
MANITOBA GOVERNMENT NEWS RELEASE

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NEW BRUNSWICK AND MANITOBA JOIN FORCES ON TEXAS MISSION

WINNIPEG-Strengthening trade and investment opportunities with Texas is the goal of a mission to be jointly led by Manitoba Premier Gary Doer and New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord from Jan. 24 to 28.

The two premiers made a commitment to improve co-operation between their jurisdictions and improve Canada-U.S. relations in a 2002 memorandum of understanding and undertook a joint trade mission to Chicago and Atlanta last year. Business delegates and partners in the mission will visit Houston, Austin and San Antonio.

"Our trading relationship with the United States and Texas is crucial to Manitoba's economy. In 2003, Manitoba's two-way trade with the U.S. totaled \$15.2 billion Cdn. Trade with Texas was worth \$691.4 million Cdn," said Doer. "Our province's biomedical, manufacturing, high-tech and transportation companies will join the mission to expand their trading opportunities and help promote the Manitoba advantage."

"This is our government's first official visit to Texas and we're excited about sharing our plans for New Brunswick's prosperity and growth," Lord said. "By attending this mission with Premier Doer and his delegates, we're also spreading the message that Canada is a natural investment and trading choice."

In Houston, Manitoba's mission will focus on investment promotion, a round table session with Texas business leaders and the two premiers will make a joint speech to the Houston Economic Partnership. In Austin, Doer will promote the mid-continent corridor, Manitoba's electric power system technology industry and meet with Gov. Rick Perry. The mission will conclude in San Antonio where Manitoba's aerospace industry presence in Texas and manufacturing opportunities will be promoted and both premiers will address the Free Trade Alliance.

While in Texas, New Brunswick will take the opportunity to raise the province's profile and exposure in a key U.S. marketplace with significant trade opportunities for the province's businesses and to attract direct foreign investment in the province. The main objective of the visit is to build strategic alliances between the province and the various business communities in Texas. The mission will also enable the government to showcase Service New Brunswick, a world leader in the e-government arena, and reap real

benefits from its made-in-New Brunswick solutions like it did in Atlanta, Ga., last year, where it witnessed the signing of a letter of intent between CGI-AMS and the Georgia Municipal Association.

"Last year, Premier Doer and I led a joint trade mission to Chicago and Atlanta, which proved to be very successful," said Lord. "We believe this formula will also serve us well in Texas, where New Brunswick companies will benefit from Manitoba's knowledge and experience in that particular market. This mission will open many new doors for the companies that will join us and I look forward to meeting officials from Texas and northern Mexico."

"While our provinces differ in location and strengths, Premier Lord and I have successfully agreed to co-operate, not compete to benefit both our jurisdictions," Doer said. "Manitoba is aligned at the northern hub of the Mid-Continent Trade Corridor and New Brunswick is an east coast portal to Canada, so both provinces have excellent opportunities for trade expansion."

Both premiers will meet with Perry to discuss trade, co-operation and opportunities for governments to work together within the NAFTA framework. The visit to Texas was planned to coincide with the Governor's State of the State address, which the premiers will attend as his invited guests.

Manitoba companies traveling on the Texas trade mission:

Manitoba HVDC Research Centre, <http://www.hvdc.ca> or <http://www.pscad.com>

Nordevco Associates Ltd., <http://www.nordevco.net>

North Star Human Resources Inc., <http://www.northstarhr.com>

Peak of the Market, <http://peakmarket.com>

The Training Source, <http://www.thetrainingsource.ca>

Vista Medical Ltd., <http://www.pressuremapping.com>

International Centre for Infectious Diseases (ICID), <http://www.icid.ca>

Jazz Golf Equipment Inc., <http://www.jazzgolf.com>

Biomedical Commercialization Canada Inc., <http://www.biomedcanada.com>

Invest North West, <http://www.inw.org.za>

Technologies for Learning Group, <http://www.tlg.ca>

Winnipeg Airports Authority, <http://www.waa.ca>

Red River College, <http://www.rrc.mb.ca>

Destination Winnipeg Inc., <http://destinationwinnipeg.ca>

Business Council of Manitoba, <http://www.businesscouncilmb.ca>

Canadian Unity Council, <http://www.cucweb.ca/calgary>