

MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL RELATIONS  
AND RECONCILIATION  
BRIEFING NOTE

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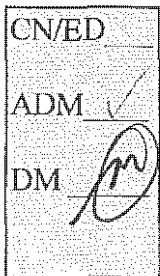
Date: April 15, 2014  
Ref. No. 33827

I Prepared for the **INFORMATION** of Honourable John Rustad, Minister.

II ISSUE:

Aboriginal Affairs Working Group Meeting.

III BACKGROUND:



The Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) was established by Premiers and National Aboriginal Organization (NAO) leaders during their meeting in the summer of 2009. The AAWG Meeting is a good opportunity for Ministers and deputy ministers to engage with colleagues in other jurisdictions, and with the NAO leaders and their staff.

The May 12-13, 2014 AAWG meeting being held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, will be the seventh since it was established. The Manitoba Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable Eric Robinson, is the current chair.

The AAWG meets annually each spring to review and endorse its Progress Report and recommendations from its five sub-committees which include: education, economic development, housing, emergency management; and ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls (EVAAWG); the latter being co-chaired by British Columbia (BC).

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IV DISCUSSION:

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Speaking Notes or Summary Bullets on the five AAWG topics are provided for the Minister's use. Summary Bullets provide key points that the minister could draw upon to illustrate BC's context or interest during informal discussions at the private dinner and lunch.

One of the objectives of the AAWG is to encourage the engagement of the federal government in the AAWG process and issues.

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An invitation for this May has been sent, but the federal minister has not confirmed whether he will attend.

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## V CONCLUSION:

Preparation of the Minister and deputy minister's briefing binders are under way.

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### Attachments: (7)

- (1) Introductory Remarks MJR BINDER 2014
- (2) Bullets Housing MJR BINDER 2014
- (3) Bullets Disaster Management MJR BINDER 2014
- (4) Bullets Education MJR BINDER 2014
- (5) Speaking Notes Economic Development MJR BINDER 2014
- (6) Speaking Notes EVAAAWG MJR BINDER 2014
- (7) Child Welfare Backgrounder: Hughes Manitoba Inquiry BINDER 2014

Barb Miles, A/ Director, Governance, Strategic Policy Branch (250-356-1189)

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**Introductory Remarks – Minister Rustad  
Aboriginal Affairs Working Group – May 2014**

- I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself, I'm John Rustad, BC's Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.
- I'm very pleased to join my colleagues here today: Premiers and Ministers from other provinces and territories and Leaders of the National Aboriginal Organizations.
- I also want to express my thanks for our warm and gracious welcome to the territory of Treaty 1 First Nation and to the Elder for the opening prayer.
- We are here today because we share a vision. We envision a future where we have positive, lasting relationships with Aboriginal peoples, whose communities are healthy, prosperous, sustainable and self-determining.
- The way to reconciliation is through open communication at tables such as this, building solid relationships that are the foundation of these efforts.
- My ministry works closely with First Nations on community-identified priorities to build capacity based on the communities' assets and strengths.
- My ministry also champions community development principles within the Government of BC to increase our effectiveness in working with Aboriginal people.

## **Housing – Bullets for Minister**

### **Aboriginal Affairs Working Group, May 2014**

- Housing is central to all our lives. It creates stability for families, is central to our economy and key to attracting and retaining people in the workforce. Housing is the platform, the case upon which we build healthy, sustainable communities.
- In BC, we recently updated the provincial housing strategy, *Housing Matters BC*. Addressing Aboriginal housing need through a strong Aboriginal housing sector is a key component of the provincial housing strategy. We invest in a wide range of Aboriginal housing options and supports to improve access to safe, affordable housing for Aboriginal people living off-reserve.
- To support Aboriginal self-management and to build capacity within Aboriginal organizations, the Province has completed the transfer of the administration of all Aboriginal social housing from BC Housing to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association including:
  - more than 4,200 Aboriginal social housing units;
  - emergency shelters;
  - transition houses; and
  - the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program.
- Approximately 200 off-reserve units have been built to provide safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal youth, women, elders and those struggling with addictions.
- Last year, provincially funded shelter and outreach workers helped more than 1,750 Aboriginal people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness to find stable housing.

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## **Disaster Mitigation On-Reserve – Bullets for Minister**

### **Aboriginal Affairs Working Group, May 2014**

- Disaster mitigation is a concern for everyone, but especially so for those living on-reserve in remote locations where response times are longer and access is more challenging.
- Emergency Management BC is the provincial lead for emergency management (EM) in the province and, through a long standing Letter of Understanding, provides support to FN reserve communities with emergency response and recovery activities when requested by either Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada or the local band council.
- Unlike other provinces, the Health Canada responsibility for health-related activities in First Nation (FN) reserve communities in BC has been transferred to the new First Nations Health Authority along with other First Nations and Inuit Health Branch responsibilities, programs and services.
- My ministry continues to facilitate dialogue on EM issues among First Nations leaders and government agencies.
- When we work together, as in the BC response to the H1N1 virus threat, the result was less anxiety and stress in FN communities, and low morbidity and mortality for BC's Aboriginal population.

**Education – Bullets for Minister  
Aboriginal Affairs Working Group, May 2014**

- Aboriginal education and skills training are very important investments in BC. In particular, Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing segment of the provincial labour force and by working together with Aboriginal and education sector partners we can ensure they will be part of the solution to the looming skill shortage created by Liquefied Natural Gas and other major developments.
- Partnerships and collaboration are the best way to achieve common objectives and to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.
- In BC, we are working with our education partners and stakeholders to support better outcomes for all Aboriginal students. We support Aboriginal student achievement and continue to see improvements, especially in the Aboriginal student completion rate.
- We are taking steps to integrate culturally relevant Aboriginal content, traditional knowledge, histories and Aboriginal languages, and perspectives throughout the K-12 curriculum, including math.
- BC continues to support the efforts of First Nations to gain control of the education of their children. We are pleased that work toward a federal First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act will not undo the good work we have achieved through the Tripartite Education Agreement in BC.
- We continue to work closely with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association to achieve their aspirations of excellence in First Nations schools.

**Speaking Notes: Economic Development/Skills Training - Minister Rustad  
Aboriginal Affairs Working Group, May 12-13, 2014**

- I would like to take a few minutes to make you aware of what BC is doing in the area of Aboriginal economic development and skills training.
- Today's Aboriginal youth will make up a key part of tomorrow's workforce and play a vital role in B.C.'s future economic development.
- The Province is committed to working with First Nations, the federal government and industry to develop an effective aboriginal skills training strategy, to allow Aboriginal people to take advantage of the generational opportunities that are currently before them.
- The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation will guide the development of an approach to Aboriginal skills training.
- This will include a focus on the LNG and mining sectors and gathering input from First Nations on barriers and best practices to help in the development and delivery of skills training programs for Aboriginal people.
- We're building on our success: First Nations participation in skills training has doubled between 2006 and 2011.

## KEY BC INITIATIVES

### Resource Revenue Sharing

- BC and First Nations have set up agreements to share revenues from
  - forestry,
  - mining,
  - resort development,
  - clean energy and
  - oil and gas projects

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- Through these agreements we demonstrate government's commitment to improving opportunities and resources for First Nations to participate in resource activity in their traditional territory.
- BC's innovative approach to non-treaty agreements supports economic growth and job creation - not only for the First Nations involved, but for neighbouring communities. Strengthening government's relationships with First Nations creates benefits for all British Columbians.

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### Aboriginal Business and Investment Council

- Another component of the Jobs Plan is the Aboriginal Business and Investment Council which works to help Aboriginal businesses flourish by developing relationships between Aboriginal communities, industry and government to implement practical measures for economic development.

### Business Council of British Columbia (BCBC)

- Since 2011, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and the Business Council of British Columbia (BCBC) are working together to enhance dialogue between industry leaders and provincial decision-makers on key areas of interest.

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### CONCLUSION

- BC is committed to working collaboratively with First Nations and Aboriginal people to achieve long-term social, economic, and cultural benefits for their communities.
- By working together we have learned that there are many pathways that lead towards reconciliation and greater prosperity.

## **Speaking Notes Ending Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls - Minister Rustad**

### **Aboriginal Affairs Working Group - May 12-13, 2014**

- I'd like to express my appreciation and support for the hard work and dedication of the Ending Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls Working Group

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- Violence against Aboriginal women and girls is a very complex issue requiring the cooperation and partnership of a wide range of organizations and stakeholders.
- Aboriginal women in BC have experienced violence in tragic numbers and too many have gone missing or been murdered.
- We are strongly committed to working with Aboriginal leaders, particularly women leaders, to identify ways of being more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal women in BC, so that they do not find themselves in vulnerable situations that lead to tragic outcomes.
- I join with my P/T colleagues in supporting the NAO Leaders call on the federal government to launch a national public inquiry into the case of missing or murdered Aboriginal women.
- I'd like to take a moment to talk about some of the key initiatives BC has undertaken recently to address the issue of violence against women and girls.

## Attachment 6

### KEY INITIATIVES

#### Missing Women Commission of Inquiry

- The Missing Women Commission of Inquiry Final Report was released in December, 2012 and its findings are being addressed as a top priority to improve our justice system and better protect vulnerable women.
- The completion of this report by the Commission was a significant milestone towards improving the safety and security of vulnerable women.

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- BC's Ministry of Justice is also currently involved in work with other provinces, territories and the federal government to develop a justice framework to improve how the justice system responds to the issue of violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

#### Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women

- I'd like to acknowledge and express my appreciation for the contributions the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW) are making in British Columbia.
- The MACAW provides advice to me and to government generally on how to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women across BC.

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- The MACAW believes that real and meaningful solutions to ending violence are found within communities - in women, youth, Elders, leaders, men and boys – and in cultural teachings. The Province is pleased to support this approach.

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### Provincial Office of Domestic Violence

- We have also created the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence which has led the development of a three-year domestic violence plan for B.C. that includes an Aboriginal-specific strategy. Aboriginal leaders, communities and organizations have been consulted on what they want to see in the plan.
- The new three-year, \$5.5-million Provincial Domestic Violence Plan delivers on government's commitment to make B.C. a safer place for women, children and anyone who has been affected by domestic violence.

### CONCLUSION

- While I know we will all continue to work within our own jurisdictions to identify better ways of working to address this issue, I believe that working together to coordinate, collaborate, develop partnerships, and share information will enhance our efforts to address this serious and tragic issue.

## Child Welfare Backgrounder: Hughes Manitoba Inquiry

- The Honourable Ted Hughes was appointed as commissioner to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the death of Phoenix Sinclair and, in particular, to inquire into:
  - the child welfare services provided or not provided to Phoenix Sinclair and her family under *The Child and Family Services Act*;
  - any other circumstances, apart from the delivery of child welfare services, directly related to the death of Phoenix Sinclair; and
  - why the death of Phoenix Sinclair remained undiscovered for several months.
- The three volume report *Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair - Achieving the Best for All Our Children* was released on January 31, 2014, with 62 recommendations to better protect Manitoba children.
- At the next Council of the Federation meeting the Premier of Manitoba will speak to the unacceptably disproportionate number of Aboriginal children taken into care.

### Recommendations Highlights include:

- Adhere to a set of principles that includes early intervention, assessment and the goal of keeping as many children safe at home as possible.
- Improve continuity of service, improve service delivery through management caseloads, and enhance availability of early intervention services.
- Ensure completeness and accuracy of record keeping system, including interface with all key agencies
- Establish a Representative for Children and Youth with new RCY Act to contain provisions similar to those in BC's RCY Act.
- Encourage Aboriginal people to enter social work.
- Provide training on multigenerational impacts of residential schools.
- Extend services to any child who at the age of majority was receiving services under the Act, up to age 25.
- Provide supports to families transitioning from First Nations communities to urban centres.

MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL RELATIONS  
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File: 280-20

Date: March 28, 2014  
Ref. No. 34089

I Prepared for the **INFORMATION** of Honourable John Rustad, Minister

II ISSUE:

British Columbia/Alberta Deputy Ministers Working Group

III BACKGROUND:

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ADM	_____
DM	_____

On July 26, 2013, British Columbia Premier Christy Clark and Alberta Premier Alison Redford announced the appointment of a British Columbia/Alberta Deputy Ministers Working Group (Working Group) led by senior energy officials from the British Columbia Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Alberta Ministry of Energy. The Working Group's mandate is to develop recommendations related to energy exports and open new export markets for British Columbia and Alberta.

IV DISCUSSION:

The British Columbia/Alberta Deputy Ministers Working Group has focused on five unique facets of the partnership: Responsible Development and Public Engagement, Marina and Terrestrial Spillage, Transportation, Fiscal and Economic Benefits, and First Nations. MARR staff have participated in the First Nations Working Team with their Alberta counterparts. The First Nations Working Team agreed to focus on the exchange of materials in order to recommend direction or policy on the following key areas:

- Review of provincial responsibilities in First Nations consultations, in the framework of distinctly different treaty contexts
- Direction on industry engagement
- Review of existing types of agreements with First Nations
- Harmonizing consultation practices between British Columbia and Alberta

The First Nations Working Team made four recommendations to the Working Group. Those recommendations include:

1. Development of "First Nations Engagement Principles for Energy Development and Exports" document which identifies the Provinces' expectations of proponents ranging from employment, training, education and service opportunities, to financial support, information sharing and protocols and equity based on the "Fourth Condition" for heavy oil transmission.
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3. Consolidation of the British Columbia/Alberta Guidelines for Proponents document. Currently, both provinces have individual guidelines for proponents; the intent would be to provide an overview document.
4. Further identification of future request/recommendations to Canada. These will be subject to internal review by British Columbia and Alberta.

The First Nations Working Team has collaboratively worked to address all four recommendations. For the purposes of the principles document, both provinces agreed these engagement principles are to guide further engagements and opportunities respecting cross boundary initiatives and consultation obligations, including the involvement of proponents in engagement with First Nations. Three key principles were agreed upon to guide how the provinces interact with First Nations on resource development projects:

- Legal Requirements to consult and accommodate First Nations for impacts on Aboriginal interests must be addressed;
- Proponents should make best efforts to avoid or mitigate the impacts of a project on Aboriginal interests; and
- First Nations should have the opportunity to benefit from major developments on Crown land; specifically, proponents should make best efforts to conclude agreements that provide training, employment and other economic benefits to First Nations.

## V CONCLUSION:

The Provinces expect proponents to build strong, enduring relationships with First Nations potentially affected by energy projects. Through these relationships, there should be discussion of possible impacts on aboriginal interests and implementation of measures that would mitigate those impacts.

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Pages 16 through 24 redacted for the following reasons:

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