

New West Partnership

TRADE AGREEMENT



The Agreement

- On April 30, 2010, the Governments of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan signed an unprecedented economic agreement, the *New West Partnership*, which includes a comprehensive agreement on trade, investment and labour mobility called the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA).
- Built on the groundbreaking success of the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) between Alberta and British Columbia, the NWPTA extends Alberta and British Columbia's commitments to include a new partner, Saskatchewan. The trade obligations under the NWPTA remain the same as those made under the TILMA, but they will now apply across the three western provinces.
- The NWPTA will come into effect on July 1, 2010 and will create Canada's largest interprovincial free trade zone with a market of almost 9 million people and a combined GDP of more than \$555 billion – a market that rivals Ontario in size and is easily the most dynamic economic region in Canada. The goal of the NWPTA is to strengthen the economies of the three provinces by creating a more open and competitive marketplace.

Key Elements of the NWPTA

Procurement

Public procurements will be conducted in an open, fair and transparent manner, ensuring equal opportunity for suppliers in all three provinces to an expanded field of selling opportunities.

Labour Mobility

Certified workers will automatically have their credentials recognized in all three provinces and be able to begin work immediately without being subject to additional training or examination.

Transparency

Provinces will notify each other to ensure that new measures, including standards and regulations, are not unnecessarily different and that they do not result in impediments to trade, investment or labour mobility.

Legitimate Objectives

Each province will continue to protect important public interest objectives, such as public security and safety, the protection of human, animal or plant life or health, the protection of the environment and the health and safety of workers.

Streamlining Regulations

Unnecessary differences in provincial regulations and standards related to all facets of trade, investment and labour mobility will be eliminated.

Non-discrimination

Workers and businesses will be treated equally, regardless of their province of residency.

Dispute Resolution

The NWPTA provides for penalties up to \$5 million if a government is found to be non-compliant with its obligations and fails to bring itself into compliance. This demonstrates the seriousness with which the three governments treat their commitments.

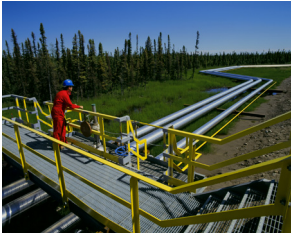
The Benefits of the NWPTA

- Access by Alberta suppliers to the procurements of British Columbia and, for the first time, Saskatchewan Crown corporations.
- Enhancement of labour mobility in Alberta through mutual recognition of the certifications of workers in over 120 occupations in all three provinces.
- A broader pool of qualified workers for Alberta businesses.
- Reduction in the red-tape businesses face through unnecessary differences in regulations between the three provinces.
- Seamless registration of Alberta businesses in all three provinces.

What the NWPTA Means

- The NWPTA covers all public sector entities, including government ministries and their agencies, boards and commissions, Crown corporations, municipalities, school boards and publicly-funded academic, health and social service organizations.
- The obligations of the NWPTA replicate Alberta and British Columbia’s existing commitments under the TILMA. For example, the dollar levels at which the NWPTA applies to public procurement are the same as under the TILMA, as outlined below.

<i>Public Entities</i>	<i>Goods</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>Construction</i>
Departments, ministries, agencies, boards, councils, committees, commissions and similar agencies of a Party.	\$10,000	\$75,000	\$100,000
Crown corporations, government owned commercial enterprises and other entities that are owned or controlled by a Party through ownership interest. (Does not apply to Saskatchewan until July 1, 2012).	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Regional, local, district or other forms of municipal government, school boards, publicly-funded academic, health and social services entities, as well as any corporation or entity owned or controlled by one or more of the preceding entities. (Does not apply to Saskatchewan until July 1, 2012).	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$200,000



Implementation Schedule

// New West Partnership Trade Agreement comes into effect

July 1, 2010

- All NWPTA obligations will apply to Alberta and British Columbia since these replicate the existing commitments of the two provinces under the TILMA.
- The NWPTA obligations will also apply to all Saskatchewan government entities and measures; however, the application of the NWPTA is delayed in certain cases to allow Saskatchewan the necessary time to transition its measures into full compliance.

// Transitional Period

- Saskatchewan ministries will post all tender notices on a common electronic system.
- Saskatchewan will complete the reconciliation of any differences in commercial vehicle registration rules.
- The NWPTA procurement provisions, including non-discrimination and requirements to post tenders on a common electronic system, will apply to Saskatchewan Crown corporations, municipalities, school divisions or publicly-funded academic and health and social service entities.

July 1, 2011

- Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan will have mutually recognized or otherwise reconciled any differences in regulations and standards that restrict or impair trade, investment or labour mobility as well as their measures relating to business registration and reporting requirements.

July 1, 2012

- Saskatchewan measures relating to financial services and financial occupations will be subject to the NWPTA.

July 1, 2013

