

A Day in the Life...

on the Ice Roads in Northwest Territories



*Above: The convoy arrives in Yellowknife, and stages in the WalMart parking lot
Left: A raven escorts one truck the entire length of the ice-road run. A good omen
Right: Playing by the speed and distance rules. Don't make a wave!*

Every winter, a phenomenon starts in Canada's Northwest Territories: Ice Roads. That's the time of furious activity to bring in as much manufactured product and construction supplies and equipment as possible, taking advantage of the best time of year to bring supplies into the booming areas around Yellowknife at the lowest cost.

According to Dave Baker, Western Logistics' Edmonton Terminal Manager, who, along with his brother, Ken, are masters of

the ice roads: "Around the end of November, the ferry shuts down to all traffic, and nothing moves unless it is flown in. Everybody has to wait until the ice is at least three feet thick, and strong enough to support truck traffic. Ice road driving is not for everyone: some drivers love the work; some can't make a single trip. Trucks must move very slowly to not create bubbles below the ice. They cannot move alone or in groups larger than four. Top speed is 30 kms per hour. Breakthroughs are very costly to rescue, and can disqualify the operator from future operation."

In late February 2009, Western Logistics transported a large office furniture project to Yellowknife for Chase Office Interiors, operating a convoy from Edmonton, 1000 miles south, and synchronized to arrive just in time to meet the installation crew flown in for the project -- a process in which Western Logistics excels.

According to Danny Chase, "Every project is critical for us to deliver on our commitment to the client because 'dependable' is one of our brand





Captions from top to bottom: This adventure begins when the convoy enters Northwest Territories; Western Logistics truck on the Ice Road; Here's what it looks like in the summer. A Western Logistics truck on the ferry.



Some interesting facts about Northwest Territories:

- If it were an independent country, it would have the highest GDP per capita in the world.
- Its main products are diamonds, gold, and natural gas.
- It has only 42,000 people in 520,000 square miles.
- It has eleven official languages, nine First Nations tongues, plus English and French.

promises. We look for key partners who can help us exceed our client's expectations. At times, there are circumstances that make it extremely challenging, and the Yellowknife project was certainly one. Chase Office Interiors was amazed by the reliability of Western Logistics to deliver on schedule and we were relieved as it was a critical step to the success of the project."

Echoed Dave Baker: "I and my drivers love the North. After all, every week we operate what may be the most northerly specialized furniture run on the planet, when we go through Grande Prairie and Dawson Creek en route to Prince George. Yellowknife is 700-plus miles straight north from Grande Prairie, not far from the Arctic Circle, so you want to have some company when you're driving to 63 degrees North Latitude in outside temperatures of minus 50."

Western Logistics is Canada's premiere transporter of new office furniture and electronics, providing specialized service from Victoria, BC, to St. John's, NL -- and occasionally on the ice roads to Yellowknife!



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