



ENERGY LAW BULLETIN

NWT Energy Policy Consultation 2003 (March)

Introduction

On January 29, 2003 the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) released a discussion paper entitled “Towards an Energy Strategy for the NWT”. In anticipation of a final energy policy in the summer of 2003, the paper summarizes two years of prior government consultation on energy issues, describes what it believes are “Key Issues” arising from them and sets the ground rules for the second of three final rounds of consultation. To focus this round of consultation, the paper sets out a number of questions the government seeks community input on. Responses to the questions are due by March 26, 2003.

The full text of the discussion paper may be found at [www.gov.nt.ca\RWED](http://www.gov.nt.ca/RWED)

What the GNWT Wants to Know

The GNWT believes its new energy strategy should provide clean and affordable energy to northern consumers while, at the same time, creating a sustainable economy in the Northwest Territories. It wants the public to give it a mandate to build an energy strategy based on this objective. The discussion paper proposes a “Vision Statement” and a list of specific “Goals” and “Principles”, which are meant to advance the policy objective, and asks the public to adopt them. The Key Issues link the proposed Vision Statement and the list of specific Goals and Principles with the specific questions the GNWT government is seeking input on.

The questions arising from these Key Issues are:

1. (a) Does the proposed Vision adequately reflect the balance of competing interests on meeting our domestic energy needs, developing our energy resources for export, protecting the environment?
(b) Is there general support for these specific Goals?
(c) Are the proposed Principles acceptable or should additional Principles be used?
2. (a) Is there general acceptance that residential and commercial energy users have a responsibility to manage their energy use to both reduce their costs and reduce their impact on the environment?
(b) Should energy efficiency improvements be achieved by constricting consumer practices (e.g. energy codes) or through incentive programs?
3. (a) Is there general support for maximizing the use of small- hydro, renewable energy, natural gas or other innovative technologies, thus reducing our dependence on imported fossil fuels?



- (b) Should this be done only where cost-effective or are energy consumers prepared to pay a premium?
4. In considering options for re-structuring the electrical industry in the Northwest Territories, which factors do you believe are most important and why?
- (a) Security of energy supply
 - (b) Cost of energy
 - (c) Allowing competition, distributed energy or alternate sources of electrical supply
 - (d) Public ownership and management of essential electric services
5. (a) Should all Northwest Territory energy consumers pay the same price for essential energy consumption? If yes, how should this best be achieved?
- (i) By imposition of common energy prices across the Northwest Territories through cross subsidization from low cost communities to high cost communities?
 - (ii) By general taxation and redistribution through government subsidies?
 - (iii) Another option?
- (b) Should energy prices and/or subsidies be set considering “relative ability to pay” (e.g. those with higher incomes should pay more)?
- (c) Should energy prices and/ or subsidies be different among the customer classes (e.g. residential, small business, large business, industrial)?
6. Do you have any suggestions or conditions for development that the Government of the Northwest Territories should consider with respect to the approach to development of Northwest Territories energy resources?
7. Is there general confidence that existing and future measures outlined will ensure adequate protection of the environment?

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