

MEDIA RELEASE

New high-speed network improves NB's research and educational capacity

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For immediate release

Fredericton, N.B. – The partners in the Optical Regional Advanced Network (ORAN) gathered today in Fredericton to unveil a new high-speed network and the latest iteration of the technology partnership, and to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the NB/PEI Educational Computer Network (ECN).

The ORAN is a joint initiative among CANARIE Inc., The Province of New Brunswick (PNB), the New Brunswick universities, the Maritime College of Forest Technology (MCFT), the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), the National Research Council of Canada, and newest partners New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) and Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB). It is designed to provide a high-speed network that maximizes capacity while reducing capital and operating costs for all partners, to facilitate cutting-edge research and collaboration regionally and globally.

The partners have created a new research network with extensive fibre installations, redundant links around New Brunswick, improved bandwidth, and state-of-the-art equipment. The network, which is scalable to meet future needs, includes a predictable pricing model for the partners for at least ten years and provides a reliable platform for another ten years. Network capacity will be up to ten times that previously available.

“As New Brunswickers, we’re building our future through the tremendous creativity and ingenuity of our skilled workforce. Today’s announcement will help allow New Brunswick’s ICT industry to continue its remarkable record of growth and achievement while playing a critical part in building our province and our country,” said New Brunswick Economic Development Minister Paul Robichaud. “This is a great example of the way we can build a brighter tomorrow through innovation and partnership.”

“Having an organization with a national mandate, like CANARIE, ensures all regions of Canada benefit from the power of advanced network technology,” says Jim Roche, President and CEO of CANARIE. “We are proud to be a member of this strong partnership in New Brunswick, one that supports world-class research and discovery, creative educational initiatives, and innovation in the private sector.”

In the opinion of the president and chief executive officer of the CCNB, Mrs. Liane Roy, the pioneering initiative meets their philosophy and vision: “We are proud to join in the New Brunswick Optical Regional Advanced Network (ORAN). The CCNB promotes

innovative partnerships that give opportunities to high-performance information technologies allowing for better teaching integration within the classroom. The collaborative project gives the postsecondary system as well as the research community in New Brunswick quick and efficient access to high-performance networks. ORAN will boost our college corporation's capabilities towards innovation and entrepreneurship."

The funding partners for the new network are: CANARIE Inc., \$3,148,000; New Brunswick universities/MCFT, \$3,500,000; NBCC and CCNB, \$3,500,000; NRC, \$350,000; PNB, \$500,000.

Partners took advantage of the network launch to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the ECN, which includes the publicly-funded universities in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, the MCFT, Holland College and the MPHEC. The primary service provided by the ECN to member institutions is connectivity among its members. Additional benefits include joint purchasing and licensing, shared support services, professional development and the delivery of network-based services and information exchange.

"The ECN is a highly successful example of interprovincial and inter-institutional co-operation between post-secondary institutions in the area of information technology services," said ECN Chair Yvon Fontaine, Recteur of l'Université de Moncton. "For forty years we have been efficiently leveraging resources to reduce costs, avoid unnecessary duplication, and connect our members to the wider world.

"The new network will provide increased capacity to educators, students, innovators and researchers in New Brunswick, so they can collaborate and participate in research and innovation projects regionally, nationally and globally. The network will facilitate next-generation research and deliver the associated scientific, economic and cultural benefits of that research to the region."

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