

AGREEMENT ON
INTERNAL TRADE



ACCORD SUR LE
COMMERCE INTÉRIEUR

News Release

Panel to hear trade dispute between a private Person from Quebec and Ontario January 9, 2012

Winnipeg – January 6, 2012 - A Panel will hold a hearing under the *Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)* to resolve a dispute between a private person from Quebec and Ontario regarding labour mobility for Crane Operators. The complainant, a crane operator by trade, alleges that the Government of Ontario refuses to grant him certification as a tower crane operator.

In February 2011, a screener gave permission for the private person to commence proceedings against Ontario. In September of 2011 the private person made a request for a panel hearing under Article 1714(1).

The Panel is comprised of: Denise Ann LeBlanc (Chair), Phyllis Smith, and J. Christopher Thomas. The Panel hearing will begin at 9:30 A.M. on January 9 and will be held at the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, 655 Bay Street, 14th Floor, Toronto, Ontario. The hearing is open to the public. The Panel shall issue its report within 45 days after the hearing.

The AIT is an intergovernmental trade agreement signed by Canadian First Ministers in July 1994. Its purpose is to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services, and investment within Canada so as to establish an open, efficient, and stable domestic market. Access to the dispute resolution mechanisms of the AIT is open to governments, individuals and businesses.

For more information on the AIT and its dispute resolution procedures, visit www.ait-aci.ca. and/or contact: Anna Maria Magnifico, Executive Director, Internal Trade Secretariat, T: 204 - 987-8094 or email: amagnifico@ait-aci.ca

Background information attached.

Biographical Notes – Panel Members

Denise Ann LeBlanc is a lawyer who practices in the areas of asset recovery and insolvency, corporate and business transactions, including shareholder agreements, and real property and land use planning. She works with major developers in the acquisition, subdivision and development of multi-phased residential and commercial projects, with institutional lenders in major secured project transactions in greater Moncton area and as arbitrator/adjudicator in New Brunswick Small Claims Court. She is an accredited adjudicator with the Society of Ontario Adjudicators and Regulators. She is a past president of CBA New Brunswick and sits on a number of committees of the Law Society of New Brunswick.

Phyllis Smith, Q.C., is a partner of the law firm Emery Jamieson LLP and practices in a number of areas including energy and utility regulatory matters, arbitrations (primarily but not exclusively collective agreement arbitrations) and civil litigation. She is a member of the Arbitration and Mediation Society of Alberta and the Grievance Roster of Alberta Mediation Services. She is a past president of the Law Society of Alberta and the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and is the past Chair of the Canadian Lawyers Insurance Association.

J. Christopher Thomas Q.C. is the Managing Partner in the firm of Thomas and Partners in Vancouver where he specializes in international trade and commercial law with an emphasis on international trade negotiations, trade regulation, investor-State arbitration, administrative law proceedings and dispute settlement. He has held the position of Assistant Professor at the Law Faculty of the University of Ottawa and Assistant Professor and subsequently Adjunct Professor at the Law Faculty of the University of British Columbia. He acted as a Senior Policy Advisor to the federal Ministry of International Trade during the Canada-U.S. free trade negotiations and the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. He has published extensively on topics related to NAFTA, the GATT and international trade law.