COMMUNIQUÉ

RÉGIE DE L'ÉNERGIE

A LEADING REGULATORY BODY
FACING UP TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE ENERGY MARKET

Montreal, September 24, 1997 – Mr. Jean A. Guérin, Chairman of the Régie de l'énergie, gave a speech today to the Club d'électricité and the Association Pipeline.

At this meeting, Mr. Guérin presented the objectives of the agency, its role and priorities. The Régie was created by the Government of Québec on June 2, 1997, to regulate natural gas and power distribution. In addition, it monitors the petroleum product and steam markets.

After outlining recent developments in the North American energy industry, Mr. Guérin reminded the audience of the economic importance of this sector of activity for Québec, and he emphasized the impact of the opening of the market on our own energy industry.

The Chairman of the Régie de l'énergie defined the powers and the functions of the Régie with respect to natural gas, electricity, petroleum products and steam.

He then continued to highlight the priorities of the Régie in the months to come:

- implement a consumer complaint review procedure;
- introduce a method for collecting the duties and fees which are the revenues of the Régie;
- enforce articles 55 to 59 of the Act respecting the Régie de l'énergie, allowing the Régie to monitor, inspect and inquire on the sale and distribution of petroleum products;
- conduct an inquiry on the method used to establish and implement the electrical supply tariff;
- define fair competition rules between natural gas and electricity.
The Régie will also pursue its activities in the area of natural gas, with the intention of easing and lightening the regulatory process. The Régie will favour the adoption of incentive measures to enhance distributor performance and the satisfaction of consumer needs.

"The mandates are many, subjects are complex, issues are major and the schedule is tight", said Mr. Guérin. "It is in this demanding yet challenging context that the Régie undertakes its mission based on the principles of equity, fairness, independence and transparency". The Régie will establish "the conditions to foster competition between suppliers and ensure the free choice of consumers within the perspective of sustainable development" concluded the Chairman.

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