

Atlantic provinces work to reduce regulations for business

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MONCTON – Ministers and officials from the four Atlantic provinces and representatives from the private sector have met in Moncton, New Brunswick, to discuss ways to reform rules and regulations for small- and medium-sized business.

The roundtable discussion is an initiative of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, designed to identify how provincial regulations can be streamlined to reduce the burden on business.

Today's event brings together senior government officials responsible for regulatory reform, and private sector stakeholders from Atlantic Canada who will represent the interests of their respective industries.

“New Brunswick is proud to host this important roundtable discussion that allows our four governments to receive direct feedback about how regulations affect business,” said Business New Brunswick Minister and Minister responsible for red tape reduction Greg Byrne. “While government regulation is necessary to protect the health and safety of Atlantic Canadians, we must continually look at ways to reduce red tape for our thousands of small- and medium-sized businesses. Our government's goal of self-sufficiency depends on their success, and this roundtable is another way we are responding to their needs.”

“Working with representatives of small- and medium-sized enterprises in sessions like these is the key to improving the competitiveness of business and protecting our communities in Nova Scotia and throughout our region,” said Angus MacIssac, chair of the Treasury and Policy Board, and minister responsible for the Better Regulation Initiative. “The province of Nova Scotia has been working with business and the public to get regulation right through the Better Regulation Initiative. One of our goals is to reduce the paperwork burden for businesses in Nova Scotia over the next three years by 20 percent, making the province an easier place to do business.”

“The objective is to work with industry to evaluate governments' regulatory process,” said Prince Edward Island MLA Wayne Collins. “However, in order to streamline regulations for small and medium sized businesses, we need to have an open line of communication between government and industry. Today's consultation session is a positive learning experience for all governments in Atlantic Canada.”

"I am very pleased to have the opportunity to discuss ways to improve rules and regulations in Atlantic Canada, and to hear directly from industry representatives," said the Honourable Kevin O'Brien, Newfoundland and Labrador Minister of Business. "In Newfoundland and Labrador, we have initiated a three-year red tape reduction program with the goal of reducing the number of regulatory requirements by 25 per cent. The latest figures released show that we are just over one quarter of the way to achieving this goal. Another result of our work in regulatory reform is a positive impact on the way our government provides services to clients, which is very encouraging as we continue our work on this initiative."

"The Atlantic ministers are to be congratulated for conducting this consultation with business leaders from Atlantic Canada," said Elizabeth Beale of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC), "The session allowed Atlantic governments to hear in detail how current rules and regulations impact businesses at the operational level. The knowledge gained by participating in this event will be a valuable addition to further work that APEC and the Atlantic provinces are pursuing in relation to competitiveness".

The information that was provided by stakeholders will allow Atlantic ministers responsible for regulatory reform to assess where opportunities may exist to collaborate on improvements to regulations governing SMEs within each province or across Atlantic Canada.

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