

## **Council of Atlantic Premiers' meeting communiqué**

### **Atlantic Premiers are Focused on Improving Competitiveness**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ST. JOHN'S, NL (January 19, 2015)** – Atlantic Premiers are working together to improve the competitiveness of the region's economy through actions to strengthen our workforce, harmonize and streamline regulations, ensure open transmission and transportation of energy, and provide more efficient and cost-effective services to Atlantic Canadians.

Premier Paul Davis of Newfoundland and Labrador welcomed his colleagues, Premier Brian Gallant of New Brunswick, Premier Stephen McNeil of Nova Scotia, and Premier Robert Ghiz of Prince Edward Island to the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of Atlantic Premiers.

#### **Competitiveness of the Atlantic Region**

The private sector is a key driver of job creation and economic growth across the region. Premiers announced today the Atlantic Red Tape Reduction Partnership. This partnership will identify business regulations and administrative processes that can be harmonized and streamlined to create a more competitive economic environment across Atlantic Canada.

A competitive Atlantic economy depends on people having the right skills for the right job. Premiers extended the successful Atlantic Workforce Partnership for a further three years to continue harmonizing apprenticeship certification in 10 trades, and strengthen immigrant recruitment and retention in Atlantic Canada. This focus on demographic growth and skills enhancement builds on Atlantic Premiers' commitment to increase the competitiveness of the region.

#### **Atlantic Cooperation**

Atlantic Premiers confirmed common priorities, including stable, adequate and predictable fiscal arrangements, Labour Market Development Agreements, immigration and energy.

They reiterated the importance of Labour Market Development Agreements, which support the labour market needs of the region, and agreed that no province should be adversely affected as a result of any changes to the agreements.

Premiers agreed to enhanced collaboration on Atlantic immigration including in the following strategic areas: sharing best practices, enhancing joint recruitment and retention, marketing, and sharing research. The federal government can support these efforts by increasing the allocation levels for immigration for the Atlantic provinces.

Premiers agreed that a renewed focus on cooperation in the energy sector would help contribute to a more competitive economy. The Atlantic provinces' energy resources are abundant and their responsible development will ensure continued growth and prosperity for Atlantic Canadians.

Premiers affirmed their continued support for development of energy infrastructure such as the Energy East Pipeline Project, the Northumberland Strait Cable Project and the Muskrat Falls and associated transmission links.

Atlantic Premiers remain committed to the vision and principles of a Canadian Energy Strategy, which were agreed to by Canada's Premiers in 2014.

Atlantic Premiers look forward to discussions with their colleagues at the upcoming meeting of Canada's Premiers in Ottawa.

**Building on CAP's Successes**

Premiers today signed a new 10-year agreement on the Atlantic Veterinary College, securing the continued operation of this world-renowned institution into the next decade. The only veterinary school in Atlantic Canada, the Atlantic Veterinary College is committed to excellence in innovation, teaching, research and service to the Atlantic region.

Premiers commended the lobster industry on the common lobster promotion initiative. Atlantic Canada's lobster industry is internationally renowned for producing and delivering a high-quality product to consumers across the globe. Provinces will continue with stakeholder consultation on this initiative.

- 30 -

For further information, please contact:

Heather MacLean, Office of the Premier, Newfoundland and Labrador (709) 729-3581

Shawn Berry, Office of the Premier, New Brunswick (506) 453-2144

Geoff Townsend, Office of the Premier, Nova Scotia (902) 424-6600

Krista Grant, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs, Prince Edward Island (902) 394-4616