December 15, 2015

Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet
Langevin Block, 80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A3


I am writing on behalf of Aecon to support Bell Canada’s petition to the Government concerning the CRTC’s decision to begin regulating all-fibre broadband networks.

Aecon is Canada’s largest publicly traded infrastructure development and construction company. Aecon Utilities has been providing telecommunication installation services within the Province of Ontario since the 1950’s with emerging telecommunications investments in British Columbia and Alberta. We use the latest technologies and processes to provide the engineering design, management and construction services essential for the success of large infrastructure projects. Aecon Utilities has over 2,000 employees across Canada with a fleet of over 4,000 vehicles and specialty equipment. In 2015 Aecon Utilities and its subsidiaries conducted over $400 million dollars’ worth of business with over $100M of that in telecommunications related infrastructure and services.

We support Bell’s request to overturn the CRTC’s decision as it is likely to discourage investments in fibre networks across Canada. At Aecon, we know the value that large infrastructure projects can provide, often for decades into the future. We also know that this value is created by large, sometimes risky, investments undertaken by private industry. Regulations that slow or reduce such investments will deprive citizens of the benefits these infrastructure projects can provide. Should the pace of network investment slow, there will be severe impacts to the construction industry which has already been hard hit by the falling oil prices and the drying up of work in the west. We will scale back not only our front line unionized forces but also the support staff including engineers, designers, project managers and senior leadership. We will also have to cut our co-op programs and our new grad hiring programs. If this impact is market wide this will also be forced to rethink our growth strategies and investment beyond the major markets impacting smaller communities following suit with Bell and other network providers.
The secondary impacts will be with felt with the equipment manufactures as Aecon is one of the largest buyers of construction equipment in Canada and that investment will now be in jeopardy as it is based on forecasted work coming.

We therefore encourage the Government to support broadband network investments, and all the Canadian suppliers that play a role in building these networks, by reversing the CRTC's decision.

Yours truly,

Eric Macdonald
Senior Vice President Aecon Utilities

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