

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE  
OF  
FIRST MINISTERS

Position of Provincial Ministers on  
Reducing Duplication of Government Services

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We must demonstrate, and quickly, some concrete successes which benefit the taxpayer. There must be a demonstration that collective effort is directed toward the reduction of red tape, duplication, and confusion in government services.

The provinces are determined to play their part in achieving these objectives.

We have examined the federal proposals for studying duplication. As the Premiers have indicated, elaborate and time-consuming studies are unnecessary. Early decisions must be taken if there is to be credibility to this effort. In the end, workable decisions must be taken by elected representatives.

We must demonstrate our resolve to cooperate in improving the practices of federalism. Accordingly, we propose that the reduction of overlapping and duplication take place at a number of levels over different periods of time. We must establish a process that will achieve concrete results as soon as possible.

Our priorities should be directed toward the areas set out in the Premiers' Conference communiqué and other suggestions put forward by individual governments.

In proceeding towards these objectives, the provinces have two concerns.

- (a) They wish to emphasize that disentanglement should not mean simply unilateral withdrawal by one order of government, and regard it as imperative that there must be consultation and the provision of appropriate financial resources in any such exercise.
- (b) Once clarification has been achieved, some provinces may wish to work out individual arrangements with the federal government in specific areas.

When the Premiers met in Regina, they stated that there should be an early solution to overlapping government services and regulation. The overall exercise will require firm direction, and this group of ministers is best suited to that role.

Once agreement has been reached, we should then establish committees, as necessary, of federal and provincial Ministers responsible for particular subject areas, to achieve specific results.

It is understood this process will not supplant the process of constitutional review of division of powers.