



Government of  
Saskatchewan

Media Services/  
Media Relations

Legislative Building  
Regina, Canada  
S4S 0B3  
(306) 787-6281  
www.gov.sk.ca

# News Release

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Saskatchewan

Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport

## **GOVERNMENT PROVIDES SCN CORE SERVICES IN MORE EFFICIENT MANNER**

The Government of Saskatchewan is winding down Saskatchewan Communications Network Corporation (SCN), but will maintain many of its important services in a more effective manner.

Satellite distance education classes, which increase access to education for students across the province, will be maintained through SaskTel, as will the connectivity to the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network and the broadcast of the Legislative channel, which are also maintained on that satellite system. The Crown corporation will also have the opportunity to offer SCN programming on its Max on Demand channel. Outstanding contracts with film producers will be brought to a conclusion and also potentially broadcast on Sasktel Max on Demand.

"SCN provided many important services and we are ensuring those continue," Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport Minister Dustin Duncan said. "The broadcast industry has changed drastically since SCN was created nearly 20 years ago. This was long before things like the internet and specialty channels were prevalent in our society. In addition, SCN's viewership is quite low, and we feel that there is no longer a role for government in the broadcast business."

The most recent Bureau of Broadcast Measurement (BBM) survey indicates that only 4 per cent of respondents viewed SCN for at least 15 minutes in any given week. These numbers have been fairly consistent over the past six years.

A team will explore potential buyers for the broadcast assets, including the CRTC license.

The transfer of assets from SCN to Sasktel will take place throughout the spring. There will be no disruption of service through the transition period and it is anticipated that broadcast operations through SCN will cease in May.

The changes will affect about 35 employees. Some of those employees will remain in their positions until the end of June to deal with outstanding contracts.

"I want to thank SCN and all the employees for their hard work and dedication in providing these services for a number of years," Duncan said. "We believe we have struck the right balance in maintaining core services in an effective, responsible manner that better maximizes taxpayers' dollars."

The savings to government with the dissolution of SCN will be \$2.4 million in the 2010-11 budget year. The annualized savings will be closer to \$5 million.

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For more information, contact:

Jennifer Johnson  
Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport  
Regina  
Phone: 306-787-0619  
Email: [jennifer.johnson@gov.sk.ca](mailto:jennifer.johnson@gov.sk.ca)  
Cell: 306-529-5805