planes at this point and carry on servicing and minor overhauls there. If this were done it would offer an admirable opportunity to enable promising young Eskimo men to learn something about the servicing and flying of planes. With some additional facilities and suitable instructors this point might be made a center not only for training native airmen and ground crews, but also to teach them to take at least some part in operating radio and weather stations. By a further extension of the project, if deemed desirable, the Eskimo might be trained to build and operate small ships and make their own contribution to water transportation.