



Canadian
Chamber of
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Le porte-parole des entreprises canadiennes^{MD}

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John Giraldez
Director, Business Development
Indigenous Services Canada
10 Wellington Street, fl. 11
Gatineau, QC K1A 0H4

Dear Mr. Giraldez:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the federal government's modernization of Indigenous participation in its procurement. Our members have a few suggestions for your consideration in moving forward with this important initiative that promises to provide more economic development opportunities to Canada's youngest, fastest growing population which will contribute to our overall economic competitiveness.

The Canadian Chamber and its members support governments at all levels using their procurement heft more throughout their supply chains to contract more Indigenous-owned and controlled companies as well as non-Indigenous companies with Indigenous content (employees, investors, product, services, etc.) as suppliers. The long-term benefits of doing so are powerful and include training in transferable skills, increasing Indigenous employment and entrepreneurship, as well as creating more opportunities for partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses.

Our members wished to draw your attention to the following for your consideration as you move forward:

1. It is definitely a positive move to seek to engage more Indigenous-owned and controlled businesses as suppliers. However, the federal government needs to expand its thinking for Indigenous procurement beyond this if it's going to maximize the opportunities for Indigenous peoples to participate in the federal government's supply chain. To accomplish this, the federal government needs to complement attracting more Indigenous-owned and controlled suppliers with an RFP evaluation process that acknowledges (through points, etc.) prospective suppliers that have Indigenous content (suppliers, products, employees, investors) in their businesses.

This approach would be particularly relevant to Indigenous businesses that partner with larger suppliers to serve large national RFPs to meet the economic development provisions of Comprehensive Land Claims Agreement (CLCA) holders but cannot compete against larger companies for federal contracts. The result is often that the main supplier will ignore these provisions and suffer no consequences. The federal government's RFP process must include incentives for larger suppliers to have regional Indigenous partners.

Doing so would also reduce the number of situations, for example the Giant Mine clean up in the Northwest Territories, where very large contracts are awarded to large multinational companies with no requirement for Indigenous participation or consultation even when the projects are taking place on Indigenous lands and affect Indigenous peoples.



2. Our members also feel that any targets for increasing Indigenous participation in federal procurement should be a “floor” objective not a ceiling. Making any target a ceiling all but ensures it would never go higher.
3. Set asides for Indigenous suppliers must be well communicated inside the federal government as well as to the business community (Indigenous and non-Indigenous). Set aside levels should be minimums or floors, not ceilings or maximums.
4. Effective communication of the changes to the federal government's procurement regime is essential to its success. This applies to the government and business, both of which are very very complex audiences.

Please accept our best wishes as you move forward on this important initiative. If you feel the Canadian Chamber or its members can be of assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Susanna Cluff-Clyburne
Sr. Director, Parliamentary Affairs