



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Executive Council

NEW WEST PARTNERSHIP COMMITS TO REDUCE EXCEPTIONS

Today, Premiers Brad Wall, Dave Hancock and Christy Clark agreed to review the list of exceptions to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA) to make trade in the New West even more open.

Currently, the NWPTA provides the most open trading environment in Canada. Premiers are asking Ministers responsible to implement further improvements.

Specifically, Ministers are to:

- implement a bid protest mechanism by November 2014; and
- review exceptions to determine if there are other possible improvements to liberalize trade, particularly in the area of occupational health and safety by March 31, 2015.

"While exceptions can be important in areas like occupational health and safety, it makes sense to review these from time to time to eliminate those that create unnecessary barriers to trade," said Premier Christy Clark. "For example, if we can all adopt the highest standard among our jurisdictions for things like first aid kits that will make trade across the region easier."

The New West Partnership has undertaken significant work to make it easier for businesses to operate across the region by harmonizing trucking rules and regulations, creating a single window for business registration, and ensuring consistent rules across the three provinces.

"In today's businesses environment companies and workers often cross provincial borders," Premier Brad Wall said. "We all have a strong interest in ensuring worker health and safety and it makes sense to have a common set of rules for businesses and workers to uphold these safety objectives."

"The New West Partnership is the model for eliminating unnecessary barriers to trade," said Premier Dave Hancock. "We continue to break down barriers to the benefit of citizens in each of our provinces."

Premiers noted the federal government's interest in internal trade and expressed hope that the federal government will come to the table with as much ambition regarding federal barriers as Premiers have in the New West.

"Wow, that was fast," said Dan Kelly President of CFIB. "It's terrific to see the three western provinces showing leadership on this issue and resolving small but important examples of challenges to interprovincial trade."

-30-

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