

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

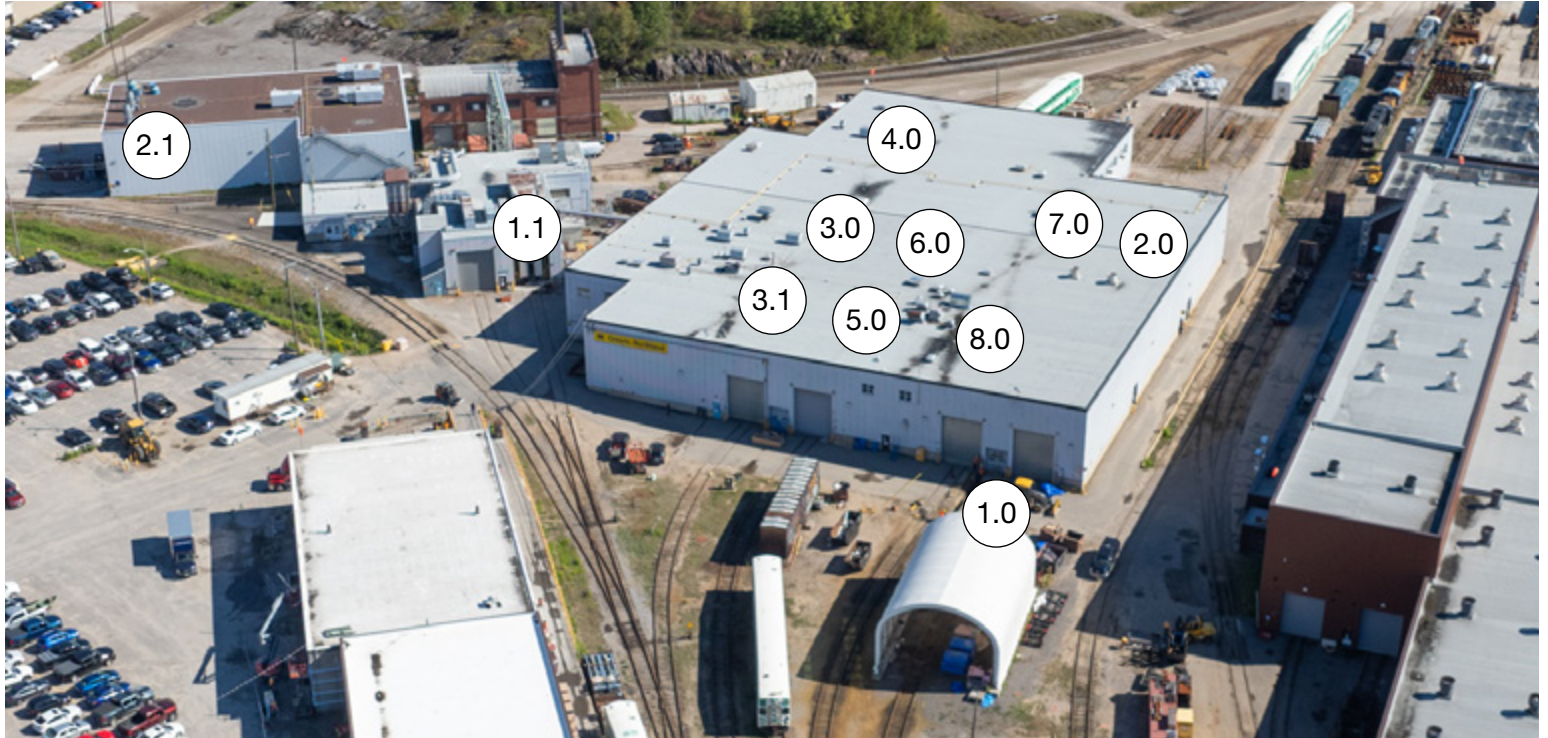


Behind the Scenes: Remanufacturing Coaches for Metrolinx

Ontario Northland's Remanufacturing and Repair Centre has a proven track record for delivering high-quality work to customers. This reputation has earned Metrolinx trust and support in securing further contracts for the refurbishment of GO Transit bi-level cars.

While RRC employees are very familiar with their processes, this is an opportunity for all employees to learn what takes place behind the scenes.





The refurbishment process takes a bi-level coach car through several stations comprising over 793 individual tasks that are completed in 22 weeks. A coach car moves through a station every two weeks. Quality assurance tests and inspections are completed several times throughout to ensure work meets the highest standards for safety and quality. Each station is completed thanks to the valuable expertise and specialized skillset of the employees.

1.0 Pre-Dismantle

After a thorough inspection, the coach car is moved to a heated tent where the remainder of the work at this station is completed outdoors. After air brake and LED light checks, the coach car is stripped down to the frame where items like ceiling and wall panels, duct work, insulation, electrical wires, windows and doors are removed and tagged when reusable.



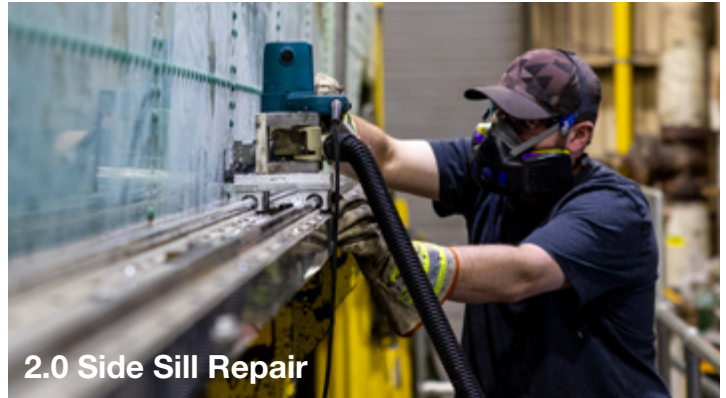


1.1 Underframe

Next, the car is jacked up and the underframe is sandblasted to remove rust and corrosion. The car is then lowered to an easier working height and all interior steel surfaces are sandblasted. Any damaged steel floor pans are repaired and replaced and then painted before moving on to the next station.

2.1 Paint/Undercoat

Flooring is removed to access the underframe for painting and applying a tectyl undercoating that will protect underneath the coach car from moisture, rust and corrosion. New head-end power (HEP) cables (which provide the power for lights, HVAC, etc.) are then run before the subfloor is put back in.



2.0 Side Sill Repair

After air conditioning units and water tanks are removed for refurbishment, the coach car is lifted for weight and alignment checks. While lifted, the side skins and sills are removed and replaced. Side sills are part of the structure of the coach car that take on the load bearing weight of the car. The side skins are aluminum panels that are riveted to the side sills.



3.0 Electrical

The bulk of the electrical work happens here. Electricians run wiring throughout the entire coach car and begin wiring the components for the door systems, HVAC systems and lighting. The washroom module is then installed, and amenities are added.

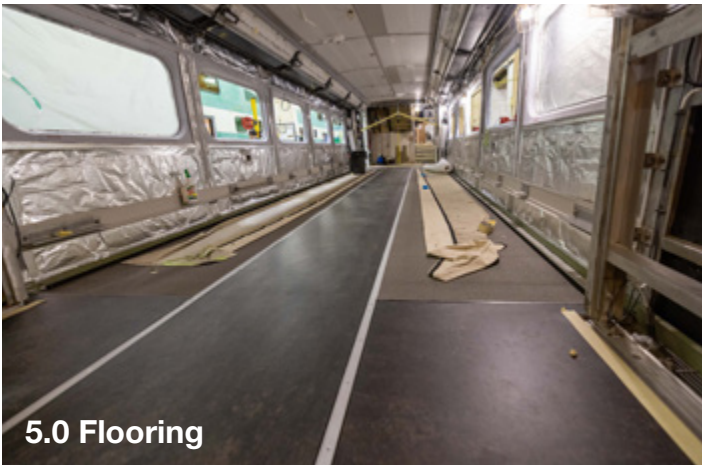
3.1 Electrical Phase 2

Next, electrical for all panels, USB ports, emergency and cove lighting are wired. All the electrical under the car is water tested with a pressure washer for 3-5 minutes. Even one drop of water means the issue must be fixed and the test is repeated. The car is then checked for air leaks. Pipes for the washrooms are installed and pressure checked. The vestibule doors are added and adjusted so they open and close properly.



4.0 Pre-Assemble

Before future stations can start rebuilding the coach car, Station 4 ensures the floor is level and the coach car is clean and ready for assembly. The first stages of rebuilding begin here with the installation of ceiling panels and the side stair modules.



5.0 Flooring

This station begins by cleaning and preparing the duct work, vestibule pockets and windows for future work. The new flooring is carefully cut, prepped and fitted throughout the entire coach car before rolling out the carpeting and marmoleum (high quality linoleum flooring). New duct covers and insulation are installed. End doors are then built and installed including motors and tracks.



6.0 Interior

This station is where the interior of the coach car begins to take shape. Interior wall and ceiling panels, upper cabinets, heaters, and door panels are installed here.



7.0 Windows and Seats

Over 700 feet of wall trim and 37 windows are installed and water tested. Bi-level GO trains have 162 seats which means 25 seat bases, 105 seat shells and all individual cushions and head rests are installed here. Finally, decals and luminescent tape are put up along the wall and flooring.

8.0 Testing

This is the final station before the completed car is delivered to Metrolinx. Air brakes, door operations and over 20 different electrical systems are tested. The entire car, inside and out, goes through a “snagging process” where thorough tests and inspections are completed to ensure it meets Ontario Northland and Metrolinx quality standards.



A Message from Chad Evans

I am excited to share Ontario Northland's second employee newsletter for 2025. In just a few short months, we already have many accomplishments and milestones to celebrate. Construction on the new Timmins-Porcupine Station has commenced and summer rail infrastructure work is now in full swing, including significant investments in our rail tie disposal program, joint elimination work and grade crossings. We are also progressing work on a major bridge rehabilitation program in Kapuskasing, set to be completed later this year. Station time at the Remanufacturing and Repair Centre continues to improve, while still adhering to the same level of excellence we are known for. Our employee roadshow took place in May and supported our first employee pulse survey.

I am proud of what has been achieved so far in 2025. I hope all employees take some time to enjoy the warm summer weather that lies ahead.

-Chad

Customer Contact Centre Upgrades

Bilingual service is now being offered to Ontario Northland passengers 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Manager of Customer Service, Michelle Redgrave says, "We have seven employees and a spare available around the clock. Now, there is always someone available to speak in English or in French, depending on the passenger's preference."

Employees are working remotely because they were hired from around the region. "We thought this was very important because we're known for our 'northern hospitality,'" says Redgrave. "By hiring employees from northern Ontario and within our service territory, they will have a better understanding of what our passengers experience when travelling in the north. This will help if someone calls in with a question, whether it's one o'clock in the afternoon or one o'clock in the morning, passengers will get answers to any of their questions."

Customer service technology has also received an upgrade.

"We're upgrading our software and implementing scripts so that our passengers have a seamless, consistent experience. We're not just expanding our staff, but we're expanding and elevating the experience for passengers," says Redgrave.

Redgrave says this comes down to showing our passengers we are there for them.

"We're providing safe, reliable and accessible service to our passengers. Whether they are visiting a nearby community or visiting Ontario for the first time, these upgrades will help us serve our customers throughout their entire journey."



Maintainers and Operators stand next to the new Mark IV. This equipment will help Maintenance of Way crews line and level the track.



Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) in Action: Laying the Foundation for Change

Recently, EAM Change Leads came together to learn more about what the EAM program is and what it will mean for their teams.

As the EAM Program shifts from design into build, the organization is relying on the strength of its Change Leads to help bring the transformation to life. Change Leads extend beyond supervisors and upper management; they encompass individuals at all levels of Ontario Northland. Change Leads' role is critical—not only in understanding what is changing, but in helping their teams stay informed, engaged, and supported throughout the journey.

To support this role, the program has launched a series of monthly roadshows, designed to provide updates, resources, and a clear picture of what's ahead. These sessions help ensure that the EAM Change Leads across ONTC are equipped to guide their teams and foster readiness at every level.

"I think the monthly sessions will be important going forward," says Leith Beadman-Farquar, Supervisor, Northern Area Mechanical. "It will be a chance for us to ask questions, share pain points and make sure employees are supported throughout the change. After this first session I feel more informed about the program and what is to come."

The first monthly roadshow, a three-day event in early April and early May across Cochrane, Englehart, and North Bay, brought together Change Leads from Rail

Mechanical, Rail Infrastructure, Maintenance of Way, Work Equipment, RRC, Procurement and Stores, Non-Revenue Fleet, and Facilities for meaningful conversations about the transformation, their roles, and preparing their teams for what's ahead.

"The recent meetings were a good opportunity for us to become more informed and to help us better understand the goals of the program," says Rick Macpherson, Manager of Work Equipment Maintenance. "For our crew in Englehart it will mean doing things a bit differently, but it will help us avoid some of the hurdles we encounter during routine maintenance of way operations."

As the EAM Program progresses, Change Leads will remain a central pillar—guiding teams, championing change, and helping ensure the transformation is grounded in the realities of day-to-day work.

If you work in any of the divisions transitioning to the EAM program (listed above), ask your supervisor about who to approach for EAM-related questions. This person will be able to answer any questions you have about the program and relate suggestions back to the project team.

Transformation at ONTC isn't only about systems and processes—it's about people. With strong leadership, the organization is well-positioned to lead that change with purpose and unity.



On the Road Again: The Passion Behind Ontario Northland's Bus Operators

As an agency continuing to grow and evolve, Ontario Northland employs individuals at different stages of their career. Whether you're a long-time employee like Jeff Schoenberger, or a relative newcomer like Cameron Smith, all are integral members of the Ontario Northland team.

Schoenberger's journey to becoming a motorcoach operator began with his previous experience as a school bus driver. "I like driving, and I like being on the road. When I found Ontario Northland I knew it was a place where I could do what I enjoyed," Schoenberger said. His transition from school bus driving to motorcoach operations involved adapting to longer trips and overnight stays, which he says required a period of adjustment. "You've got to work your body into it and eventually you get accustomed to it."

Schoenberger finds fulfillment in his work, particularly in interacting

with passengers and ensuring their comfort and safety. "I went to Winnipeg one time, and I enjoyed talking with some customers who sat at the front. They wanted to talk and share their experiences. It was that trip that really opened my eyes to how we are doing a tremendous service for people by connecting them to places and connecting them to their loved ones. Over time you get to learn a lot about people, where they are going, their life stories, and you just share your experiences with them," Schoenberger shared.

"We get to know people and I really enjoy helping people from all walks of life," he says. "I think our customer service is unmatched. If we have people who have accessibility issues, our drivers know ahead of time, and we do everything we can to make that journey smooth and enjoyable. We get to know our passengers and their routines. We do everything we can to make everyone feel comfortable when

they ride an Ontario Northland bus."

His dedication to maintaining a clean and safe bus environment reflects Ontario Northland's value, Never Stop Caring. "Part of my job is to make sure the bus is safe and sanitary. It's got to be clean so that our passengers know we care. I also check to make sure there are no defects while I'm cleaning it, and if there are, I report those to the maintenance team to correct them," Schoenberger said.

Smith, on the other hand, joined Ontario Northland six months ago, marking his first commercial driving job. Initially planning to be a truck driver, Smith applied for the position at Ontario Northland and was happy to be given the opportunity. "Everyone here was really great in making me feel like I'm part of the team right from day one. They gave me the chance to learn and grow," Smith said.

He says Ontario Northland provided him with extensive training and support, allowing him to develop into his role as a bus driver. “They gave me extra lessons, extra trips, extra time with the trainers, extra time doing training routes, just making sure I was up to snuff to safely do the position,” Smith explained.

Smith enjoys the sense of belonging and the vital role of linking smaller towns across Ontario. “It’s a sense of community, really. I feel like I’m doing something significant here. We’re bridging gaps between towns and municipalities. For a lot of people, this is the only way they can get from one place to another,” Smith shared.

His interactions with passengers, especially during challenging weather conditions, highlights his commitment to providing excellent service. “It’s always nice to get a compliment from someone about my driving during a snowstorm, or for helping them with their luggage.” Smith said.

Both Schoenberger and Smith exemplify the values of Ontario Northland through their dedication to safety, customer service, and community connection. Their stories reflect the company’s commitment to supporting its employees and providing essential transportation services to the people of Ontario.





Scott Naveau, Kourtney Baulne & Samantha McKenzie from Mattagami First Nation.

Ontario Northland and Mattagami First Nation: A Partnership Rooted in True Northern Hospitality

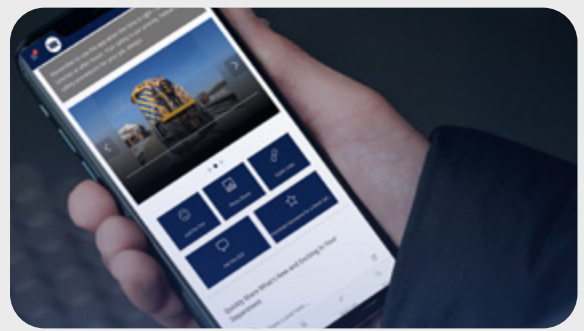
Ontario Northland partners with 50 third party agencies across Ontario and into Winnipeg, to provide a variety of services that fit the unique needs of the communities in our service territory. The Passenger Services team recently developed a new partnership with Mattagami First Nation.

With this new partnership, passengers can visit the band office to purchase tickets, ship parcels and wait for their bus in a comfortable waiting room located in their community.

The Mattagami Region Conservation Authority will no longer have to make a trip to Timmins to ship water samples. Thanks to our partnership and the ability to ship parcels on our bus service, the community can send those samples using our Bus Parcel Express service—a huge time-saver for everyone involved.

Since developing this partnership, Ontario Northland has experienced the local hospitality firsthand. In January of this year, one of our trips experienced a lengthy delay and Mattagami First Nation went above and beyond. They opened their community hall and provided coffee, soup and sandwiches while our passengers and staff waited until the trip could resume again.

We are grateful to Mattagami First Nation for making us feel at home, and we look forward to growing this partnership and serving the community together!



How to Access The Dispatch

The Dispatch is Ontario Northland's employee app which provides you with exclusive access to employee content, news, contests and events!

1. Download the App



To download the Dispatch app, visit your phone's app store (ex. Apple App Store or Google Play Store) and search 'ON Dispatch'.

OR Open the Dispatch Website

If you are using a web browser on your desktop or phone, you can access the Dispatch by visiting <https://dispatch.ontarionorthland.ca>.

2. Sign In

To sign in, click the green 'Sign In' box at the top of the home screen. Then, click the blue 'Sign in with Microsoft account' and enter your Microsoft login (i.e., your work email, in the format of firstname.lastname@ontarionorthland.ca, and password – this is also the same password used to sign into a computer or Terminal Server). After entering your Microsoft credentials, you will be prompted to verify the sign-in using whatever authentication method has been set up for your account.

You are now ready to access the Dispatch App!

If you need assistance with your Microsoft login, please contact the IT Service Desk at Ext. 500 or servicedesk@ontarionorthland.ca



Northlander Questions: Answered

What route will the Northlander travel?

The Northlander will carry passengers 740 kilometres between Toronto and Timmins, with a rail connection to Cochrane. The route includes 16 stops in communities along the way.

What can I expect onboard the train?

Passengers can expect comfortable seating, Wi-Fi, charging outlets, overhead storage space and food service at their seat. The train also features wider aisles, large adjustable tray tables, overhead reading lights as well as standard and accessible washrooms.

How much will tickets cost?

Ticket prices will be determined closer to the launch of the service. Affordability is important to passengers and Ontario Northland is committed to meeting those expectations.

When does Northlander service begin?

Ontario Northland will receive train equipment for this service in 2026. Once we receive the trainsets, we will conduct thorough testing of the equipment, prior to launch.



Northlander Service Map

- Core Northeastern Rail Corridor
- - - Rail Connection Timmins-Cochrane
- - - Express Bus Matheson-Cochrane
- Polar Bear Express (Existing)
- Confirmed Stations

Earth Day Cleanup

At Ontario Northland we want to do our part to take care of our planet. In honour of Earth Day, employees volunteered their time to help keep our community and workplaces litter-free.





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Hearst Mechanical Building Updates

The new mechanical building in Hearst has replaced five smaller buildings, enhanced efficiencies and simplified work processes for our technicians and maintenance of way crews in this area. This \$2-million project includes a modern employee break room as well as washrooms and change rooms.



Work Safe Recognition and Awards Program Winners



Andrew Sime and Michelle Etmanski

Andrew and Michelle were named as recipients of the Safety Star Award for their teamwork in making the Rail Mechanical Division a safer place. They took the initiative to find a new safer product that could be used in their cleaning duties. Their collaboration successfully removed three hazardous products, replacing them with one product that was less hazardous. Andrew and Michelle reviewed and compared the safety data sheets and then participated in the job safety analysis of the new degreaser.



Kevin Lagrange

Kevin received a Safety Star Award for promoting safety within the Passenger Services Division. Lagrange proposed an initiative to assist Motor Coach Operators in lowering the risk of injury when handling heavy luggage. He designed a visual tag to inform operators when it is safe to lift the luggage. This measure has contributed to reducing injuries and improving morale among Motor Coach Operators, and it has been adopted by other stations to enhance safety across the division.

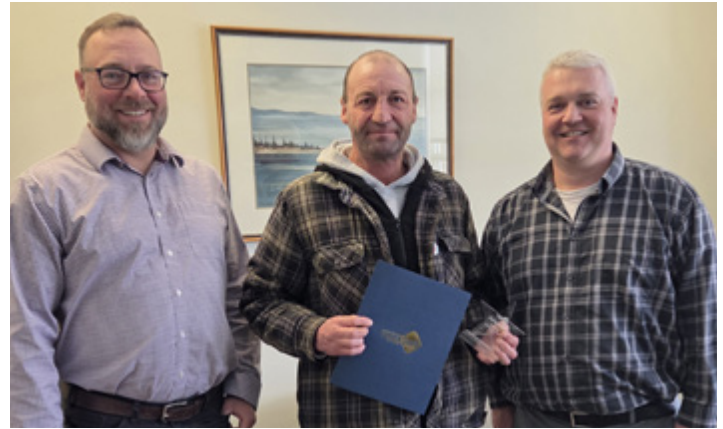
Wyatt Cross

While on duty, Wyatt witnessed a contractor performing an unsafe act, resulting in the uncontrolled movement of two rail cars heading toward Worthington Street in North Bay. Recognizing the immediate danger, Wyatt quickly attempted to slow the rail cars and immediately made a radio call to alert others that they could not be stopped. His swift actions allowed the supervisor to take protective measures at the crossing and ensure the rail cars were safely stopped.



Bradley Boros

In January of 2024, Bradley Boros demonstrated extraordinary bravery and quick thinking when he encountered an accident involving a school bus. Upon seeing the incident, Bradley immediately pulled over to check on the children and ensured their safety. Without hesitation, he then proceeded to stop traffic on Highway 11 to prevent the situation from worsening. His swift actions were instrumental in controlling the scene and safeguarding children from further harm.



Kipley Moore

During the Track Requirements and Movement Over a Rail Break training held from January 15 to 17, 2024, in North Bay, Kipley Moore provided invaluable assistance to a new trainee, ensuring that they understood the critical aspects of maintaining track structures to standard. This training is essential for identifying and protecting against conditions that do not meet safety standards. Kipley's proactive involvement not only helped the new employee but also supported the facilitator, allowing for more effective training sessions. His dedication to sharing knowledge and assisting others has consistently demonstrated his commitment to safety and excellence.

Safety Shout Out

Kudos to the passenger services team for significantly improving the number of days lost at work due to injury year over year. In the last fiscal year there were only eight days lost which is nearly 98% less than reported in 2022, thanks to the successful modified work solutions implemented by staff.



Online Nomination Form

If you know someone who has gone above and beyond for safety, nominate them for a Work Safe Award on the Junction.



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Ontario Northland



Northern Ontario Municipalities Association conference in Thunder Bay

The 2025 NOMA Conference and AGM took place in Thunder Bay. The theme this year was “Innovation” and our Events Team got to showcase how Ontario Northland continues to adapt and evolve to the needs of the communities we serve. Pictured above are Micheline Rochefort and Michelle Ferrigan.

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