

Since 1969 the government has provided financial assistance to Indian and Inuit people to conduct research to support their claims to traditional interests in lands, and their rights under treaty or the Indian Act. The government has recognized that its lawful obligations to Indian people must be met, and has agreed to undertake negotiations with Indian and Inuit people. Claims may be based on traditional use and occupancy of land in areas where the Indian interest has not been extinguished by treaty or superseded by law (comprehensive claims), or they may be based on interpretation of treaties and legislation, or the administration of assets (specific claims).

In 1974 the department established the Office of Native Claims to act as the government's representative in negotiating claims settlements, to advise on policies relating to the development of claims and to coordinate the government's response to claim proposals.

Progress has been made toward settlement of claims based on traditional use and occupancy of land. The first settlement of such a claim was reached in November 1975 with the signing of the James Bay Agreement between the Cree and Inuit people of northern Quebec and the federal and Quebec governments. Negotiations were launched with the Indians of the Yukon Territory. Discussions also took place with the Nishga Indians of British Columbia. The Inuit of the Northwest Territories presented their claim proposal in February 1976. In addition, the Indians and Métis of the Northwest Territories indicated that they would submit a comprehensive claim in November 1976.

By June 1976, six specific claims which had been submitted to the department for negotiation were settled; 15 were not approved for negotiation, five were under negotiation, three were awaiting court decisions, 10 were under review or awaiting band action, and remedial measures were recommended for seven claims.

The Policy Planning and Research Branch conducts projects for the Indian and Eskimo Affairs Program, and coordinates similar projects of other branches. The branch is responsible for legislative planning, for formulating broad socio-economic policies, and for consulting on major policy issues with organizations that represent Canadian Indians. The Research Division conducts a small research program directly related to major policy issues and contracts with other agencies to carry out related work. It provides research services to the Indian and Eskimo Affairs Program and to other agencies conducting studies on Indian rights and treaties. This division also administers a program to finance the research, development and negotiation of Indian claims, under which \$2.7 million is being allocated in the form of contributions and loans to claimants in the fiscal year 1976-77.

Inuit

3.2.3.2

Canada's 18,000 Inuit or Eskimo people, most of whom live in the Northwest Territories, Arctic Quebec and northern Labrador, are the concern of the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the government of the Northwest Territories and provincial governments.

From 1966 to 1975 the Northern Rental Housing Program provided 1,505 three-bedroom houses for the Inuit people. On April 1, 1975 the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation became responsible for Inuit housing, and new accommodation since then has been supplied under National Housing Act building programs.

Counselling units are maintained in Ottawa and Winnipeg for Inuit students attending various high school, technical school, college and university programs in southern Canada and a program has been instituted to enable parents to come south to visit their children.

The Department of National Defence offers employment at its station at Alert to civilian Inuit. A Student Centre for Inuit was established in Ottawa during