

National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone (ONSA) ່ວັດແມ່ນ ເພັ່ງ ເພັງ ເພັ່ງ ເພັ່ງ ເພັ່ງ ເພັ່ງ ເພັ່ງ ເພັງ ເພັງ ເພັງ ເພັງ ເພັ

Internet Connectivity Among Aboriginal Communities in Canada

Since its inception the Internet has been the fastest growing and most convenient means to access timely information on just about everything. Given the geographical size of Canada and the number of rural and remote Aboriginal¹ communities, the Internet has become more than just a medium to access information; it is increasingly becoming a lifeline – a lifeline to other communities, and a lifeline to access services. In 2004 the Aboriginal Canada Portal (ACP) survey team in cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) undertook a survey to gather data on connectivity rates in Aboriginal Communities², the results of which have been published in the *2004 Report on Aboriginal Community Connectivity Infrastructure*. The following information is a synthesis of the survey's findings.

Province/Territory	First Nations	Inuit	Métis	Total
Alberta	46		8	54
British Columbia	201			201
Manitoba	62		5	67
New Brunswick	15			15
Newfoundland	3	5	6	14
Nova Scotia	13			13
Northwest Territories	27	6		33
Nunavut		28		28
Ontario	140		1	141
Prince Edward Island	2			2
Quebec	39	14		53
Saskatchewan	70		30	100
Yukon	16			16
Canada	634	53	50	737

Distribution of Aboriginal Communities by Province and Territory, 2004

INAC - Information Management Branch, Strategic Planning

¹ The term Aboriginal will be used throughout the document to refer to First Nations, Inuit and Métis as defined by the *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982*.

² All information contained in this report has been obtained from the Aboriginal Canada Portal (2005). 2004 Report on Aboriginal Community Connectivity Infrastructure. Retrieved April 28, 2008, from http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/vDownload/connectivity2004report/\$file/2004ROAC.pdf



According to the Indian Land Registration System (ILRS) at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Inuvialuit and Nunavut Land Claims Agreements, and the 2001 Census there are 634 First Nations reserves, 53 Inuit hamlets and 50 Métis Settlements. It should be noted, however, that the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan are the only provinces that formally recognize Métis Settlements.

Aboriginal Community	TOTAL Communities	Internet Access	%	No Access	%
First Nations	634	625	98.58%	9	1.42%
Inuit	53	49	92.45%	4	7.55%
Métis	50	50	100.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL	737	724	98.24%	13	1.76%

Internet Access at the Community Level

According to the *Report* almost all Aboriginal communities (98 per cent) in Canada have access to the Internet in some capacity. This includes access at the Band Office, Community Access Points, SchoolNet sites and at the household level. Ninety-nine per cent of First Nations, 92 per cent of Inuit and 100 per cent of Métis communities have access to the Internet. Programs such as the Community Access Program (CAP), SchoolNet, Connect Yukon and other federal and provincial programs have significantly increased the number of northern and remote Aboriginal communities with Internet access.





The method by which an Aboriginal community is able to access the Internet depends on the telecommunications infrastructure within the area. When examined as a whole 49 per cent of Aboriginal communities with access to the Internet connect through a dial-in connection; 42 per cent have access through a high-speed connection; five per cent do not have access to the Internet; and the remaining four percent access the Internet by some other means such as satellite connection.



Internet Access in Northern (60 degrees +) Aboriginal Communities

As a result of the above mentioned Internet connectivity initiatives the availability of high-speed Internet access north of the 60th parallel is five per cent greater than Canada as a whole.³ The INAC Band Classification Manual identifies 83 Aboriginal communities north of the 60th parallel, of which 43 are First Nations and 40 are Inuit. Of these communities located north of the 60th parallel 39 per cent access the Internet through a dial-in connection; 47 per cent through a high-speed connection; 12 per cent have no access; and two percent use other means such as a satellite connection.



Aboriginal Community	TOTAL Communities	Internet Access	%	No Access	%
First Nations	634	594	93.69%	40	6.31%
Inuit	53	51	80.39%	2	3.77%
Métis	50	40	80.00%	10	20.00%
TOTAL	737	685	92.94%	52	7.06%

Internet Access at the Household Level

Based upon 2004, 2003 & 2002 Connectivity Survey Responses Only

There is a statistical difference between Internet access at the broader community level when compared to access at the household level. At the household level 93 per cent of all Aboriginal communities have access to the Internet in some capacity. Of those communities with access at the household level 94 per cent are First Nations, 96 per cent are Inuit and 80 per cent are Métis.

Method of Internet Access at the Household Level





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At the household level 43 per cent of all Aboriginal communities access the Internet through a dial-in connection; 34 per cent use a high-speed connection; 20 per cent that use a dial-in with long distance connection; while the remaining five per cent use a satellite connection.

When looking at population specific connectivity methods at the household level dial-in access is the predominant method. Fully 42 per cent of First Nations, 45 per cent of Inuit and 50 per cent of Métis access the Internet though a dial-in connection at the household level; while 35 per cent of First Nations, 33 per cent of Inuit and 25 per cent of Métis access the Internet through high-speed respectively.