



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMUNIQUÉ

***COUNCIL OF ATLANTIC PREMIERS ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF
ATLANTIC INSURANCE HARMONIZATION TASK FORCE***

Atlantic Premiers today fulfilled their commitment made at their June 18th meeting in Charlottetown, PEI, to lower automobile insurance rates by announcing the appointment of the Atlantic Insurance Harmonization Task Force. The Task Force will be chaired by Fred Morash of Truro, Nova Scotia. Mr. Morash is a former president and CEO of Island Tel and a former chair of the Atlantic Procurement Coordinating Committee. Atlantic Premiers also appointed the following members.

- New Brunswick Yassin Choukri – Director of Insurance Reform Initiatives, New Brunswick Department of Justice.
- Nova Scotia Paul Lafleche – Coordinator, Corporate Projects, Treasury and Policy Board, Province of Nova Scotia, and past Vice-President, Academic, Nova Scotia Community College.
- Newfoundland & Labrador
Barbara Wakeham – Deputy Minister, Department of Government Services and Lands, Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Prince Edward Island
Bennett Campbell – former Premier and former Superintendent of Insurance for the Province of Prince Edward Island.

The Atlantic Premiers have mandated the Task Force to:

1. Identify a common, harmonized legislative and regulatory framework for private automobile insurance in Atlantic Canada designed to:
 - create a more efficient market;
 - ensure more affordable and fair options for Atlantic Canadian consumers;
 - promote common underwriting practices to ensure fairness and avoid discrimination for consumers;

2. Conduct and complete a comprehensive study of the full cost-benefit and legal implications of establishing an Atlantic Canada public automobile insurance system; and
3. Complete the drafting of an Atlantic Canada "Model Act" covering other lines of insurance.

The Task Force will commence its activities immediately and will report to the Council of Atlantic Premiers by September 30, 2003.

"Consumer protection is a key priority of the work emanating from the Task Force," Premier Pat Binns announced. "By joining forces, we can ensure access to more affordable and fair automobile insurance options for consumers."

Premier Bernard Lord of New Brunswick is confident that the Atlantic Insurance Harmonization Task Force will come up with solutions benefiting all Atlantic Canadians. "Our goal is to adopt common regulatory and harmonized rules resulting in a more efficient market within the Atlantic region and lead to lower auto insurance costs."

The work of the Task Force will complement the recent initiatives undertaken by the provinces. Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm stated "harmonization of insurance regulations will reduce duplication and therefore cost. We feel that these cost saving measures will be passed on to consumers in the form of lower premiums."

Premier Roger Grimes of Newfoundland and Labrador is optimistic that the Task Force will identify concrete steps that can form the basis of legislation to be introduced in respective provincial legislatures. "These Atlantic Canadians have tremendous experience in regulatory reform environments that will guide our decisions in this very important issue."

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