

COMMUNIQUÉ

October 20, 2000

Shipbuilding and marine fabrication forum a success

Atlantic Premiers are pleased with the participation and outcomes of the shipbuilding and marine fabrication forum, "*Charting a Course: Towards a Canadian Marine Industrial Policy*" held in St. John's today.

The high attendance at this Forum demonstrates the commitment to this industry from all stakeholders including representatives from shipyards, organized labour, ship owners, offshore fabricators, and various industry associations as well as governments. Approximately 250 participants provided substantive insight into the future of the marine industrial sector in this country.

Premier Beaton Tulk of Newfoundland and Labrador said, "It has been reported that this industry is a dying industry. The Forum today demonstrates this is not the case. All stakeholders have strongly reinforced the value of this industry in Canada."

"Our government has always supported co-operation between the four Atlantic provinces on issues of mutual importance," said Premier Pat Binns of Prince Edward Island. "By working together, perhaps we can achieve our objective of a federal policy that supports this very important industry."

Premier Bernard Lord of New Brunswick stated, "The federal government has an obligation to re-establish certainty in the future of this sector by working with the stakeholders on a new national shipbuilding policy."

"This Forum has sent a clear message, shaped by wide stakeholder input, about the need to develop a comprehensive national policy to take advantage of the many opportunities before us in shipbuilding and marine fabrication," said Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm. "But we can't do it in isolation of support from Ottawa. What the federal government needs to do is ensure that Canadian shipyards can compete with our heavily subsidized competitors."

The role of the federal government in securing a strong and viable future for this industry is pivotal. The results from this Forum will be immediately transmitted to the federal government for consideration in the development of a marine industrial strategy.

Atlantic Premiers look forward to discussing the outcomes of this Forum with the federal government.

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