

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES (NEBS)

# **Pension Plan Annual Report**

For the Year Ended
December 31, 2023
And including updated information to June 2024.

Al McDonald Pension Committee Chairman

June 30, 2024

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# **BACKGROUND**

This Report is the Annual Financial Report (the "**Report**") for the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan (the "**Plan'**) prepared in respect of the year 2023 as required by section 27 of the *Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act*, both as S.N.W.T. 2015, c. 6 and S. N. 2015, c. 10 (the "**NEBS Acts**").

Overall responsibility for preparation and assembly of the Report is with the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Pension Committee (the "Pension Committee") which serves as the administrator of the Plan pursuant to section 13 of the NEBS Acts. However, this Report consists of the audited financial statements for the Plan, prepared by Avery Cooper & Co., a certificate of compliance prepared with the assistance of the Pension Committee's legal counsel, Lawson Lundell LLP, and a report on the long-term goals and objections for the Plan, prepared by the Board of Directors of NEBS.

# REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PENSION COMMITTEE

For the 2023-2024 Year

# **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

The Pension Committee administers the Pension Plan and has a fiduciary duty to Plan members to ensure they receive the retirement benefits established in the Plan. Pension Committee Members are trustees with responsibility for the Plan's funds. In discharging these duties, the Pension Committee meets at least three times a year on a face-to-face basis and holds other meetings as necessary by teleconference. Since last May's report to Members, the Pension Committee met in Yellowknife for the April and December meetings. September's meeting was cancelled due to the Yellowknife wildfire evacuation, and instead a brief Pension Committee meeting was held via teleconference in October.

2023 markets rebounded from 2022 and the investment returns were a positive 13%. The investment fund sits at \$433 million. NEBS continues to actively manage investments with sound investment strategies, diligence, awareness of economic conditions and events, experienced investment managers, and good governance. These assist in minimizing any potential losses due to global economic conditions. NEBS' 5-year rate of return is 9.1 %, and the 10-year rate of return is 8.8%.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES

Lori Satov is the NEBS investment manager with the firm Connor, Clark & Lunn. Lori keeps the CEO, Pension Committee and Board aware of the markets on a monthly and quarterly basis, as well as presenting on our investment returns at each Pension Committee meeting. The NEBS Investment Fund also includes a Real Estate asset class managed by BentallGreenOak. In April of 2023 the Pension Committee made the strategic decision to allocate 10% of the fund into Infrastructure. This additional asset class typically hedges risk over the long run as a stable, increasing asset class.

The Pension Committee also engages a third-party investment consultant, Julianna Spiropoulos from TELUS Health, to monitor the investments and report on the performance of our investment managers. Julianna regularly compares our managers to other managers and the performance objectives as set out in our Statement of Investment Policy. The strong returns achieved in the Investment Fund this year, despite the challenges in the markets throughout the year, shows the investment strategies of the Pension Committee and the investment managers are working the way they should.

At each meeting, the Pension Committee also reviewed reports on the Plan's operations and dealt with several Employer Member and individual Plan Member matters.

# FINANCING THE PLAN

How well, or poorly, NEBS does with its investments is a key determinant of the financial position of the Pension Plan. The contributions of employees and their employers, plus the investment returns achieved on these contributions, must fund the benefit entitlements of Plan Members. It is required that a professional actuary determine if the Plan can fund its pension promise to Plan members. The actuary for the NEBS Plan is AON.

AON completes a valuation of the Plan on two bases. The first basis, called a going concern valuation, projects the costs of future pension entitlements for all members and estimates the future assets of the Plan. These projections are calculated using a number of assumptions about the future demographics of Plan members and economic factors such as future inflation rates. Our actuary then determines how much will be required in current contributions to pay the future benefit entitlements.

The January 1, 2024 preliminary Valuation demonstrates the Plan remains solidly funded on a going concern basis. This year, the valuation once again demonstrates a continued surplus in the going concern analysis. Contributions to service the current and future costs of the Plan remain less than current employer and employee contribution rates and no increase will be necessary from the current 8% employee and 8% employer amounts. It should be noted that the NEBS Pension Committee has managed to stabilize the rates since the last increase in 2002.

The second valuation of the Plan that AON completes for the Pension Committee is on a solvency basis. This valuation is completed on the assumption the Plan is terminated on the date of the valuation and all Plan members are paid for the future value of their pension entitlements on a commuted value basis. This requirement to finance a pension plan on a solvency basis commonly applies for private plans, not public-sector plans such as the NEBS Plan, where the windup of the plan would not occur. With the new legislation, the NEBS Pension Plan is exempt from funding on solvency but will continue to monitor solvency through the valuation process.

# CONCLUSION

2023 was a successful year for the NEBS Plan operationally and despite increasing interest rates and inflation, the plan remains solidly funded and well placed. The diversification of the current portfolio positions the Plans assets to perform well in the current economic environment. The Plan is in good hands, and we appreciate the partnership we have with employers and employees along with your interest and support.

Al McDonald Pension Committee Chairman

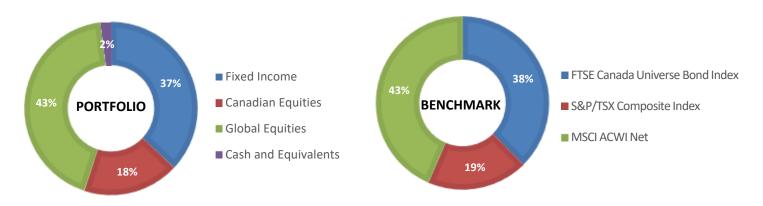
# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

2022 was a difficult year leading to challenges in both stocks and bonds, as well as across most of our investment asset classes, ending with a -9.0% loss. In 2023 the market conditions improved, recouping the 2022 losses and adding an additional 65 million in value for a year-end total of 415 million. January to March 2024 returns were approximately 5.5% for a total of 433 million as of March 31, 2024.

Real estate continues to be an important piece of the NEBS investment portfolio. The original capital investment in 2016 in the BentallGreenOak Prime Canadian Fund was \$20,921,670. Since then, the fund has generated \$5,345,042 in dividends (which have been reinvested) and overall, the fund has appreciated \$3,996,070 for a market value of \$30,262,782 as of December 31, 2023.

In the tables below we illustrate the asset classes within the investment fund and the percentage of those assets in the overall fund.

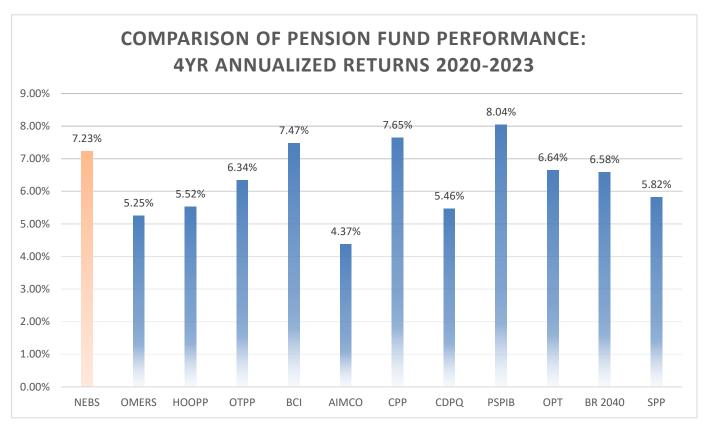
# Portfolio Composition End of Quarter - CCL



The table below illustrates the investment fund's returns against the benchmark from 2023 to 2013.

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
YTD Return	13.12%	-10.75%	15.39%	14.47%	19.05%	-2.78%	10.5%	7.57%	5.29%	10.24%	18.16%
Benchmark	12.50%	-13.17%	12.05%	11.43%	18.00%	-2.53%	9.89%	8.18%	3.76%	10.63%	12.24%
Added Value	0.62%	2.41%	3.35%	3.04%	1.05%	-0.26%	0.61%	-0.61%	1.53%	-0.39%	5.92%
Market Value (\$CAD)	382.2 M	323.4 M	349.2 M	295.7 M	248.4 M	198.6 M	195.7 M	183.0 M	163.2 M	141.1 M	121.5 M

The table below illustrates the NEBS investment fund performance against other similar public sector pension funds in Canada.



<sup>\*</sup>AIMCO 2023 results are only available for the first half of the year.

On behalf of the NEBS Board and Pension Committee and myself, it is a pleasure to continue to offer a high-quality pension plan for all of our Northwest Territories and Nunavut members, and we remain steadfast in servicing our members to the best of our ability.

Shawn Maley, NEBS Chief Executive Office



# 2023 MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

The Annual Financial Report for the year ended December 31, 2023 is based on the Northern Employee Benefits Services (NEBS) audited annual financial statements for the year then ended. Responsibility for preparing this Annual Financial Report rests with NEBS and has been approved by the NEBS Pension Committee.

# **Highlights**

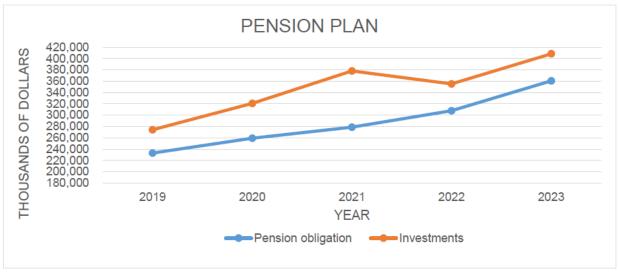
- Clean audit opinion
- Pension Plan Trust Fund is \$54,739,000 for 2023, up 7% from \$51,304,000 for 2022
- Increase in Pension Net Assets Available for Benefits is \$56,337,000, a significant change from a decrease of \$22,115,000 in 2022
- Investments totaled \$408,731,000, up 15% from \$355,269,000 for 2022
- Investment income of \$42,093,000, a significant increase from a loss of \$34,620,000 for 2022
- Pension Obligation is \$360,882,000, up 17% from \$307,979,000 for 2022
- Cash from operations is \$29,087,500 up 577% from \$4,296,000 for 2022
- No new accounting standards adopted in 2023
- Pension contributions are \$30,927,000, down less than 1% from 2022

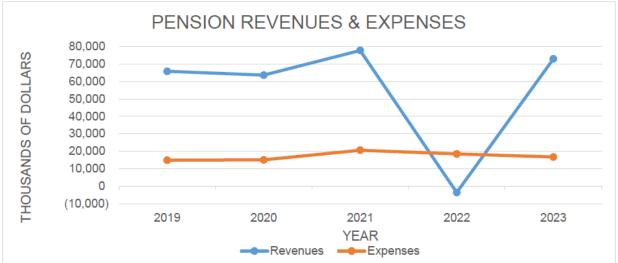
#### **Analysis**

The Independent Auditor's Report is dated April 18, 2024, the date the NEBS Pension Committee approved the annual audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2023.

There were no significant changes to the format or presentation of the annual financial statements from 2022.

The Pension Obligation at December 31, 2023 is \$360,882,000 up \$52,903,000 or 17% from 2022. The increase is due primarily to changes in actuarial assumptions, interest accrued on benefits and changes to indexing experience.



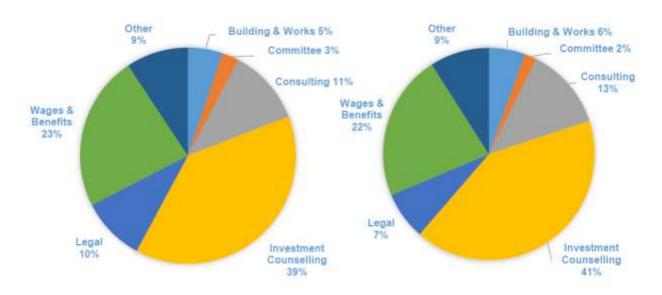


Revenues for 2023 include all sources, such as contributions, of \$30,927,000 (2022 - \$31,000,000), investment income of \$42,093,000 (2022 - loss of \$34,620,000), and other income of \$23,000 (2022 - \$19,000). The total revenue is \$73,044,000 (2022 negative (\$3,601,000)), an overall increase due primarily to the unrealized gains on investments. Excluding investment income, total revenues during 2023 were \$30,950,000 (2022 - \$31,000,000), a decrease of less than 1% from 2022.

Included in contributions during the year of \$30,930,000 (2022 - \$31,000,000) is \$130,000 (2022 - \$1,078,000) from terminating membership buyouts. This represents the portions of the Pension Plan solvency deficiency owing upon the withdrawal from membership in accordance with the NEBS Joining or Terminating Membership Policy totalling \$nil (2022 - \$nil), and \$nil (2022 - \$nil) arising from the subsequent cancellation of a member's termination process to return to the Pension Plan. Management is aware of 1 pending member withdraw.

#### 2023 Administrative Expense

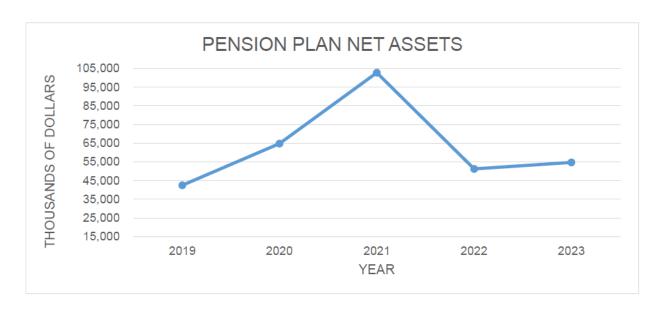
#### 2022 Administrative Expenses



Expenses for 2023 totaled \$16,706,000 (2022 - \$18,514,000), a decrease of approximately 10%. Expenses represent about 54% (2022 - 60%) of total revenue excluding investment income or losses. Expenses include benefits payments of \$14,196,000 (2022 - \$16,241,000), a 13% decrease from 2022, representing about 46% (2022 - 52%) of total revenues non inclusive of investment income or losses.

While pension payments of \$8,512,000 (2022 - \$7,025,000) increased by \$1,487,000 or 21% during 2022, this is within normal expectations as it represents approximately 28% (2022 – 23%) of total contributions. Termination payments of \$5,684,000 (2022 - \$9,216,000) decreased by \$3,532,000, or 38% during 2023 and represents about 18% (2022 – 30%) of total contributions.

Total expenses also include administrative expenses of \$2,510,000 (2022 - \$2,274,000), up 10% from 2022, representing about 8% (2022 – 7%) of total contributions. The increase in administrative expenses for 2023 was due primarily to the increases in both legal and investment counselling expenses. Building and works expenses were 90% of budget, Committee expenses were 48% of budget, Consulting fees were 77% of budget, Investment counselling fees were 105% of budget, Trustee and custodial fees were 100% of budget, Legal expenses were 141% of budget, and Wages and Benefits expenses were 93% of budget. Committee expenses are lower because the September meeting was not held due to the fire evacuation. Overall, as shown in the above graph, total administrative expenses for 2023 are within expectations, representing 87% of budget.



Net assets (Net Assets Available for Benefits less Pension Obligations) of the Pension Plan Trust Fund were \$54,739,000 at December 31, 2023, compared to \$51,304,000 at December 31, 2022, an increase of \$3,435,000 or approximately 7%. The increase in net assets during 2023 is primarily due to significant gains observed in investments.

The net assets consist of the components detailed in Note 9 to the audited annual financial statements at December 31, 2023 which include Net Assets Invested in Tangible Capital Assets (EITCA) of \$184,000 (2022 - \$189,000) the Unfunded Severance Pay Liability of \$(116,000) (2022 - \$(102,000)), and Unrestricted Surplus of \$54,671,000 (2022 - \$51,217,000).

#### **Risks & Outlook**

The Pension Plan has various investments on the stock markets. Income made from these investments are dependent on whether the markets go up or down. NEBS cannot control these changes but has a sound investment strategy to try and minimize the risk. This strategy includes continuous monitoring and economic forecasting to ensure the investments are placed correctly and of tolerable risk. Management also believes that sound assumptions are being used in determining the value of the pension obligations.

At December 31, 2023, NEBS Pension Plan has an unfunded liability included in the accounts for the provision of severance pay totalling \$116,000 (2022 - \$102,000). In accordance with its standard employment terms and conditions, NEBS estimates costs of long-term, full-time employees, who have four years or more of continuous service, based on one weekly pay multiplied by the number of years of such service. If the employee voluntary resigns, the aforementioned multiple is one half that rate. Management uses a 50%/50% probability that an employee will leave NEBS due to retirement, layoff or illness, versus voluntary resignation. Management assesses this proportion annually and believes the assumptions used are reasonable. Actual results could differ materially from estimates.

NEBS is modernizing its software platform and has engaged PENAD and its PENAD PX 3000 platform for this transition. It is expected to be operational in 2025.

Global market resilience, stable inflation and interest rates positively effected the Pension Plan Investment Fund in 2023.

Looking forward, NEBS will continue to manage its funds in an efficient and effective manner to ensure a healthy Pension Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Maley

**Chief Executive Officer** 

April 18, 2024

# MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL REPORTING

Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund's management is responsible for the preparation, integrity and objectivity of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans relevant to preparing such financial statements and have been approved by the Northern Employee Benefits Services' Board of Directors. Where appropriate, the preparation of financial information contained in this report includes estimates and judgments based on careful consideration of information available to management. Actual results may differ from those estimates.

Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund's management have developed and maintained books of account, records, financial and management internal control and management practices. These are designed to provide reasonable assurance as to the reliability of financial information in accordance with the Canada Business Corporations Act. Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund's management fulfills their responsibilities for financial reporting, internal control and safeguarding assets.

Avery Cooper & Co. Ltd. Chartered Professional Accountants annually provide an independent, objective audit for the purpose of expressing their opinion on the financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards.

Aon Hewitt Inc., an independent firm of consulting actuaries, has been engaged to provide an extrapolation of actuarial pension benefits and liabilities of the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan. This extrapolation was performed as of December 31, 2023 in which they provided their estimated valuation of accrued pension benefits and liabilities of the Plan.

On behalf of Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund,

Al McDonald

Chair of the NEBS Pension Committee

Shawn Maley

Chief Executive Officer

April 18, 2024

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Northern Employee Benefits Services

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund (the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023, and the statements of changes in fund balance, net assets available for benefits, pension obligations, and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (together "the financial statements").

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at December 31, 2023, and the results of it operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans relevant to preparing such financial statements.

## **Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Emphasis of Matter

As described in Note 2(a), Northern Employee Benefits Services has prepared a separate set of financial statements of the Health & Welfare Fund for the year ended December 31, 2023 in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans relevant to preparing such financial statements on which we issued a separate auditor's report to the members of Northern Employee Benefits Services date April 19, 2024. A separate set of combined financial statements of Northern Employee Benefits Services as at December 31, 2023 and for the year then ended has not been prepared.

#### Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Management Discussion and Analysis.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not and will not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We obtained the Management Discussion and Analysis prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact in this auditor's report. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance of the Financial Statements Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans relevant to preparing such financial statements, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentation, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit
  procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an
  opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transaction and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Avery Cooper & Co. Ltd.

**Chartered Professional Accountants** 

Avery Cooper & Co. Ht.

Yellowknife, NT April 18, 2024

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 6,759,087	\$ 4,063,210
Contributions Receivable (Note 8)	611,181	511,101
GST Receivable	54,604	23,295
Prepaid Expenses	19,680	17,488
	7,444,553	4,615,094
INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	408,731,740	355,269,028
CAPITAL ASSETS (Notes 2(e) and 4)	17,240	*8
INTANGIBLE ASSETS (Notes 2(e) and 4)	388,105	197,802
	\$ 416,581,638	\$ 360,081,924
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Wages & Benefits Payable (Note 10)	\$ 153,528	\$ 127,365
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	340,901	286,638
Deferred Contributions	101,388	261,926
Penad Loan (Note 5)	202,709	
Current Portion of Capital Lease Obligation (Note 6)	4,949	3,871
Due to Health & Welfare Fund (Note 12)	143,869	113,521
	947,344	793,321
CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATION (Note 6)	13,520	5,113
	960,864	798,434
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS per page 3	415,620,773	359,283,490
PENSION OBLIGATIONS per page 4 (Note 7)	360,881,800	307,979,500
NET ASSETS		
PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND per page 2 (Note 10)	\$ 54,738,973	\$ 51,303,990

Approved and authorized for issue on behalf of the Pension Committee on April 18, 2024:

Al McDonald, Director

Michael Cohen, Director

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 51,303,990	\$ 102,737,644
INCREASE IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS per page 4	(52,902,300)	(29,318,200)
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS per page 3	56,337,283	(22,115,454)
Net change	3,434,983	(51,433,654)
FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR per page 1	\$ 54,738,973	\$ 51,303,990

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
INCREASE IN ASSETS		
Contributions (Note 8)	\$ 30,927,618	\$ 30,999,532
Investment Income (Loss) (Note 9)	42,093,242	(34,619,712)
Other Income	22,683	19,157
	73,043,543	(3,601,023)
DECREASE IN ASSETS		
Benefits		
Pension Payments	8,511,815	7,024,573
Termination Payments	5,684,196	9,216,008
	14,196,012	16,240,581
Administrative		
Administration	10,187	14,484
Amortization and losses (Note 4)	41,955	50,687
Building & Works	130,861	117,250
Committee	63,983	94,656
Communications	11,802	13,872
Computer Software Development	24,652	22,833
Consulting	284,865	246,011
Investment Counselling	973,663	904,916
Legal	240,203	168,017
Marketing	9,937	7,839
Professional Fees	18,608	14,807
Staff Travel & Staff Training	30,597	21,283
Supplies & Materials	3,494	2,426
Trustees & Custodial Fees	82,913	49,258
Wages & Benefits	582,528	545,511
	2,510,248	2,273,850
	16,706,260	18,514,431
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	56,337,283	(22,115,454)
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	359,283,490	381,398,944
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS, END OF YEAR per page 1	\$ 415,620,773	\$ 359,283,490

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

DIGDE ASE IN DENSION OR ICATIONS		<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
INCREASE IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS			•
Service Buyback	\$	-	\$ -
Interest Accrued on Benefits		20,617,500	16,702,100
Changes in Actuarial Assumptions		13,171,100	218,600
Other Miscellaneous Losses		1,156,600	-
Indexing Experience		3,846,600	1,316,600
Benefits Accrued		27,734,400	26,536,600
COLA applied to pensioners and deferred vested members		3,056,600	2,383,400
New entrants		896,800	521,300
		70,479,600	47,678,600
DECREASE IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS			
Changes in Actuarial Assumptions		_	_
Other Miscellaneous Gains		_	425,800
Experience Gains		3,381,300	2,326,300
Indexing Experience		-	· -
Benefits Paid		14,196,000	15,608,300
		17,577,300	18,360,400
INCREASE IN PENSION OBLIGATIONS per page 2		52,902,300	29,318,200
PENSION OBLIGATIONS, BEGINNING OF YEAR		307,979,500	278,661,300
PENSION OBLIGATIONS, END OF YEAR per page 1	\$	360,881,800	\$ 307,979,500
AS REPRESENTED BY:			
Active/Disabled Members	¢.	212 766 500	¢ 102.012.400
Deferred Pensioners	\$	213,766,500 56,488,800	\$ 193,012,400
Pensioners		, ,	46,844,500
rensioners	_	90,626,500	68,122,600
	\$	360,881,800	\$ 307,979,500

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

# **STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	2023	2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash Receipts from Contributions	\$ 30,667,000 5	30,982,447
Cash Receipts from Other Income	22,683	19,157
Cash Receipts from Investment Income	15,015,197	(8,196,736)
Cash Paid for Pension & Termination Benefits	(14,196,012)	(16,240,580)
Cash Paid for Wages & Benefits	(556,365)	(536,314)
Cash Paid for Other Administrative Expenses	(1,865,003)	(1,732,238)
	29,087,500	4,295,736
CASH FLOWS USED FOR INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of Capital & Intangible Assets	(258,482)	
Increase in Investments	(26,375,683)	(3,486,693)
	(26,634,165)	(3,486,693)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Penad Loan Advances	202,709	
Change in Due to Health & Welfare Fund	30,348	13,617
Repayment of Capital Lease Obligation	9,485	(3,451)
	242,542	10,166
INCREASE IN CASH	2,695,877	819,209
CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	4,063,210	3,244,000
CASH, END OF YEAR per page 1	\$ 6,759,087 \$	4,063,210

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

#### 1. DESCRIPTIONS OF PLANS

Northern Employee Benefits Services (the "Organization" or "NEBS") is registered under federal legislation and was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization under Part II of the *Canada Business Corporations Act* on March 16, 1999, and is continued under the *Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act* on March 26, 2013.

NEBS is also registered as an extra-territorial corporation in the Northwest Territories. The registered address of NEBS is located at 5122 53 Street, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, X1A 1V6.

#### (a) General

The Board of Directors is responsible for administering the Group Benefits Plan and the Pension Committee for administering the Pension Plan on behalf of the employer groups participating in these plans and their employees.

The Pension Plan is a contributory multi-employer defined benefit plan covering employees eligible to participate. Eligible employer groups are public sector employers, First Nations, community governments and their agencies, public housing organizations, cooperatives and other not-for-profit employers operating in northern locations (including the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon Territory and the northern portions of other Canadian provinces) who are members of the organization.

Under both the group benefits and pension plans, contributions are made by the participating employer members and their employees.

The NEBS Pension Plan was registered under the Canada Pension Benefits Standards Act (1985) (PBSA) until 2004 when the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI), the regulator of the Act, ruled that the Plan was exempt from registration. The Board and Pension Committee had jointly agreed to voluntarily comply with the PBSA until the Plan was registered under Territorial legislation.

Both the Government of the Northwest Territories and Government of Nunavut passed mirror legislation, the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act that came into force March 12, 2009. This legislation sets rules to protect Plan Members funds.

During 2015, the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act (NWT) was amended by the NWT Legislative Assembly. In October 2015, the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act (Nunavut) came into effect.

## 1. DESCRIPTIONS OF PLANS, continued

**(b)** The following description of the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Trust Fund ("Pension") is a summary only. For more complete information, reference should be made to the Registered Plan Text filed with the Canada Revenue Agency.

#### 1) Funding Policy

The plan administrator, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Committee, must fun the benefits determined under the Plan. The determination of the value of these benefits is made on the basis of an actuarial valuation for the pension fund.

In accordance with the Pension Plan Text, Individual Plan Members are required to contribute 8% of their salary to the Plan. Employer contributions required are equal to the amount certified by the Actuary as being necessary to fully fund the benefits accruing under the Plan, less the amount of required employee contributions. Any deficit existing in the Plan must be specifically funded in accordance with the requirements set out in the Registered Plan Text.

#### 2) Service Pensions

A service pension is payable to a member, for each year of pensionable service in accordance with the Pension Plan Text.

#### 3) Survivors' Pensions

A survivor pension is paid to a vested member's spouse or eligible children.

#### 4) Death Benefits

The Plan provides benefits, depending on the age at death, to a spouse, eligible dependents or a beneficiary.

### 5) Withdrawal Refunds

Refunds include an amount equal to the commuted value of a vested member's pension benefit if the employee's service exceed two years. If the employee's service is less than two years, the refund is equal to the employee's contributions plus interest.

## 6) Income Taxes

The Plan is a Registered Pension Plan as defined in the Income Tax Act Canada and is not subject to income taxes.

#### 2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans relevant to preparing such financial statements. The significant policies are detailed as follows:

#### (a) Basis of Presentation

A pension plan is a reporting entity separate from the sponsor and the plan participants using the going concern basis to present the aggregate financial position of the plans independent of the sponsor and plan members.

The financial statements are prepared to assist participating employers and others in reviewing the activities of the plan for the fiscal period, but they do not portray the funding requirements of the plan or the benefit security of individual plan members. As such, participants may also need to review, amongst other things, actuarial reports, and to take into account the financial health of the sponsor.

In selecting or changing accounting policies that do not relate to its investment portfolio or pension obligations, Canadian accounting standards for pension plans (ASPP) requires NEBS to comply on a consistent basis with either International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), or Canadian accounting standards for private enterprises (ASPE), to the extent that those standards do not conflict with the requirements of ASPP. NEBS has chosen to comply on a consistent basis with IFRS relevant to preparing these financial statements.

As required by the legislation referred to in Note 1(a), these separate set of financial statements present the financial position, results of operations and cash flows of the NEBS Pension Plan Trust Fund and exclude the accounts of the NEBS Health & Welfare Fund. The financial position, results of operations and cash flows of the NEBS Health & Welfare Fund are presented in a separate set of financial statements that do not include the financial position, results of operations and cash flows of the NEBS Pension Plan Trust Fund. A separate set of combined financial statements of NEBS as at December 31, 2023 and for the year then ended has not been prepared.

#### (b) Cash Equivalents

NEBS considers all highly-liquid investments with maturities of three months or less, convertible to known amounts of cash, and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value, to be cash equivalents.

### (c) Fair Value Hierarchy

The Organization classifies its financial assets and liabilities at fair value using a fair value hierarchy made up of three levels, according to the inputs used in making the measurements.

Level 1: This level includes assets and liabilities measured at fair value based on unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets and liabilities in an active market that the Organization can access at the measurement date.

Level 2: This category includes measurements that use, either directly or indirectly, observable inputs other than quoted prices included in level 1. Derivative instruments in this category are measured using models or other standard valuation techniques using observable market data.

Level 3: The measurements in this category depend upon inputs that are less observable, not available or for which observable inputs do not justify most of the instruments' fair value.

#### (d) Investments

Investments for the Pension Fund Trust Fund are measured at fair value and categorized according to the fair value hierarchy using the market approach valuation technique. NEBS determines fair value of investments based on information supplied by the investment manager. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date under current market conditions. Purchases and sales of investments are accounted for at trade date. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred. Investment income is recognized on an accrual basis. The current year change in fair value of investments is the difference between the fair value and the cost of investments at the beginning and end of each year, adjusted for realized gains and losses during the year.

#### (e) Capital and Intangible Assets

Northern Employee Benefits Services records capital assets at cost allocated equally between the Group and Pension Funds. NEBS considers individual capital items costing \$10,000 or more to be capital assets. Cost includes a portion of GST that is not recoverable. NEBS provides for amortization allocated equally between the Group and Pension Funds using the straight-line method at the following rates:

Office Equipment 5 years
Computer Equipment 3 – 6 years
Intangible Assets 10 years

#### (e) Capital and intangible assets, continued

Intangible assets, consisting of a software license for the use of the C-DAT Pension and Health Benefits Integrated System (PHBIS), is amortized and allocated between the Pension and Group Funds on a straight-line basis over its estimated useful life of ten years. In 2018 the software license was purchased outright and is now the property of NEBS to utilize as it deems necessary. The recording of annual amortization expense commenced during 2015 when the asset became available for use. NEBS has approved the replacement of the C-DAT software with the Penad PX3000, which will provide Defined Benefit Pension administration and Group Life and Health administration. During the year, \$237,798 of implementation costs were allocated to the Pension Fund and \$241,536 were allocated to the Group Fund. The software is expected to become available for use during 2025 at which time amortization expense will commence.

### **(f)** Pension Obligations

Pension obligations of the multi-employer defined benefit pension plan are measured using the actuarial present value of accrued pension benefits determined by applying best estimate assumptions and the projected benefit method prorated on services. Net assets available for benefits is the difference between the Pension Plan's assets and its liabilities, excluding the accrued pension benefits.

#### (g) Revenue Recognition

Revenue from contributions, investment income, and interest charged to members' accounts, are recognized on an accrual basis. The accrual basis of accounting recognizes the effect of transactions and events when the transactions and events occur, regardless of whether there has been a receipt of payment of cash or its equivalent. Deferred revenue results from contributions for future periods paid in advance. Employer contributions for current service and special payment for funding deficiency must meet or exceed the minimum contributions required based on the most recent actuarial valuation report. Employee contributions for past service are recorded in the year received.

### (h) Pension and Termination Benefits

Pension and termination benefits are shown as expenses in the year of payment.

#### (i) Allocated Expenses

Expenses incurred under a cost-sharing arrangement that are common to the administration of NEBS' two Funds are consistently allocated equally each year.

#### (i) Cash Flows

To provide more relevant information about the flows of funds in and out of NEBS' cash balances under Canadian accounting standards for pension plans, NEBS has elected to include as an integral part of the financial statements, a Statement of Cash Flows for each period presented.

Information about NEBS' timing of cash receipts and cash payments within each Fund enables NEBS' management to assess the capacity of NEBS to generate cash and cash equivalents and the needs of NEBS for cash resources. The adequacy of expected cash flows, taking into consideration their timing and certainty of generation, is evaluated against cash resources required repay financial obligations, and to conduct the necessary activities of the Fund as described in Note 1(b).

#### (k) Measurement Uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Significant estimates are used in determining the useful lives of depreciable capital and intangible assets, provisions for delinquent accounts and severance pay, allocating administrative expenses between NEBS' two Funds, and pension obligations. The Pension Plan's actual experience may differ significantly from assumptions used in the calculation of the Pension Plan's pension obligations. While best estimates have been used in the valuation of the Pension Plan's actuarial value of accrued benefits, management considers that it is possible, based on existing knowledge, that changes in future conditions in the short term could require a material change in the recognized amounts. Differences between actual results and expectations are disclosed in these financial statements as net experience gains or losses in the Statement of Changes in Pension Obligations in the year when actual results are known.

#### 3. INVESTMENTS

The Pension Plan's investments are categorized according to the fair value hiearchy as follows:

	Cost	2023 Market	Cost	2022 Market
Level 1				
Canadian equities	\$ 74,606,728	\$ 71,028,334	\$ 99,884,469	\$ 91,672,913
Foreign equities	160,865,468	162,033,549	142,614,809	128,021,733
	235,472,196	233,061,883	242,499,278	219,694,646
Level 2				
Fixed income securities	130,431,146	139,904,609	101,170,097	101,989,352
Pooled Money Market	5,266,571	5,266,572	1,734,512	1,734,512
Real Estate Funds	26,265,276	30,498,676	25,226,510	31,850,518
	161,962,993	175,669,857	128,131,119	135,574,382
	\$ 397,435,189	\$ 408,731,740	\$ 370,630,397	\$ 355,269,028

## 3. INVESTMENTS, continued

The above listed investments are held by Canadian Western Trust and will not be redeemed in the subsequent period.

The fair value hierarchy as described in Note 2(c) requires the use of observable market inputs wherever such inputs exist. A financial instrument is classified at the lowest level of the hierarchy for which a significant input has been considered in measuring fair value.

Investments are valued based on information provided by the investment manager. In particular:

- Money market instruments consist of cash and treasury bills, which are valued using published market quotations;
- Fixed-income securities consist of an investment in a bond fun. Directly owned bonds are
  valued using published market quotations. Valuations of the bond fund are received on a per
  unit basis from the investment manager. Valutions are derived from the sum of the fair value
  of bond fund assets determined using published market quotations less bond fund liabilities
  divided by the total number of units outstanding;
- Equities consist of Canadian and foreign equity funds. Foreign equity funds also include the fair value of foreign exchange forwards contracts. Investment valuations for the funds are received from the various issuers and are calculated in accordance with their published valuation methodologies. Valuations are derived from the sum of the fair value of equity fund assets determined using published market quotations less equity fund liabilities divided by the total number of units outstanding.

#### 4. CAPITAL AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

A reconciliation of the carrying amounts of capital assets at the beginning and end of the year is as follows:

us ronows.	Office Equipment	Computer Equipment	Intangible Assets	Total
Cost:				
Balance, beginning of year Additions Disposals	\$ 6,861 \$ - (1,678)	46,089 \$ 20,684 (19,745)	499,513 \$ 237,798	552,463 258,482 (21,423)
Balance, end of year	5,183	47,028	737,311	789,522
Accumulated amortization:				
Balance, beginning of year Amortization Disposals	(6,861) - 1,678	(46,089) (3,444) 19,745	(301,711) (47,495)	(354,661) (50,939) 21,423
	(5,183)	(29,788)	(349,206)	(384,177)
	<u> - \$</u>	17,240 \$	388,105 \$	405,345

Included in capital assets is computer equipment under capital lease with a cost of \$20,684 (2022 - \$19,883), accumulated amortization of \$3,444 (2022 - \$19,833), and carrying value of \$17,240 (2022 - \$nil).

#### 5. PENAD LOAN

NEBS has a non-revolving demand instalment loan; detailed as follows:

	2	023	2022
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Software			
\$1,000,000 Non-revolving Demand Instalment Loan - prime + 1%, regular monthly payments of \$16,666.62 plus interest.		700 ¢	
Interest only payments until facility has been fully dispersed.	\$ 202	<u>,709</u> \$	

# Secured by:

- 1. General Security Agreement granting a first security interest in all present and after acquired personal property.
- 2. Debt service covenant of 1.25 to 1.00 or more.

The software replacement is anticipated to become available for use and the loan fully drawn during 2025.

#### 6. CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATIONS

The capital lease with Xerox Canada Ltd. for printer and scanner equipment with a carrying value of \$17,240 (2022 - \$nil), is recorded at an amount equal to the present value of the lease payments using the interest rate implicit in the lease. The implicit interest rate of the obligation is 10.15% and the lease expires November 3, 2028, repayable in quarterly installments of \$2,474 including interest. The following is a schedule of future minimum lease payments under the capital lease:

2024	\$ 4,949
2025	4,949
2026	4,949
2027	4,949
2028	 3,712
Total future minimum lease payments	23,508
Less amount representing interest	 5,039
Present value of minimum net lease payments	18,469
Less current portion	 4,949
	\$ 13,520

#### 7. PENSION OBLIGATIONS

The actuarial present value of accrued pension benefits was estimated by Aon Hewitt Inc., a firm of consulting actuaries. The data and assumptions used for the extrapolated December 31, 2023 liabilities are the same as that used in the actuarial valuation as at December 31, 2022. The data and assumptions used for the extrapolated December 31, 2022 liabilities are the same as that used in the actuarial valuation as at December 31, 2021. The December 31, 2023 extrapolation has been prepared based on the pension plan provisions as at December 31, 2022. The December 31, 2022 extrapolation has been prepared based on the pension plan provisions as at December 31, 2021. The going concern results were prepared using the projected benefit actuarial cost method (also known as the projected unit credit method).

The Plan's liabilities have been estimated as at December 31, 2023 by increasing the liabilities at the last valuation date described above by the cost of accruing benefits and interest, and subtracting benefit payments accumulated with interest for the same period. The cost of benefits accrued is from the December 31, 2022 actuarial valuation report, adjusted for differences in the actual versus expected contributions. Other than the actual cost-of-living increase on January 1, 2023, the actuaries have assumed that there were no experience gains and losses in the interim period.

### 7. PENSION OBLIGATIONS, continued

Significant and long term actuarial assumptions used in the going concern valuation were:

	2023	2022
Interest rate:	6.25%	5.90%
Rate of salary increase:	2.50%	2.50%
Inflation:	2.00%	2.00%

A going concern valuation is performed to determine the funded status of the pension plan and the funding requirements for the pension plan treating the plan as a going concern. The legislation referred to in Note 1(a) does not require the Plan to be funded on a solvency basis.

The actuarial valuation report on the funded position of the Plan on a going concern basis as at January 1, 2023 was completed by the actuary in December 2023. In accordance with the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act, the next actuarial valuation for the purposes of developing funding requirements should be performed no later than as at January 1, 2026.

Should there be a deficiency, the NEBS Pension Committee would review the action necessary to ensure such a hypothetical deficiency is amortized according to the rules established by the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985. Accordingly, NEBS has elected to perform a funding valuation annually, the next expected to be in January 1, 2024.

The actuarial value of net assets available for benefits is equal to the adjusted market value of assets as at December 31, 2023 and adjusted for outstanding contributions, and benefit payments.

The actuarial value of net assets available for benefits is equal to the adjusted market value of assets over a four year period as of December 31, 2023.

## 8. PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions revenue during the year of the Pension Plan Trust Fund consists of the following:

	_	2023	2022
Employee and employer current service cost Employee past service cost Voluntary additional contributions from employees Terminating membership buyouts Employer Unfunded Liability Contributions	\$	30,614,354 \$	28,582,287 - 1,335,837 1,078,300 3,108
	\$	30,927,618 \$	30,999,532

There was one terminating membership buyout in 2023 (2022 - one). Additionally, there were no member withdrawals in both 2023 and 2022, and no amounts arising from the subsequent cancellation of a member's termination process to return to the Pension Plan for both years. Management is not aware of any pending withdrawing members.

# 8. PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS, continued

Contributions revenue during the year of the Pension Plan Trust Fund includes the following:

	_	2023	_	2022
Employee portion Employer portion	\$			16,708,388 14,291,144
	\$	30,927,618	\$	30,999,532

As at December 31, 2023, contribuitions receivable of the Pension Plan Trust Fund includes the following:

	_	2023	_	2022
Employee portion Employer portion	\$	305,590 305,591	\$	255,550 255,551
	\$	611,181	\$	511,101

# 9. INVESTMENT INCOME

Total investment income during the year of the Pension Plan Trust Fund is as follows:

	_	2023	2022
Realized investment income:			
Gain (loss) on sale of investments Interest and dividends	\$	(3,328,786) \$ 18,343,983	(22,256,800) 14,060,064
Total realized investment income		15,015,197	(8,196,736)
Unrealized investment income:			
Current period change in fair value of investments	_	27,078,046	(26,422,976)
	\$	42,093,243 \$	(34,619,712)

### 9. INVESTMENT INCOME, continued

Investment income during the year from gain on sale of investments of the Pension Plan Trust Fund consists of the following:

	_	2023	2022
Canadian equities Foreign equities Fixed income - Bonds	\$	(2,667,123) \$ (729,216) 67,553	1,019,572 (981,534) (22,294,838)
	\$	(3,328,786) \$	(22,256,800)

Investment income during the year from interest and dividends of the Pension Plan Trust Fund consist of the following:

	_	2023	2022
Canadian equities	\$	5,901,649 \$	11,418,472
Foreign equities		10,535,030	2,591,675
Fixed income - Bonds & Debentures		1,638,364	-
Canadian pooled money market funds	_	268,921	49,912
	\$	18,343,964 \$	14,060,059

#### **10. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT**

The purpose of NEBS is to provide benefits to members. As such, when managing capital, the objective is to preserve assets of the Pension Plan Trust Fund, and the Health and Welfare Fund, in a manner that provides NEBS with the ability to continue as a going concer, to have sufficient assets to meet future obligations for benefits, and to have sufficient liquidity to meet all benefit and expense payments.

The capital of NEBS consists of its surplus (deficit) as represented by the Pension Plan Trust Fund balance or deficit. Excluding the impact of investment income, NEBS is funded through a combination of employee and employer contributions. The surplus (deficit) of the Pension Plan Trust Fund represents the difference between the Net Assets Available for Benefits and the actuarially determined accrued pension benefits on a going-concern basis. Actuarial valuations, which aid in the determination of the extent of the Pension Plan's Trust Fund's capital, are performed annually. Surplus or deficit, as they arise, as well as other relevant aspects of NEBS, are managed in order to comply with the externally imposed requirements of the *Income Tax Act* and the legislation referred to in Note 1(a).

As at December 31, 2023, NEBS is not in violation of any externally imposed legal or regulatory requirements.

## 10. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT, continued

As at December 31, 2023, the Pension Plan Trust Fund balance consists of the following:

	_	2023	2022
Net assets invested in capital and intangible assets:			
Capital assets	\$	17,242 \$	-
Intangible assets		388,105	197,802
Penad Loan		(202,709)	-
Capital lease obligation		(18,469)	(8,984)
Net assets invested in capital and intangible assets		184,169	188,818
Unfunded severance pay liability in wages & benefits payable	;	(115,846)	(101,844)
Unrestricted surplus	_	54,670,649	51,217,016
	\$	54,738,972 \$	51,303,990

#### 11. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND RISK

The Pension Plan's investments are recorded at fair value based on information provided by the investment manager. Other financial instruments of NEBS consist of cash, short-term investments, contributions receivable, other receivables, interfund balances, wages and benefits payable, and accounts payable. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values.

The fair values of Pension Plan investments are exposed to credit, liquidity, and market risks. Asset diversification and investment eligibility requirements serve as basic risk-management tools for the investment portfolio as a whole. The Pension Plan's investment strategy requires that investments be held in a diversfied mix of asset types and also sets out investment eligibility requirements. The diverstification of assets serves to lower the variations in the expected return performance of the portfolio. Eligibility requirements serve to ensure that Pension Plan assets, to the extent possible, are not placed at undue levels of risk and can meet the obligations of the Pension Plan as necessary. While the above policies aid in risk management, the Pension Plan's investments and performance remain subject to risk, the extent of which is discussed below:

#### **Credit Risk**

Credit risk is the risk that a counterparty to a financial contract will fail to discharge its obligations in accordance with agreed-upon terms. The Pension Plan is exposed to credit risk through its investments in money market instruments (excluding cash), and fixed-income securities. The Pension Plan's credit risk on money market instruments, fixed-income securities, and inflation-linked assets is managed by setting concentration limits on exposure to any single issuer, as well as by setting minimum credit-rating criteria for investment.

#### 11. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND RISK, continued

Concentrations of credit risk exist when a significant proportion of the portfolio is invested in securities subject to credit riks with similar characteristics or subject to similar economic, political, or other conditions. The investment portfolio as a whole is subject to maximum exposure limits and asset allocation targets that are designed to manage exposure to concentrated credit risk.

#### **Liquidity Risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Pension Plan will encounter difficult in meeting obligations associatied with financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset. The Pension Plan's financial liabilities consist of Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities, and Due to Health & Welfare Fund. These amounts are short term in duration and are set to mature within one year. Liquidity risk is managed through ensuring that sufficient liquid assets are maintained to meet anticipated payments and investment commitments in general. With respect to the Pension Plan's financial liabilities and the actuarial value of accrued pension benefits, management believes that the Pension Plan is not subject to any significant liquidity risk. The actuarial value of accrued pension benefits is not considered a financial liability; however, it is the most significant liability of the Pension Plan in the Statement of Financial Position. NEBS is required to contribut all funds necessary to meet any funding shortfalls of the Pension Plan as they may arise from time to time.

#### **Market Risk**

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk is composed of interest rate, currency, and other price risk. The extent of market risk exposure is dependent on the nature of the investment.

#### Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate owing to changes in market interest rates. The Pension Plan is exposed to interest rate risk through its investment holdings in interest-bearing, or fixed-income, assets. These principally include money market instruments and fixed-income securities. The Pension Plan manages its exposure to interest rate risk through holding a diversified mix of assets, both interest-bearing and non-interest bearing. This approach lowers the impact of variations in overall portfolio performance owing to factors arising from interest rate risk. The fair value of the Pension Plan's assets, specifically the fixed-income securities, is affected by changes in the nominal interest rate.

#### Other Price Risk

Other price risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a fincancial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate or currency risk), whether those changes are caused by factors specific to individual financial instrument or its issuer or by factors affecting all similar financial instruments traded in the market. The Pension Plan is exposed to other price risk through its holdings in Canadian equities. The Pension Plan manages these risks through maximum proportions of equities in its investment portfolio and through concentration limits on investments in any one issuer, as outline in the investment policy. Future cash flows relating to the sale of an investment exposed to other rpice risk will vary depending on market prices at the time of sale. Concentrations of other price risk exists when a significant portion of the portfolio is invested in equities with similar characteristics or subject to similar economic, market, political, or other conditions.

#### 12. ALLOCATED EXPENSES

Included in administrative expenses of the Pension Plan Trust Fund for the year are expenses allocated under a cost-sharing arrangement totalling \$1,034,911 (2022 - \$991,453) which includes equal allocations between the Health & Welfare Fund and the Pension Plan Trust Fund. Expenses allocated equally include certain expenses included in Intagible Assets, Wages & Benefits, Communications, Building & Works, Supplies & Materials, Professional Fees, Investment Counselling, certain Committee Expenses, and Marketing.

Included in the NEBS Pension Plan Trust Fund as at December 31, 2023 is an amount due to the NEBS Health & Welfare Fund of \$143,869 (2022 – \$113,521). The interfund balance, which arises from the chargeback of expenses during the year allocated to, and paid on behalf of, the Pension Plan Trust Fund, is unsecured, non-interest bearing, and due on demand. Changes during the year in interfund balance are as follows:

Interfund balance, beginning of year Total chargebacks charged from Health & Welfare Fund Repayments to Health and Welfare Fund		2023	2022	
		113,521 \$ 1,034,911 (1,004,564)	99,904 991,453 (977,836)	
Interfund balance, end of year	\$	143,868 \$	113,521	

During the year, excluded from the accompanying financial statements are self-insured pension premiums expenses incurred totalling \$47,387 (2022 - \$54,540).

# NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN TRUST FUND

#### COMBINED SCHEDULE OF BOARD HONORARIA

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

The NEBS Honorarium & Expenses Policy establishes honoraria and expenses to be paid to Directors and the Chairman, and the By-Laws for Northern Employee Benefits Services requires that Employer Members ratify any changes in remuneration. The Policy was last changes and ratified in 2015.

During the year, two in person Pension Committee and Board Meetings were held in Yellowknife in April and December. The September meeting was cancelled for both Pension and Board due to the evacuation, however, a Pension Committee meeting was held in October by phone.

	2023 Meetings				
	Attended		2023		2022
Aumond, Michael	5		1,600		3,200
Bennett, William	3		3,200		6,400
Bruce, Tommy	2				
Cohen, Michael	5		4,800		5,800
Couturier, Marie	4		2,000		800
Fleming, Brian	2		2,000		5,000
McBride, Gary	5	2,400			4,200
McCrea, Sara	4	1,600			3,400
McDonald, Allan	5	2,750			4,250
McKee, John	5	2,200			2,200
Stewart, Art	5	4,600			4,800
Young, Gwen	5	2,200			3,400
Sessua Kuengou, Judy Romaric	2		2,200		
		\$	31,550	s	43,450
Allocation:					
Administrative Board Expenses - Health & Welfare Fund		\$	15,775	S	21,725
Administrative Committee Expenses - Pension Plan Trust Fund		U I I I	15,775		21,725
		S	31,550	S	43,450

#### NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN (the "Plan")

## PENSION COMMITTEE'S CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE IN RESPECT OF THE YEAR 2023

The Pension Committee is required by section 27(2)(b) of the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act (the "Act") to file a certificate stating that, in the opinion of the Pension Committee, the Plan complies with the Act and the regulations under the Act.

I, Al McDonald, the Chair of the Pension Committee for the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan CERTIFY THAT

- 1. The Pension Committee has reviewed the compliance of the Plan with the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act and the regulations under the Act;
- 2. It is the opinion of the Pension Committee that the Plan complies with the Act and the regulations, and
- 3. The Pension Committee acknowledges that the obligation to determine compliance of the Plan is the responsibility of the Pension Committee, and declares that the Pension Committee has fulfilled that responsibility and, in having resolved to that effect, has complied with the Act and the regulations.

I declare that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make these statements conscientiously believing them to be true.

AL MCDONALD

**CHAIR OF PENSION COMMITTEE** 

April 24, 2024

Date



### Long Term Sustainability

In accordance with section 27(2)(c) of the NEBS Act and in compliance with Appendix B of the NEBS Funding Policy, a statement of the long-term sustainability has been prepared for the NEBS Plan.

Based on a 15-year projection of the going concern position, using the assumptions and methods disclosed in the January 1, 2024 actuarial valuation as well as the guidelines recommended in Appendix B of the NEBS Funding Policy, current contribution rates of the NEBS Plan are adequate to sustain the NEBS Plan over the next 15 years.

In accordance with Appendix B of the NEBS Funding Policy, excess amounts existing in the Pension Fund over and above amounts required by the NEBS Acts to be held in the Pension Fund to secure the benefits payable from the Plan over a 15 year period may be used to as a contingency reserve (margin) against adverse deviation arising from negative plan experience, shifts in maturity of the NEBS Plan over time and higher than projected costs of future benefit accruals.

The accompanying presentation details the assumptions, methods, calculation and results of the 15-year projection (i.e. the Contribution Rate Adequacy Test) performed as at January 1, 2024 to assess the long term sustainability of the NEBS Plan.

#### PLAN SPONSORS' GOALS AND OBJECTIVES REPORT FOR THE COMING YEAR

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Northern Employees Benefits Services (NEBS) was established in 1978 by an Act of the Government of the Northwest Territories and then incorporated in 1999 with the creation of Nunavut and Northwest Territories. NEBS offers health and insurance benefits and a pension plan program to public sector employees who work at the community and regional levels. Our programs and services are organized to be comparable and competitive with those offered by the Nunavut and Northwest Territories governments so that our member employers can recruit and retain high quality staff to manage and operate their organizations. We are unique in that we operate and are headquartered in the north, provide programs and services specifically designed to meet the needs of northern public sector employers and their employees and are managed by a Board of Directors that is elected by Employer Member Organizations.

#### **OUR MARKET**

We provide a multi-employer program across the vast expanse of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Our Employer Members range in size and capacity and we operate in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual environment. In many cases our staff and Directors know our Employer Members and their employees personally. We strive to provide excellent services that are responsive to the unique interests and needs of northerners.

Like any organization providing a pension plan, we are strongly influenced by the international investment market. The past five years have been challenging – but we have ended the period in a strong financial position. In addition, a full regulatory framework for our pension plan has been established in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

#### **MEMBERS**

Membership in NEBS is open to all northern Public Sector Employers, including: Community Governments, Band Councils and Aboriginal Governments, Public Housing Organizations, Boards and Agencies of Government, and Non-Profit Organizations.

#### **OUR VISION**

The vision statement for NEBS describes what we want our organization to be in the future.

#### **NEBS VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision is to be the provider of choice for pension, health benefits and insurance services for the northern public sector

#### **OUR VALUES**

We support our vision by operating NEBS according to some specific values. These values describe our core basic principles and expected behaviors of our directors and staff.

Our values include:

#### 1. Integrity

The organization and its Board operate in a manner that demonstrates honesty and truthfulness in thought and action. Integrity is demonstrated through the development of trust between NEBS, Employer Members, and their employees.

#### 2. Independence

Our directors and staff act neutrally and free of conflicts of interest.

#### 3. Respectful of Member Interests

We protect and advance Member interests in the development and operation of programs and services offered by the organization.

#### 4. Transparency

Our programs and services are operated with open and direct communication regarding the directions and decisions of the organization.

#### 5. Fiduciary Stewardship - Board

Our directors have a fiduciary duty to protect the interests of the Employer Members, placing those interests above all others.

#### 6. Fiduciary Stewardship – Pension Committee

Members of the Pension Committee act as Trustees of the Pension Plan and have a fiduciary duty to protect the interests of the Employer Members, placing those interests above all others.

#### 7. Cooperation through Partnership

We treat our relationships with Employer Members, their employees, service providers and other interested parties as partnerships to be developed and maintained.

#### 8. Professionalism in Thought and Action

We strive to maintain professional standards of skill and conduct in carrying out program activities and commitments.

#### **Goals and Objectives**

#### 2023 Goals and Objectives update:

**Governance Goal (Restated):** The Pension Committee and the Board of Directors will lead the organization using a participative result based, governance model.

Objective 1: Continue to update and monitor NEBS Governance objectives and policies.

Objective 2: Continue with Pension Committee training.

In 2023, Objective 1 was achieved through a process called the Pension Committee Standing Items Adoption Table. This process, on an annual basis, has the Pension Committee review all policies and procedures and re-adopt them or change them as required. Objective 2 was achieved by including training as a component of every Pension Committee meeting. In 2023, the Pension Committee held two in-person meetings and a third by teleconference, and had training related presentations as an agenda item at each meeting.

**Funding Goal (Restated):** Obtain and maintain full funding by collecting contributions and earning investment returns on investments necessary to pay expenses and all promised benefits.

Objective 1: Achieve optimal investment returns by working with the Pension Committee, Investment Managers, and the Investment Consultant, and by updating the Statement of Investment Policy.

Objective 2: Allocate 10% of the investment fund to a new asset class, incorporating Infrastructure into the portfolio.

Objective 3: Select an Infrastructure Manager.

Objective 4: Update the Statement of Investment Policy to accommodate the new asset class.

In 2023, Objective 1 was met with a 13% annual rate of total return across all asset classes and funds. The Statement of Investment Policy was amended and updated to include Infrastructure as a new asset class. Objective 2 was met with the decision to onboard the new Infrastructure asset class. Objective 3 was met with the selection of New York based IFM Investors as the new Infrastructure Manager. Objective 4 was achieved as the Statement of Investment Policy was updated to accommodate the new asset class.

Plan Administrative Goal (Restated): Provide high quality, cost effective administrative support.

Objective 1: Continue to implement the use of electronic technology in our operations.

Objective 2: Increase electronic communication with members.

Objective 3: Finalize updates to increase the functionality of our website.

Objective 4: Finalize and distribute a new employer manual.

Objective 5: Finalize the new PENAD Software program.

Objective 6: Plan and incorporate cross-training of staff for redundancy.

In 2023, Objectives 1-3 were met as the website was updated and improved, including the use of the employer portal, the news section, and information pages. Objective 4 was not completed and is being worked on this fiscal year. Objective 5 is still underway, with significant work having been done in this area, but not yet complete. Objective 6 was achieved and is ongoing with staff.

Marketing Goal (Restated): Expand Plan Membership by attracting Nunavut and NWT Employers that qualify to be on the plan.

Objective 1: Continue to market the plan.

Objective 2: Continue to research and monitor qualified organizations than are currently not on the plan and direct marketing activities towards them.

Objective 3: Support NAMA, NAM, LGANT and NWTAC with sponsorship.

Objective 4: Continue to promote NEBS in the Yukon.

Objective 5: Advertising of the plan in media.

In 2023, Objectives 1-3 and 5 were met. NEBS regularly markets its plan by doing presentations and attending events. This year NEBS provided sponsorship to NAM, NWTAC and LGANT. NEBS attended the NAM annual general meeting in Iqaluit. Objective 4 is no longer a priority for NEBS as the Yukon, for the time being, has indicated neutral interest in the Plan.

**Strategic Goal (Restated):** Bring onto the plan a large employer group that has indicated significant interest in joining.

Objective 1: Finalize buy back provisions.

Objective 2: Enroll them in the Plan.

In 2023, Objectives 1 and 2 were completed with the onboarding and enrollment of the large employer group, with buy back provisions finalized.

#### 2024 Goals and Objectives

**Governance Goal (Restated):** The Pension Committee and the Board of Directors will lead the organization using a participative result based, governance model.

Objective 1: Continue to update and monitor NEBS Governance objectives and policies.

Objective 2: Continue with Pension Committee training.

Objective 3: Have the Pension Committee attend a Pension Conference to expand their knowledge base.

**Funding Goal (Restated):** Obtain and maintain full funding by collecting contributions and earning investment returns on investments necessary to pay expenses and all promised benefits.

Objective 1: Achieve optimal investment returns by working with the Pension Committee, Investment Managers, and the Investment Consultant, and by updating the Statement of Investment Policy.

Objective 2: Finalize the onboarding of Infrastructure as a new asset class.

Plan Administrative Goal (Restated): Provide high quality, cost effective administrative support.

Objective 1: Continue to implement the use of electronic technology in our operations.

Objective 2: Increase electronic communication with members.

Objective 3: Finalize updates to increase the functionality of our website.

Objective 4: Finalize and distribute a new employer manual.

Objective 5: Finalize the new PENAD Software program.

Objective 6: Plan and incorporate cross-training of staff for redundancy.

Objective 7: Produce a Members Annual Report.

Objective 8: Produce quarterly newsletters.

Objective 9: Schedule and conduct several marketing / information presentations to new and existing members.

Marketing Goal (Restated): Expand Plan Membership by attracting Nunavut and NWT Employers that qualify to be on the plan.

Objective 1: Continue to market the plan.

Objective 2: Continue to research and monitor qualified organizations that are currently not on the plan and direct marketing activities towards them.

Objective 3: Support NAMA, NAM, LGANT and NWTAC with sponsorship.

Objective 4: Advertising of the plan in media.

Al McDonald Pension Committee Chairman June 30, 2024

1. mass

#### **NEBS PLAN INFORMATION AND STATISTICS**

The 118 participating employers and 2,211 employees, as of January 1, 2024 are illustrated below. There is only one class of employees in the NEBS Pension Plan.

, , ,	
Employer Name	Active Members
ARCTIC BAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION	5
ARCTIC BAY, HAMLET OF	13
ARVIAT HOUSING ASSOCIATION	19
ARVIAT, HAMLET OF	48
BAKER LAKE HOUSING ASSOCIATION	19
BAKER LAKE, HAMLET OF	38
BEHCHO KO, TLICHO COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT OF	25
BEHCHOKO KO GHA K AODEE	7
CAMBRIDGE BAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION	12
CAMBRIDGE BAY, HAMLET OF	30
CAPE DORSET HOUSING AUTHORITY	9
CAPE DORSET, MUNICIPALITY OF	13
CHESTERFIELD INLET HOUSING ASSOCIATION	2
CHESTERFIELD INLET, HAMLET OF	12
CLYDE RIVER HOUSING ASSOCIATION	2
CLYDE RIVER, MUNICIPALITY OF	8
COALITION OF NUNAVUT DEAS	5
CORAL HARBOUR HOUSING AUTHORITY	8
CORAL HARBOUR, HAMLET OF	20
DELINE GOTINE GOVERNMENT	47
DELINE HOUSING ASSOCIATION	5
FORT LIARD, HAMLET OF	8
FORT MCPHERSON HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
FORT MCPHERSON, HAMLET OF	8
FORT RESOLUTION HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
FORT RESOLUTION, HAMLET OF	2
FORT SIMPSON HOUSING AUTHORITY	6
FORT SMITH HOUSING AUTHORITY	5
FORT SMITH, TOWN OF	37
GAMETI HOUSING AUTHORITY	1
GAMETI, COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT OF	4
GIANT MINE OVERSIGHT BODY SOCIETY	1
GJOA HAVEN, HAMLET OF	12
GRISE FIORD HOUSING ASSOCIATION	1
GRISE FIORD, HAMLET	2
GWICH IN LAND AND WATER BOARD	5
IGLOOLIK HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
IGLOOLIK, MUNICIPALITY OF	19
ILITAQSINIQ	15
INUIT HERITAGE TRUST INCORPORATED	7
INUVIK HOUSING AUTHORITY	10
INUVIK, TOWN OF	29
IQALUIT HOUSING AUTHORITY	4
JEAN MARIE RIVER DENE BAND	5
KAKIVAK ASSOCIATION	21

Employer Name	Active Members
KATLODEECHE FIRST NATIONS	7
KIKITAK HOUSING ASSOCIATION	8
KIMMIRUT HOUSING ASSOCIATION	1
KIMMIRUT, HAMLET OF	11
KINNGAIT, HAMLET OF	13
KITIKMEOT HERITAGE SOCIETY	5
KITIKMEOT INUIT ASSOCIATION	25
KIVALLIQ INUIT ASSOCIATION	43
KUGAARUK HOUSING AUTHORITY	7
KUGAARUK, HAMLET OF	18
KUGLUKTUK HOUSING ASSOCIATION	11
KUGLUKTUK, HAMLET OF	28
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NWT ~ STATUTORY OFFICE	1
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATORS OF THE NWT	1
LUTSELKE HOUSING ASSOCIATION	1
MACKENZIE VALLEY EIRB	14
MACKENZIE VALLEY LAND AND WATER BOARD	19
NAHANNI BUTTE DENE BAND	2
NAUJAAT, HAMLET OF	22
NORMAN WELLS, TOWN OF	20
NORTH SLAVE METIS ALLIANCE	4
NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES	6
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION	4
NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD	19
NUNAVUT LITERACY COUNCIL	8
NUNAVUT MUNICIPAL TRAINING ORGANIZATION	3
NUNAVUT PLANNING COMMISSION	10
NUNAVUT TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION	5
NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK INC.	109
NUNAVUT WATER BOARD	12
NWT ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITIES	7
PANGNIRTUNG HOUSING ASSOCIATION	10
PANGNIRTUNG, HAMLET OF	22
PANGNIRTUNG, HAMLET OF - MANAGEMENT GROUP	2
POND INLET HOUSING ASSOCIATION	8
POND INLET, HAMLET OF	15
QAMMAQ HOUSING ASSOCIATION	8
QIKIQTANI INUIT ASSOCIATION	66
QIKIQTARJUAQ HOUSING ASSOCIATION	7
QIKIQTARJUAQ, MUNICIPALITY OF	2
RADILIH KOE HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
RANKIN INLET HOUSING ASSOCIATION	8
RANKIN INLET, HAMLET OF	30
REPULSE BAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION	4
RESOLUTE BAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3

Employer Name	Active Members
RESOLUTE BAY, HAMLET OF	13
SAHTU LAND AND WATER BOARD	6
SAHTU LAND USE PLANNING BOARD	2
SANIKILUAQ, MUNICIPALITY OF	12
SANIRAJAK HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
SANIRAJAK, MUNICIPALITY OF	15
TALOYOAK HOUSING AUTHORITY	9
TALOYOAK, HAMLET OF	27
TASIURQTIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION	2
TLICHO GOVERNMENT	126
TLICHO MANAGEMENT SERVICES LTD - MANAGEMENT GROUP	8
TLICHO MANAGEMENT SERVICES LTD.	10
TUKTOYAKTUK, HAMLET OF	12
TULITA HOUSING ASSOCIATION	3
UQUUTAQ SOCIETY	11
WEK EEZHII LAND AND WATER BOARD	10
WEK EEZHII RENEWABLE RESOURCES BOARD	4
WEKWEETI, TLICHO COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT OF	5
WHALE COVE, HAMLET OF	9
WHATI HOUSING AUTHORITY	2
WHATI, THE COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT OF	13
YELLOWKNIFE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS	185
YELLOWKNIFE HOUSING AUTHORITY	10
YELLOWKNIFE, FIRE FIGHTING	30
YELLOWKNIFE, MANAGEMENT	43
YELLOWKNIFE, MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT	9
YELLOWKNIFE, UNION	123
YK EDUCATION DISTRICT #1	319
Grand Total	2211

### **Membership Reconciliation**

	Actives	Disabled	Leave	Deferred	Pensioners	Total
As at January 1, 2023	1,997	10	47	1,119	616	3,789
New Members	637	-	-	-	-	637
Return to Active	27	(1)	(23)	(3)	-	-
Termination						
Non-Vested	(125)	-	(2)	(32)	ı	(159)
Deferred Vested	(212)	(6)	(7)	225	-	-
Lump Sum	(23)	(1)	(4)	(22)	-	(50)
Retirement	(38)	-	-	(32)	70	-
Death						
No Further Benefits	-	(1)	ı	(7)	(15)	(23)
<ul><li>Pending</li></ul>	(3)	-	-	3	-	-
New Survivors	(6)	-	-	(3)	21	12
Leave of Absence	(35)	-	35	ı	-	•
Disabled	(7)	8	(1)	Ī	1	-
Data Correction	(1)	1	ı			(1)
Net Changes	214	(1)	(2)	129	76	416
As at January 1, 2024	2,211	9	45	1,248	692	4,205