



INSTITUT C.D. HOWE INSTITUTE

POLICY SEMINAR REPORT

REBUILDING BETTER: LOCAL CONTENT AND
PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES

FEATURING AN ACTION AGENDA FOR POLICYMAKERS

JUNE 2021



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The C.D Howe Institute thanks the speakers at the Special Policy Seminar, drawn from government, industry, labour, trade and the Institute staff, for their insightful presentations, as well as participants in the stimulating discussions.

AN OVERVIEW

The C.D. Howe Institute held a special Policy Seminar on local content and public procurement rules on June 9th, 2021. The backdrop for the seminar was the sense of opportunity but also the challenges emanating from a “rebuilding better” infrastructure agenda in Canada and many countries following the ravages of the Covid-19 pandemic, the urgency of the global climate challenge, and a US Administration publicly committed to increasing the share of locally made goods in public procurement expenditures.

Not surprisingly, the seminar focused on means by which Canada could meet all three challenges simultaneously. The preparatory work for the seminar, and the presentations and discussions at the event proper, yielded numerous insights and recommendations to that effect. The reader will find them in this report, in the form of the rapporteur’s summary, a summary list of Key Action items, and a background paper prepared for the seminar.

Many of the discussions focused on practical issues behind the concept of “greening” procurement, in support of reaching Canada’s target of net-zero emissions by 2050. How to maintain Canada’s competitiveness in this context? How to foster new technologies while maintaining a rigorous procurement process? And how to secure a green partnership with the United States that would leave both countries better able to meet their economic and environmental challenges? These questions were very much at the forefront of the discussions.

The seminar’s opening remarks were presented by Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, President of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. They reinforced the Government of Canada’s commitment to improving the contribution of the public procurement process to Canada’s environmental objectives, and to working collaboratively with government bodies and industries to achieve these goals.

Industry, environmental, labour and trade experts then weighed in with their perspectives, in front (virtually) of a group of over thirty-five expert participants that included a number of government officials.

From the discussion, some broad consensus emerged that federal procurement should include more robust and transparent criteria for evaluating the ultimate impact on emissions of different bids, and that this impact should be embedded in a more outcomes-based approach to procurement decisions. As well, it was agreed that the federal government should take leadership among the provinces to develop a harmonized national approach to green procurement, which would be important to spur the scaling of innovative approaches and the investments necessary for a greener, competitive Canadian industry. A workable database tracking the sources of emissions through supply chains will be necessary to effectively implement these approaches, and it will have to be developed with the cooperation of industry and with the guidance of internationally recognized standards. Last but not least among the major themes, participants suggested ways Canada should work closely with the United States with a view to building mutually beneficial, competitive North American supply chains, and ensuring that trade is as open as possible in green procurement in support of common economic and environmental objectives.

Additional action items are provided in the conference report, which the reader is encouraged to review. It points to the importance and also the urgency to act on this important question for Canadian industry, jobs, and our environment.

AGENDA

SPECIAL POLICY SEMINAR: LOCAL CONTENT AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm ET

Via Zoom



- 9:30 am - 9:35 am **WELCOMING REMARKS**
William B.P. Robson, Chief Executive Officer, C.D. Howe Institute
- 9:35 am - 9:50 am **Session I— The Canadian Government’s Approach to Public Procurement**
Moderator:
William B.P. Robson, Chief Executive Officer, C.D. Howe Institute
Speaker:
Jean-Yves Duclos, President, Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada
- 9:50 am - 10:35 am **Session II— Building Back Better: Major Infrastructure Projects Post-Pandemic**
Moderator:
William B.P. Robson, Chief Executive Officer, C.D. Howe Institute
Speakers:
Liesbeth Casier, Senior Policy Advisor, Economic Law and Policy Program, International Institute for Sustainable Development
Daniel Schwanen, Vice President of Research, C.D. Howe Institute
Marc Dutil, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canam Group
- 10:35 am - 10:50 am **BREAK**
- 10:50 am - 11:35 am **Session III—The Role of Public Procurement in Canada’s Quest to Net Zero**
Moderator:
Benjamin Dachis, Director of Public Affairs, C.D. Howe Institute
Speakers:
Sarah Petrevan, Policy Director, Clean Energy Canada
Catherine Cobden, President, Canadian Steel Producers Association
Jody Becker, Chief Strategy Officer and Executive Vice President Infrastructure, Services & Technology, EllisDon

Presentations and discussions will be closed to media and off-the-record.

AGENDA

<p>SPECIAL POLICY SEMINAR: LOCAL CONTENT AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES</p> <p>Wednesday, June 9, 2021 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm ET</p> <p>Via Zoom</p>	 <p>INSTITUT C.D. HOWE INSTITUTE</p>
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11:35am - 12:20 pm	Session IV—Aligning US and Canadian Procurement Policies Towards a “Buy North American” Strategy
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Moderator:

Benjamin Dachis, Director of Public Affairs, C.D. Howe Institute

Speakers:

Eric Miller, President, Rideau Potomac Strategy Group; Global Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Center’s Canada Institute

Ken Neumann, National Director for Canada, United Steelworkers Union

12:20 pm – 12:30 pm	OVERVIEW AND CLOSING REMARKS
	Daniel Schwanen , Vice President, Research, C.D. Howe Institute

ACTION-ITEMS CHECKLIST:

COMPETITIVENESS AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION: ACTION ITEMS FOR CANADIAN FEDERAL PROCUREMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

As the single most important public purchaser of goods and services in Canada, which also financially supports infrastructure spending across the country, the federal government should take the lead in ensuring more robust pan-Canadian “green” procurement standards and practices. Doing so would complement existing measures it has taken to achieve its goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Greener procurement would establish a more level playing field for Canadian producers vying for public contracts against foreign bidders that do not face similar emissions-reduction measures in their home country. And it would help them compete globally in a world where “greener” and lower carbon solutions will become increasingly prized by private and public purchasers.

At the same time, Canada should actively promote integrated supply chains with key trading partners engaged in the same globally beneficial effort to reduce emissions. Reaching the goal of net-zero emissions will cost less and will more easily succeed in the context of a larger integrated market among countries making comparable commitments to reduce emissions.

In that spirit, the following is a Ten-Point Action Plan for Canada’s federal government to bring about this desired outcome. These Action items are arranged according to a feasibility timeline of immediate, short-term and long-term actions, with the timing related to factors such as urgency and

technical complexity. They stem from the papers, presentations, and discussions at the C.D. Howe Institute’s Special Policy Seminar on local content and public procurement rules held on June 9, 2021.

COMPETITIVENESS AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION: A TEN-POINT ACTION PLAN FOR CANADIAN FEDERAL PROCUREMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

IMMEDIATE ACTION ITEMS

1. Require greenhouse gas emissions from materials to be a key criterion in the selection of bids

Introduce a robust requirement that scope 1 emissions (those controlled by the producer) generated in the production of materials used in infrastructure and other major capital spending projects be considered alongside, or with greater weight than, cost and performance factors, in the selection of winning bids for a project. This should allow officials to choose projects that use relatively low-emissions materials, even when they are not the lowest cost, in the same way that quality and performance considerations can mean that the lowest bidder should not always win. In practice, this would represent a shift toward environmental outcomes-based procurement for federal infrastructure and other major capital spending projects, in contrast to lower emissions being a “nice to have” criterion.

An “early harvest” approach, limited to scope 1 emissions, could help generate public buy-in and overcome hesitation within the public service among those charged with implementing the policy.

2. Work collaboratively with the United States on joint green procurement supply chains

Canada needs to build on the April 2021 bilateral announcement of a joint Greening Government Initiative with the United States, to better ensure green supply chains can operate efficiently between the two economies. This would include jointly agreed standards for what constitutes green procurement for key goods and services. Such an initiative would be particularly important in the face of tightened Buy America restrictions announced by the Biden Administration.

Given the extent of US-made materials found in Canada's supply chains, and the countries' common emissions-reduction objectives, Canada should commission easy-to-digest briefs and graphics for decision-makers, demonstrating that an open, cooperative approach to green procurement opportunities would benefit both parties by creating jobs, lowering costs, reducing emissions compared to alternative scenarios, and help build a North American technological advantage. As part of this plan, Canada should work together with the Biden Administration to develop a critical mineral supply chain, to foster the deep supply chain cooperation needed for reaching the goal of net-zero emissions.

3. Begin "pitching" Canada in the United States as an economy uniquely similar to it, in partnership with whom the US can better achieve its objectives of strengthening the US economy and manufacturing

Concurrently, Canada should revisit its traditional principles-based approach in defense of open trade between Canada and the United States, and approach the US Administration, Congress, the public and key suppliers and customers, with a strong pitch concerning the economic and environmental benefits of a "Buy North America" approach. The pitch would be based on the fact that Canada is uniquely similar to the United States, and that the two countries enjoy equally unique linkages that naturally work to our mutual and balanced benefit. These similarities include a common interest in high labour standards and wages, and in ensuring that

countries with lower standards are not able to "dump" products in the North American market as a result.

Canada and the United States could, regarding materials and components for infrastructure projects, introduce new models based on the recent experience with the rules for duty-free trade in autos under the USMCA, whereby even if Canada doesn't receive full exceptions from Buy America rules, it could receive such exceptions on products made in facilities with wages commensurate with those of union labour. If successful, this would achieve the essential goal of building stronger and greener supply chains, contributing to good jobs and international competitiveness.

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

4. Exercise national leadership towards harmonized green procurement standards

The federal government should lever existing federal-provincial mechanisms, bodies and platforms, such as the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, the Free Trade Agreement's Regulatory Cooperation Table, and the Canadian Collaborative Procurement Initiative, to harmonize green procurement methodologies and contract award criteria between the federal government and the provinces/territories. This would include a guide for what constitutes "environmentally-friendly goods," to help simplify the tendering process.

Green procurement policies and guidelines are already aligned in principle with the federal government's Greening Government Strategy in many provinces and bodies under provincial authority. National standards would draw on the best practices within industry and internationally (including credible "eco-labelling" initiatives) that encourage or mandate green procurement and materials. This standardization effort would in turn help maximize the competitiveness of Canadian industry when called to meet high environmental standards in Canada and abroad.

5. Extend green procurement standards to federally funded infrastructure projects

Federal funding for infrastructure should become conditional on sub-federal government adopting these harmonized green procurement standards, methodologies and procedures for infrastructure-projects-related procurement.

6. Expand the use of outcomes-based green procurement methodology in the selection process for infrastructure projects to include other key sources of emissions

Emissions stemming from the production and transportation of energy inputs in materials production (part of scope 2 emissions) in countries not subject to emissions-reduction measures (such as carbon pricing) as stringent as Canada's, and emissions stemming from the transportation of these materials to a project site in Canada, again to the extent not covered by emissions-reduction policies as stringent as Canada's, should be incorporated into the bid evaluation framework described in 1.

This would allow a more systematic evaluation of bids based on the relative contribution the choice of one supplier over another is expected to make to the goal of reducing global emissions. Metrics such as the Global Warming Potential (GWP) used in calculating Greenhouse gas emissions inventories, could be used for that purpose.

7. Streamline green procurement decisions methodologies and administration

As these new standards and methodologies are being introduced, a system of pre-procurement market consultations would allow for a sharing of views before the tendering strategy is set and eke out a range of possible outcomes from potential suppliers. This approach would allow for a period of "learning by doing", allowing for some future improvements in the methodology and bidding process (for example, to ensure it is easily understandable by bidders and does not result in a dearth of competitive bids). Specifications for bidders should be based on common sustainability criteria and, where it makes sense, should include straightforward requirements of inputs into the project that incorporate

proven low-emissions technologies and recycled materials ("makes sense" meaning that project still attracts competing bids).

LONGER TERM ACTION ITEMS

8. Encourage innovative technologies and processes

The tendering process should reward innovative technologies and processes that, while not necessarily providing the most economical solution for a given project, show promise in the event they can be further developed or scaled. These could include prizes for the most innovative non-winning bid. The government should also encourage would-be bidders to participate in existing environmental electronic innovation marketplaces, to both source and market best ideas for reducing emissions for a given project.

9. Develop a database for tracking emissions in supply chains

In partnership with procuring entities, establish a national set of metrics and a database for tracking materials in the procurement chain. This database would enhance the performance of the green procurement process, and increase business and consumer confidence in a greener supply chain. The database would allow tracking the embedded carbon in specific procurement supply chains, to allow the best and clearest above-described methodologies decisions to be useful in the tendering process. It should be developed with as much alignment as possible with international scientific criteria regarding carbon embedded in various industrial processes.

Maintenance of the database should be professionalized and updated frequently to ensure it does not convey outdated standards. The methodology chosen should ideally be robust to other possible purposes of a tracing system, such as for security purposes, for evaluating supply chain resilience via preference for trusted suppliers, application of trade rules, or for the purpose of other cross-border green procurement initiatives. Participating in such a tracing system should eventually become a condition of being

considered for tenders over certain amounts. For foreign bidders unable to credibly apply this methodology, the tracing system could use implied emissions based on the country of origin's progress in reducing emissions.

10. Track the plan's success in reducing emissions and strengthening competitiveness

The database should help track emissions reductions stemming from the policy, relative to the previous ways bids were evaluated, and its contribution to the goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. This would help set expectations for embedded emissions in future Canadian infrastructure procurement, and help document and publicize the relative competitiveness of Canadian and non-Canadian suppliers in this respect.

RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN CANADA FOLLOWING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a growing need to rebuild Canada's economy after the pandemic-related closures of 2020 and early 2021. The related economic downturn resulted in the unemployment rate reaching a record of 13.7 percent around mid-2020, with small businesses impacted the most due to prolonged lockdowns and stay-at-home orders. As the vaccine roll-out increases across Canada, and the economy continues to re-open, the Government of Canada plans to rebuild the economy for a more sustainable future. This plan involves new investments in infrastructure, emulating plans in the US and other major economies to "build-back better."

The pandemic has put a spotlight on the need for sustainable supply chains and the procurement of materials required to produce and distribute vital goods and services across the country. In the words of Minister Jean-Yves Duclos: "COVID-19 is fueling desire to build back better, reposition the economy for long-term success, green re-evaluation, and building a greener and stronger economy for Canada." As we move forward on the rebuilding of the economy, we need to be cognizant of the long-term repercussions of our rebuilding strategy, especially on our environment. More specifically, Canada's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 requires Canada to use procurement as a tool to make efficient progress towards this goal. There was a consensus across presenters for the need to act immediately and to establish a comprehensive plan across industries and government bodies to address the need for green procurement to rebuild the economy and achieve the overarching sustainability goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

SESSION I – THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

In his opening remarks, Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, President of the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, emphasized the Government of Canada's commitment to working with provinces, territories, and regions to establish a strong green procurement plan that will support the rebuilding of Canada's economy and the net-zero emissions goal. The Government of Canada is the largest buyer of goods and services nationally, with purchases totalling more than \$18 billion annually. In his speech, Minister Duclos added that procurement helps to create jobs and is a successful long-term catalyst for change that must be adopted by Canada, even as other major economies such as the US and EU also make procurement a centrepiece of their rebuilding strategies. The goal is to build a greener, cleaner, and stronger Canadian and international economy. The Government of Canada is committed to attaining this goal by introducing a more agile and flexible procurement process. The importance of agile procurement was demonstrated during the pandemic when federal government buying drove strong demand for "Made in Canada" personal protective equipment (PPE).

To further support Canada's procurement, Budget 2021 allotted \$87 million over five years, starting in 2021, for public service and procurement (PSPC) "to modernize federal procurement and create better opportunities to specific communities, businesses, and entrepreneurs" (Minister Duclos). As emphasized by other speakers throughout the conference, there is a growing need to increase the diversity of bidders on government contracts, especially for small businesses, businesses led

and operated by Indigenous peoples, black and racialized Canadians, women and LGBTQ+ Canadians, along with other underrepresented groups, to better reflect Canada's productive capabilities in meeting Canada's procurement needs. The Government of Canada is also committed to creating fair and equitable procurement processes to that effect.

Minister Duclos also announced that changes to procurement rules by the Treasury Board had been approved and will soon be implemented. They will place greater emphasis on "ensuring more flexibility and more agility in procurement practices, while maintaining the strong oversight Canadian taxpayers rightfully expect of the [Government of Canada]." Although we have yet to see the details of the procurement changes, the hope is that these renewed policy instruments will modernize outdated 30-year-old policies and streamline requirements. It will also allow for greater collaboration with industry, an issue subsequently raised by presenters and discussants, encouraging more agile government practices. Finally, departments across government will be transitioning to this new policy instrument this year with a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions from buildings by 40 percent (by 2025), five years ahead of the initial target by 2030. The Government of Canada's commitment to the restructuring of public procurement in the direction of a green procurement process set the tone for the presentations that followed, which emphasized collaborative support and transparency across government bodies and industries.

SESSION II – BUILDING BACK BETTER: MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS POST-PANDEMIC

Infrastructure is key to rebuilding Canada's post-pandemic economic infrastructure. In turn, the effectiveness of such investments in meeting

economic, social and environmental objectives relies on a strong procurement process that encourages the efficient use of goods and services across regions and industries. The experience with procurement for the supply of medical equipment and PPE during the pandemic also highlighted the agility needed to move toward greener procurement. However, a speaker identified risk aversion in government and industry as the number one barrier to adopting more agile and outcomes-based procurement. This speaker mentioned that there is no "silver-bullet" solution in managing this risk aversion. However, it can be mitigated by building trust among involved parties, by sharing knowledge, addressing information asymmetry, and building capacity at the individual and institutional level. One presenter emphasized the need to incorporate metrics and performance indicators that could support more strategic decisions and innovative solutions. Including metrics in the procurement process to account for the environmental consequences of materials used would generate transparency for businesses and suppliers in procurement contracts.

Presenters emphasized the necessary qualitative changes needed to build back better by more systematically incorporating environmental impact in infrastructure spending decisions, especially as a rebound in such spending is a key plank in the economic recovery of Canada and many of its closest trading partners. Indeed, a number of participants noted that creating greener and more resilient supply chains required shifting away from procurement decisions based on strict value-for-money criteria, toward criteria encompassing a broader concept of value to the public.

Supply chains require particular attention. One speaker emphasized the need for procurement to help deliberately scale up the demand for low-carbon materials, especially as the full impact of a gradually rising carbon price has yet to be felt. More precise and transparent requirements with respect to what counts as green procurement, for example with respect to construction materials, would help prepare suppliers. It would be

important, another presenter noted, for government to set standards for carbon capture that could in turn help stimulate growth in these technologies. Supply chain considerations enter the rebuilding strategy in less-talked-about ways: for example, ventilation technology is not often mentioned when discussing how procurement can spur innovation, but recent events have shown that it is important to consider in Canada's rebuilding strategy. By setting standards, the federal government working for the provinces can strengthen the supply chain and Canada's competitive position in green technologies.

SESSION III – THE ROLE OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN CANADA'S QUEST TO NET ZERO

Public procurement can play a key role and helping Canada reach its goal of zero emissions by 2050. Across speakers, it was agreed that carbon pricing would need to be supplemented by other measures for Canada to meet its objectives, and furthermore that it would reduce the competitiveness of Canadian production facilities against international competition not subject to similar carbon prices. One speaker noted that since it will take a long time to reach the 2050 net-zero goal through the use of carbon prices, green procurement can provide a more efficient solution to the need to reduce emissions. To reach its zero-emissions goal by 2050, while maintaining or increasing its competitiveness, Canada should accelerate its plans for green procurement and publish a comprehensive overview of the methods it intends to use to that effect. The challenge stems from quantifying the benefits of procurement as it is often viewed as a more expensive alternative relative to carbon pricing. To offset that view, one can emphasize the long-term benefits of green procurement in terms of internalizing environmental costs, and promoting new technologies and expertise in green technologies. Additionally, green procurement can help build the skills required by jobs in less-

carbon intensive activities that will be increasingly in demand as more OECD member-nations transition away from carbon-intensive industries.

Another speaker mentioned that one of the problems in greening procurement and increasing the demand for lower-carbon construction materials is knowing more precisely what such materials entail. This raises the need for environmental product information and disclosure, and to increase collaboration with industries to understand the content of materials. One speaker suggested it was essential to have a database enabling the tracking of green supply chains. The EU successfully established green criteria for infrastructure spending procurement, using such techniques for its supply chain. Another speaker noted that using explicit metrics (i.e., Global Warming Potential) to identify carbon-intensive materials would increase consumer and business confidence in a greener supply chain. In short, participants recommended increasing clarity and transparency in the federal agenda, with a view to making it more "actionable," and emphasized the tracking of materials used within supply chains.

SESSION IV – ALIGNING US AND CANADIAN PROCUREMENT POLICIES TOWARDS A "BUY NORTH AMERICAN STRATEGY"

A common goal between the US and Canada is the economic rebuilding strategy centered around infrastructure and the commitment to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. This session highlighted the complementarity of these two goals and how Canada and the US working more closely together could increase the benefits of infrastructure and lower the costs of reducing emissions for both, while making green procurement supply chains more competitive. Canada needs to focus on ensuring its products face as few barriers as possible in important markets. OECD nations such as

the US and UK have made significant strides in advancing significant infrastructure programs and defining the role of green procurement and, as such, are influencing what it means to become “greener,” including related industry standards.

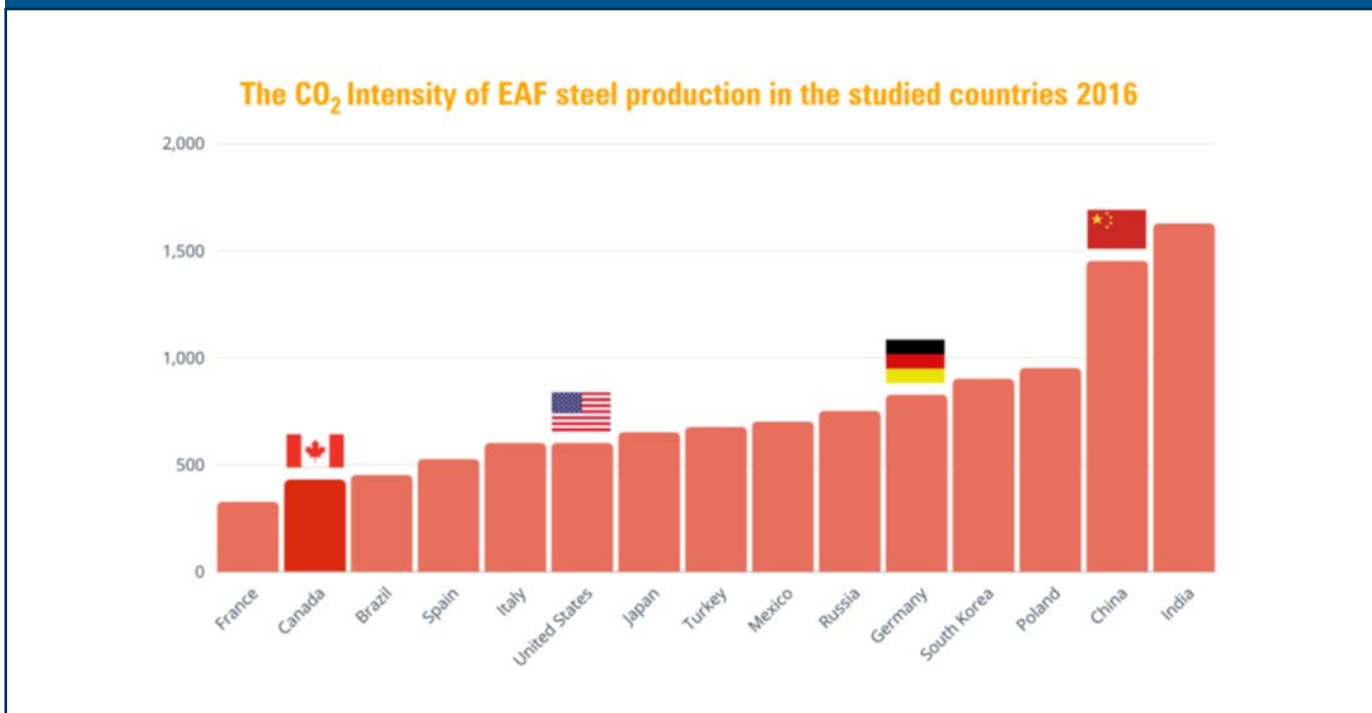
The discussions encompassed the extent to which such US procurement policies will impact the demand for Canadian resources and jobs. The recent Canada-US greening government initiative provides an opportunity for Canada to help setting the standard for certain types of green procurement. However, more needs to be done given the intense US focus on “Made in America,” which risks ignoring the complementarity between US and Canadian supply chains that support jobs in both economies.

The speakers and participants agreed that it was important to work collaboratively with the Biden Administration to develop a critical mineral supply chain and to build a North American green technology industry, spurred notably by green procurement. One speaker explained the need to promote US materials in Canada’s supply chain, and the importance of prioritizing this in Canada’s agenda, so that Canada can benefit from future US infrastructure projects and that Canadian jobs remain in demand and are internationally competitive. Another speaker mentioned that it is strategic for Canada to build a greener supply chain with its US partners and the Biden

Administration. To that effect, Canada should revisit its traditional principles-based approach in defense of open trade. One speaker suggested “pitching” Canada as uniquely similar to the US, and seek to implement a “Buy North America” approach on every opportunity. One speaker mentioned as significant a recent bill before the US Congress, the “US Innovation and Competition Act” which suggests working on a strategy with Canada to confront China within 90 days and for both nations to work economically on technology, further highlighting the importance of both nations to work collaboratively.

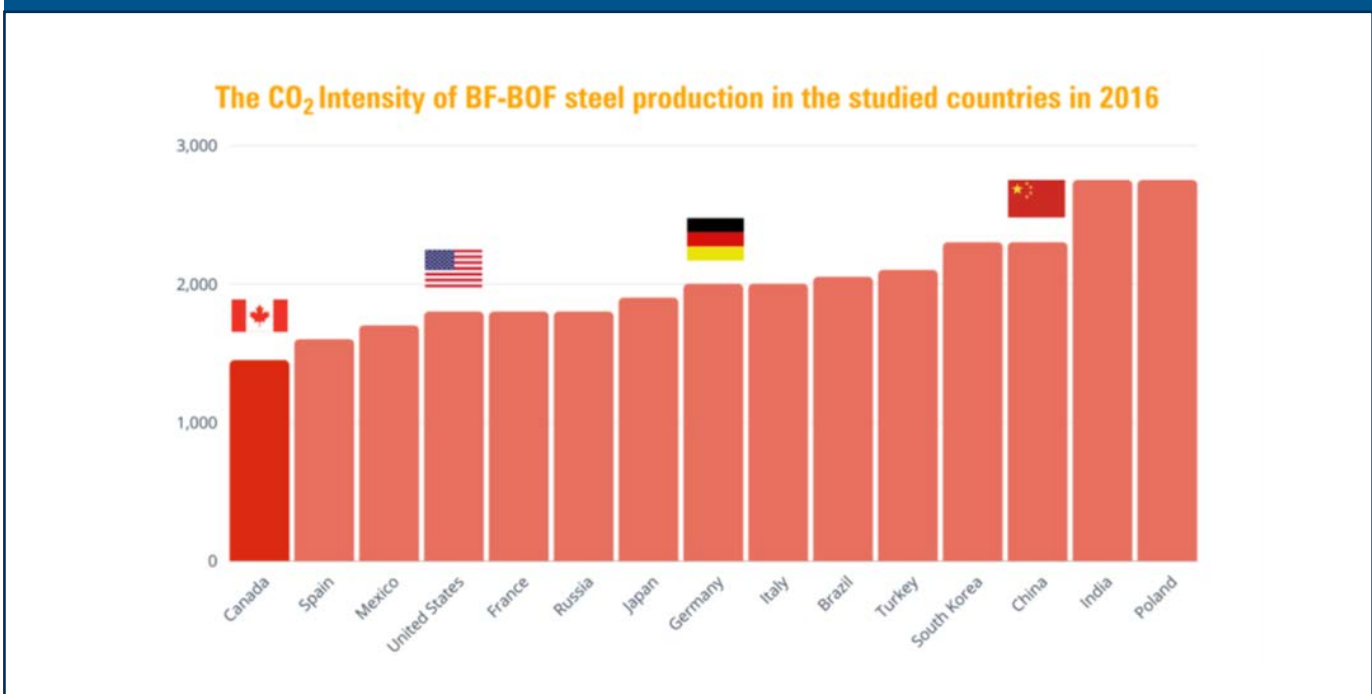
There was a consensus among the participants that Canada is unique in having a network of cross-border labour unions with the US, especially in the infrastructure sector, providing a unique opportunity for Canada and the progression of the Buy North America approach. As such, one speaker suggested the importance to create a model where Canada does not receive full exception on Buy America, but can ask for any Buy America policies on products made with union labour. In the long-term, it was suggested by one speaker for Canada and the US to develop a bilateral strategy to improve trade links, as consistent with the US green agenda, given that Canadian steel is highly competitive in terms of carbon emissions (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Green Steel Benchmarking – Electric Arc Furnace



Source: Global Efficiency Intelligence.

Figure 2: Green Steel Benchmarking – Blast Furnace



Source: Global Efficiency Intelligence.

ENHANCING THE BENEFICIAL IMPACT OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:

*By Daniel Schwanen
Vice-President, Research, C.D. Howe Institute*

A discussion paper for the C.D. Howe Institute Special Seminar on Public Procurement held on June 9, 2021. Revised July 14, 2021 based on comments received on the initial draft and discussion at the seminar.

1. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING IN CANADA

Public procurement occupies a crucial role in modern economies. In Canada, public purchases amounted to almost \$300 billion in 2018, or just over 13 percent of GDP. This puts Canada in the neighborhood of the UK or South Korea in terms of the importance of public procurement as a share of the economy. Canada's share is below many continental European countries, Japan or Australia, but well above the United States (excluding defense), or Italy (to use economies Canada is often compared with).

In Canada, some 88 percent of this amount is accounted for by provincial and municipal procurement, which makes Canada, along with Belgium and Spain, one of the three OECD countries in which public procurement is most decentralized (OECD).

Procurement for infrastructure projects is particularly important for economic growth. In the short term, many governments have indicated their intention to boost infrastructure spending to help their economies recover from the continuing deleterious effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on business investment. Furthermore, they intend to actively use portions of this infrastructure spending to support society's transition toward less carbon-intensive economic activities. In many cases, they

are signatories to the 2015 Paris Agreement, which set the goal of reaching "net-zero" emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.

Indeed, major changes will be required to the country's infrastructure and other capital stock, and to production techniques notably in major emissions-intensive industries, to meet the Canadian federal government's commitments on that front. These commitments are now embodied in the *Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, which became law in June 2021.

Canadian governments and their agencies spent \$73.7 billion on infrastructure projects in 2019, of which only \$5.7 billion was spent by the federal government (excluding defense). The private sector is also a major source of infrastructure spending, with private infrastructure expenditures totaling \$26 billion that year, for total infrastructure spending in Canada of \$100.1 billion (See Appendix A for details).

While not itself directly a "big spender" compared to other central governments, the federal government nevertheless has a crucial role to play in setting, implicitly or explicitly, infrastructure spending priorities, especially concerning interprovincial and international works and projects it financially supports in areas of provincial or municipal jurisdictions. Federal regulation of other capital-intensive sectors, notably telecommunications, also has a major impact on private infrastructure spending decisions.

As well, the federal government, through its power to conclude international trade agreements, sets broad rules by which foreign bidders will be able to access the Canadian marketplace, and conversely negotiate rules by which Canadian companies can access foreign procurement markets.

These have an important influence on the criteria and process for awarding public contracts. In short, the Canadian federal role is crucial and extends well beyond its own spending on infrastructure.

In March 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed the federal government's overarching role in setting minimum carbon pricing standards in the provinces. This decision means that the cost of carbon emissions will now be incorporated more uniformly in economic decisions across the country. This should encourage cooperation in the setting of norms for the use of other tools, such as green procurement (discussed below), which can complement carbon pricing by directly allocating a greater share of government procurement to less carbon-emitting buildings, equipment, material and technologies.

2. PROCUREMENT DECISIONS AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

How public procurement is “done” matters a great deal to economic performance. As a general rule, procurement that is open to competing bids provides good “value for money,” leaving more public resources – or more dollars in taxpayers’ hands – available for other priorities. However, there is a considerable range of rules and methods that best apply to procurement depending on its type. “Off-the-shelf” procurement may go straightforwardly to the lowest bidder, but low-bid contracting without careful specification of quality or outcome sought, or ensuring that the bidder is able to deliver them, can lead to poor outcomes (Johnston and Seidenstat 2007). It is especially not conducive to the development of new solutions to public problems, such as, specifically, developing innovations needed for sustainable development (Keaton 2013), for which in any event standards are still evolving.

Indeed, procurement that allows for flexibility in how bidders can achieve a desired outcome can help spur innovation that benefits the economy

as a whole. This can be true on a micro scale, such as with medical procurement, or on a macro scale, as with governments wishing to use the procurement process to contribute to the goal of economy-wide reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Online “innovation marketplaces,” such as the US Department of Defense’s Defense Innovation Marketplace, are also becoming an increasingly popular way to conduct outcomes-based procurement.

While infrastructure is at the heart of modern economic activity, in reality it is often hard to know with precision in advance the usage of many large infrastructure projects. Rigorous management techniques and governance of the procurement process, as well as private sector and institutional sector involvement, and reliance on user fees to recoup costs where it makes sense, can reduce the risk and the costs of these projects (Poschmann 2003, Robins 2017, OECD 2017).

While local content requirements – whether as condition of obtaining public contracts or even as condition of accessing a country’s market – can benefit a country’s economic development under certain narrow circumstances, a procurement or trade policy that requires minimum local content in certain types of contracts (as opposed to systematically ensuring local industry is considered in the bidding process), may lead to choosing a bid that is too expensive relative to any benefits of the policy (UNCTAD 2014), especially if the policy does not carefully take into account the ultimate competitiveness of the local activity being sustained by that preference.

Trade agreements, therefore, as part of attempts to liberalize cross-border trade, have also pushed in the direction of more open procurement markets, while allowing often wide exceptions for certain types of procurement (defense being the most obvious example), procurement by certain sub-national jurisdictions, procurement below a certain size, for set-asides such as for small or Indigenous businesses. Unfortunately, trade agreements have not been an effective bulwark against the rise of

measures directing certain public infrastructure spending to local suppliers, even when foreign suppliers can provide better value. This has notably been the case with respect to the rising number of US federal and state “Buy America” requirements concerning iron, steel and other manufactures used in government-funded infrastructure, which has put Canadian industry at a disadvantage in that market.

A jurisdiction whose industries are injured by such practices might naturally be tempted to then “level the playing field” by mirroring restrictive measures in its own trade or local procurement policies, or imposing duties on imports from the offending jurisdiction. The intent would be to yield an outcome that might be closer to conditions that would obtain under free market conditions, or a fairer sharing of a public burden, than if partners’ policies had been left unanswered (as predicted by the economic theory of the “second best”). A possible optimal outcome of this response might be to bring partners to the table to help restore a more efficient and sustainable global outcome.

3. KEY TRENDS IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CAPITAL GOODS PROCUREMENT

Governments all around the world are boosting infrastructure spending as a way to respond to dislocation brought about by Covid-19. There are significant opportunities but also pitfalls inherent in this focus. The opportunities lie in the fact that new infrastructure can help “rebuild better” and truly align infrastructure spending with changing needs in the post-COVID pandemic age, so as to take advantage of new markets and technological opportunities, and with other societal goals. Of the latter, the most ambitious one over a medium-term horizon is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The danger is that in an era of apparently looser government budget constraints and with the need to quickly kick-start the economy, sufficient

rigor will not be brought to the infrastructure spending decisions, implying a higher risk of wasted funds. In all of this, the clear setting of public priorities, and a clear framework for choosing projects and suppliers, will be crucial.

The Trend Toward More Directed Procurement

As mentioned, there is a clear trend in many countries for governments to seek to tilt public purchases toward domestic industries, even when foreign products are less costly (unless the cost differential is quite large). This trend clearly adds to the increasing number of tariffs and other trade barriers imposed in recent years across the G20, stretching the limit of what is permissible under WTO rules.

This trend seems born of dissatisfaction with the low rate of increase in standards of living in many countries in recent decades, which has often been blamed on openness to trade. This dissatisfaction has been enhanced by the effects of the pandemic, which has bolstered the perception that supply chains closer to home are more secure and need to be strengthened. Furthermore, there is a heightened awareness of other security risks related to doing business with state-influenced businesses from non-friendly countries.

The recently announced US\$1.2 trillion Bipartisan Infrastructure effort supported by the US Administration, prominently illustrates this trend. Consistent with the President’s January 2021 Executive Order Strengthening Existing Buy America provisions, the plan “will require that goods and materials are made in America and shipped on U.S.-flag, U.S.-crewed vessels.” This is just another example of US actions affecting Canada (such as actions against lumber, aerospace manufacturing, or s. 232 tariffs in 2018 against Canadian steel and aluminum, purportedly on national security grounds), that are meant to expand US production facilities and jobs at the expense of trade partners such as Canada.

As part of their post-pandemic infrastructure plans, governments, in addition to a greater explicit focus on local supply chains, have generally pledged to “rebuild better” after the pandemic. In this vein, they typically mean, based on policy pronouncements, that boosting infrastructure spending can help comprehensively address a range of social issues close to home, promote innovation, and contribute to a more sustainable environment.

For example, the United Kingdom National Infrastructure Strategy, released in late 2020, while emphasizing the continued importance of value for money in a plan for record spending on infrastructure, also highlights the achievement of social goals. These include reviving smaller centers, environmental goals such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions through better infrastructure investments, and ensuring “vibrant and resilient supply chains.”

Canada’s Investing in Canada plan dates from 2016, and commits \$188 billion toward spending, mainly on transit, green infrastructure, housing and other social infrastructure, trade and transportation infrastructure, and the needs of rural and northern communities. It works, as befits our federation in which infrastructure is overwhelmingly the direct responsibility of other levels of government, mostly by stimulating spending by these other jurisdictions. As such, it provides sometimes only loose guidance with respect to expected outcomes. It does put the emphasis on transit and other transportation infrastructure, and the federal government’s funding agreements with the provinces do require certain projects to be assessed through a fairly generic “climate lens” as well as benefits for under-represented groups.

A recent report by Canada’s auditor general criticizes the plan for a slow rollout, and poor tracking of expenditures against expected objectives. This may be an opportunity for Canada to produce a more specific and trackable plan that could more rigorously link the proposed spending to the changed post-pandemic needs regarding economic

infrastructure (see Dachis 2021 on the continued need to invest in public transit, for example), and promote the adoption of techniques such as green procurement to make infrastructure spending more effective on the environmental front.

Enter Green Procurement: A Look at the US and Canada

The United States, in this context, is making a major specific push on “green procurement.” One week after the inauguration, on January 27, 2021, the Biden Administration issued an executive order on Tackling the Climate Crisis that included several provisions specifically related to procurement. Section 204 emphasizes the alignment of the federal government’s procurement processes in support of climate action, such as increased transparency and data, and especially providing immediate and clear sources of product demand. The goal for the Biden Administration is the advancement of the country’s industrial supply in a greener and sustainable way. In his plan, Biden has outlined a Federal Clean Electricity and Vehicle Procurement Strategy, involving a committee of key US officials from Commerce, Labour, Energy, and other agencies that will work collaboratively to promote job creation and stimulate clean energy industries. Relatedly, at the start of his administration, Biden pledged to allocate \$400 billion on federal procurements for renewable, batteries, and electric vehicles.

Additionally, under Section 206 or “Procurement Standards” of the Executive Order, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality is assigned to increase administrative capacity to assist the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council to make regulatory amendments that increase contractor attention to a reduction in carbon emissions and federal sustainability. By assigning regulatory amendment tasks and metrics to all bodies of the federal government, the Biden Administration has produced a comprehensive plan and agenda to

ensure greener and more sustainable procurement with a focus on transparency and domestically meeting objectives outlined in the Paris Agreement.

As well, states, most prominently California, have green procurement plans in place centered around sustainability. In California, it is called “California Buy Clean” and was signed into law in October 2017. The law is a green procurement program for infrastructure materials: steel products, concrete-reinforcing steel, flat glass, and mineral wood board insulation. New York is another state that proposed a law for green procurement for cement, specifically. The *Low Embodied Carbon Concrete Act* gives supplies price discounts up to 5 percent if they are certified low global warming potential (GWP) in their environmental product declaration (EPD). Having said this, across the US, however, local government purchases of goods amount to \$2 trillion annually, with only 28 percent out of 460 cities having green purchasing policies.

Canada has had an explicit green procurement strategy in place since 2008 and updated it in 2018. The strategy require deputy heads of departments to integrate the quality of environmental performance of a product, over the life-cycle of the product, in an overall value-for-money context. The strategy also claims to be creating new markets for Canadian products and services, but does not have specific goals in this respect, nor does it link its procurement strategy to the development of local content.

Under the “Greening Government Strategy” the government of Canada “is committed to creating a greener government that will allow it be a global leader in government operations that are net-zero, resilient and green.” This agenda for greening the government will be led by the Centre for Greening Government of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Key agenda items that will be implemented by the Centre for Greening Government include (i) leading and coordinating the federal emission reduction; (ii) integrating knowledge from other leading organizations and sharing best practices broadly; (iii) tracking and disclosing government environmental performance

information centrally; and (iv) driving results to meet greening government environmental objectives.

The federal government’s net-zero emissions operations by 2050 will include government-owned and leased real property, mobility (i.e., fleets, business travel and commuting), and national safety and security operations. Importantly, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat will require the submission of a life-cycle cost analysis, with the inclusion of carbon shadow prices, for all major real property funding proposals.

The strategy includes incentivizing major suppliers to adopt a science-based target in line with the Paris Agreement and to disclose their GHG emissions and environmental performance information, and strengthening operational support for green procurement, including guidance, tools, and training for public service employees.

Growing the Induced Demand for “Green” Products

Governments around the world are seeking to reduce the environmental footprint of economic activity, set emissions reduction goals, and seek to achieve those goals in part by raising the costs of carbon-intensive energy and production methods and of carbon-intensive consumption. As is well known, not every country has committed to making comparable short-term efforts to reduce emissions, though most, accounting for over 60 percent of world emissions, are endorsing the goal of “net zero” emissions by 2050 for their economies.

Carbon pricing is a major tool used by Canada and others to reach that goal. Late last year, the federal government announced that the price will progressively be raised to \$170/tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030. Canadian federal and provincial governments use regulatory tools, such as targets for electric vehicle sales, that in effect skew market conditions in favour of low-emissions production, and away from carbon-intensive production altogether.

For Canadian producers that compete internationally – including against imports in the Canadian market – the question arises as to why they should face the potential loss of business to competitors in other countries that are not subject to similar obligations to contribute to a common environmental good. This question has wide environmental consequences as well: if production can shift to other countries where there is no, or a lesser, cost to emit greenhouse gases, and those products can be imported in countries with stronger emissions reduction commitments, the outcome would likely be no global progress on reducing emissions. Further, there would be an actual loss of facilities and jobs in the most efficient facilities, an uneconomic outcome.

Border Carbon Adjustments (BCAs) have been increasingly mooted as a tool that could level the playing field between imports from economies with less stringent carbon reduction plans into the more restrictive ones, and domestic production from the latter. The Canadian government has announced the launch of consultations on Border Carbon Adjustments (BCAs). The European Union is committed to developing such a scheme by 2023. The United States is not committed to this specific mechanism, however, and very few other countries are. In the meantime, there are policies that complement and help accelerate the impact of carbon pricing and the transition to “net-zero” more generally. These policies – regulatory, subsidies for new technologies, and purchasing policies among them – can also help distinguish internationally between firms that provide carbon-intensive supplies and others, and not only level the playing field in that respect, but help Canada compete more effectively in the low-carbon global economy of the future. In any event, an effective approach to reduce emissions requires carbon pricing (and hence BCAs) to be used in conjunction with other tools, such as subsidies to develop new technologies and modernize emissions-intensive facilities, and regulations. Green Procurement is one of these tools.

4. GREEN PROCUREMENT, LOCAL CONTENT AND SUPPLY CHAINS

What is the link between wanting to “push” more local content in the production chain, on the one hand, as is explicitly the goal of the US Administration, and wanting procurement that promotes more specific social or environmental goals, and even a more innovative economy generally, on the other? Often, legitimately pursuing the latter goal will result in more local content by helping develop a competitive local supply chain, meaning one that is also competitive globally on these various criteria, including the environmental criterion.

However, the reverse is not true: procurement or tariff policies that are based primarily on favouring local producers, often come at the expense of providing cost-effective infrastructure that can raise permanent economic growth, or at the expense of social (such as housing) and environmental goals. As such, Canada should ideally seek to maintain open procurement markets that nevertheless allow governments the necessary flexibility to impose appropriate environmental standards.

Emphasize the benefits of Canada-US and International Cooperation in Achieving Joint Goals

Given the very explicit US goal to increase local US content, Canada needs to think about an approach to the United States that not only contemplates jointly supporting a green procurement market, but also will grow the pie and lead to visible additional procurement opportunities for US-based facilities, and expanded opportunities for Canadian-based facilities in the United States. The trick would be to propose a Canada-US approach to infrastructure procurement, which would allow the US president to credibly claim that it would generate at least as many jobs, and better jobs, than a non-cooperative approach with Canada.

The Canada-US greening government initiative, announced in April of this year, helps “identify a pathway to net-zero supply chains for our buildings (e.g., renewable energy, concrete, steel), and fleet (zero-emission vehicles and clean fuels)” (Canada Treasury Board Secretariat 2021), is an important sign of the alignment of Canada and the United States on the importance of green procurement. But it needs to be built into something more ambitious by way of a more integrated market in products that helps the two governments achieve their common goal of “net-zero emissions” government.

Internationally, Canada should ensure that the application of trade agreements, and *a fortiori* the WTO’s Agreement on Government Procurement, recognizes the contribution that procurement can make to social and environmental goals, as legitimate part of the calculation of the value provided by infrastructure and other projects requiring public procurement. Indeed, initiatives involving the greening of procurement are also less likely to be challengeable under trade agreements than others that would discriminate at the border. There is increased recognition internationally that the awarding of public procurement contracts need not rest on monetary considerations alone, despite the incomplete coverage of public procurement under current trade rules.

The Need for Clearer Guidance

Canada has projected which sectors of the economy would contribute the most to the overall targeted emissions reduction. For example, it projected that 16 percent of national emissions reductions between now and 2030 would take place in the heavy industry sector (excluding oil and gas). Some provincial plans also include similar broad projections – for example, Quebec projects that 57 percent of the province’s emissions reductions will come from the transportation sector, and 18 percent of its emissions reductions from the industry sector.

More explicitly linking these broad assessments with specific policies would provide greater certainty to businesses about which investments embodying greener technologies are needed, what support there may be for developing these technologies, and what mix of regulations can help reduce emissions in specific cases, beyond the incentive provided by Canada’s carbon pricing regime. While in some cases (such as electric vehicles in Quebec) it is quite clear how the targets will be achieved, providing these details and specific policy support remains a work in progress across Canada.

One recent and welcome move in a much more specific direction was the introduction, in December of 2020, of a “Net-zero accelerator” fund of \$3 billion over five years. While in general the fund can be accessed for any initiative toward developing or adopting clean technology, it also specifically targets the development of an “end-to-end battery ecosystem” in Canada.

Notwithstanding this example, and a few others such as support for the development of carbon capture and storage technologies, Canada could be a lot more specific in how it intends to achieve its targets, including by sectors and types of equipment and technologies, and how it intends to leverage procurement to build markets and supply chains for innovative green solutions in Canada. It could more explicitly use green procurement, along the lines detailed in key reports reviewing best practices, such as from the OECD, to encourage investments in these solutions. Without impinging on provincial governments’ leveraging of their own strengths in that area, it should contemplate how it can bring them together to develop national green procurement standards and develop national rather than provincial markets for green products and technologies, perhaps using criteria for infrastructure funding as an incentive to do so. In short, Canada should contemplate a more rigorous and goals-oriented green procurement policy than it has until now.

5. LEVERAGING THE ADVANTAGES OF GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Green or sustainable public procurement is a method adopted in almost all OECD countries to directly reduce emissions associated with government expenditures. When applied to public infrastructure, it achieves its objectives partly by increasing the energy efficiency of the public capital stock (such as buildings and vehicles), which also reduces government operating costs. But the larger environmental benefits stem from reducing the carbon content of materials, such as steel and cement, whose processes (and depending on where they are produced, the considerable energy input required to produce them) are, with current technologies, very emissions-intensive. From a green procurement perspective, emissions incurred during transportation of these materials decreases their desirability.

In some industries, such as steel, the use of recycled materials is particularly desirable from an environmental point of view, as it uses less carbon-intensive technologies. Indeed, steel is not only the most-used metal in the modern world – it is also entirely recyclable. There is a close symbiosis between steel and some other key materials industries and spending on physical infrastructure – 50 percent of global steel output is used in building and infrastructure projects (private and public), according to the World Steel Association, including infrastructure that will be needed to reduce carbon emissions elsewhere in the economy. There are also large emissions-intensity differences worldwide among steel production facilities. While steel will be needed for large public investments currently touted for Canada, the United States, and most advanced economies, and even more so in developing economies (where steel production may be cheaper but is far more carbon-intensive on balance), the purpose of green procurement is to ensure that the less emissions-intensive source of steel is used in these projects, up to the point where

the benefits of reducing emissions offsets any cost disadvantage.

The choice of green procurement must therefore rest on a clear understanding of its costs and benefits. The key reason to opt for green procurement would be that, although it may be more expensive based on monetary considerations alone, it is an effective way of internalizing environmental costs, or in more general terms of meeting environmental goals that the public supports. If one incorporates the environmental costs of transportation in the calculation of the “greenness” of a purchase, then products that need to be transported over long distances via carbon-intensive means of transportation will be seen as even less competitive, from the point of view of reducing the environmental cost of procurement, which would tilt the playing field away from imports.

If domestic sourcing is more energy efficient or otherwise less emissions-intensive, it will receive a boost from a switch to green procurement – but because it is more cost-efficient viewed from that holistic lens, not because it is domestic per se.

Another benefit of green procurement, though hard to quantify, is that of bringing forth new technologies and expertise in green technologies that can be of wider use in the domestic and foreign markets – in this case, green procurement can help in the “transition” from jobs in the carbon-intensive economies, to those that will be in demand, here or abroad, in the less carbon-intensive economy. Indeed, the OECD has shown that green procurement can help secure domestic supply chains that – as long as they are built on the country’s comparative advantages such as resources and skills, and can be competitive internationally – allow a greater share of participation and success in the less carbon-intensive economy overall.

While it is a stretch to say that green procurement would be a net source of jobs for the economy as a whole, by helping to level the competitive playing field between firms and industries that are less emissions-intensive with others that are more emissions-intensive, it not only

can contribute to the goal of reducing emissions, but also help Canadian companies, skilled workers and other experts position themselves successfully in the lower-carbon-intensity global economy of the future.

From modest beginnings, green procurement will continue to expand, including in the private sector where consumers or investors demand it. But its measurement needs to be much further developed, whether that concern how to take into account the upstream, process, and downstream emissions embedded in materials purchased, or internationally accepted rules and standards for how it will be applied by governments. High-technology initiatives currently under way to enable tracing of the carbon content in materials such as steel, need to be supported and expanded.

As is often the case, success, especially for new technologies, means scale or specialization within a larger market. A government purchaser that helps ensure a market for greener materials and technologies can be a great start, but a larger market is better, as the literature on the costs and benefits of green procurement illustrates. In that light, it is imperative for Canadian government green procurement initiatives, methodologies and standards to be aligned with those in the United States and other major markets. A fragmentation in the markets for greener products would raise the cost of achieving environmental goals, costs which many producers and consumers already experience.

APPENDIX A:

Table A1: Canada: Infrastructure Spending by Main Function and Ownership, 2019

Main Function of the Expenditure	Federal	Provincial & Territorial	Local and Regional	Private Sector	Total
	(\$ Millions)				
Transportation infrastructure	3,564	12,176	10,419	10,045	36,204
Land transportation equipment	121	786	1,888	1,107	3,901
Marine infrastructure	942	59	-	-	1,312
Waterworks infrastructure	31	73	3,626	25	3,754
Sewage infrastructure	24	30	3,785	5	3,844
Culture and recreation facilities	136	201	1,751	-	2,095
Affordable rental housing	0	805	967	-	1,978
Communications network	23	76	42	5,197	5,337
Electric power infrastructure	35	12,590	1,197	5,442	19,265
Other fuel and energy infrastructure	4	403	13	2,941	3,361
Public security facilities	254	132	-	0	653
Health facilities	57	5,097	194	592	5,940
Education facilities	9	7,932	0	-	7,941
Environmental protection infrastructure	2	166	1,430	121	1,719
Other infrastructure assets	504	565	1,289	441	2,800
Total	5,704	41,090	26,882	26,428	100,105

Note: a dash indicates unreliable data. Numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding or cells with unreliable data.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 34-10-0280-01 Capital expenditures, infrastructure assets, by ownership (x 1,000,000)

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BIOGRAPHIES OF PRESENTERS AND MODERATORS

SPECIAL POLICY SEMINAR: LOCAL CONTENT AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm ET

Via Zoom



SPEAKERS



WILLIAM B.P. ROBSON

Bill Robson took office as CEO of the C.D. Howe Institute in July 2006, after serving as the Institute's Senior Vice President since 2003 and Director of Research from 2000 to 2003. He has written more than 240 monographs, articles, chapters and books on such subjects as government budgets, pensions, healthcare financing, inflation and currency issues. His work has won awards from the Policy Research Secretariat, the Canadian Economics Association, and the Donner Canadian Foundation. He is a Senior Fellow at Massey College and holds an ICD.D designation from the Institute of Corporate Directors. He is a member of the Panel of Senior Advisors to the Auditor General of Ontario and the Ifo World Economic Survey expert group, and a regular commentator on BNN/Bloomberg. Bill taught undergraduate public finance and public policy at the University of Toronto from 2000 to 2003, and a Master's level course in public finance at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy from 2014 to 2019.



BENJAMIN DACHIS

Benjamin Dachis is Director of Public Affairs for the C.D. Howe Institute. In his role, he furthers the Institute's mission to improve Canada's economic performance by enhancing the visibility, reputation and impact of its research and activities. Benjamin started with the C.D. Howe Institute in 2006 as a Research Fellow and also has experience with major U.S. and U.K. think tanks. He returned to the C.D. Howe Institute as a Policy Analyst in January of 2008, became a Senior Policy Analyst in 2011, and Associate Director, Research in 2016. From 2018 to 2019 he was the Director of Policy, Budget and Fiscal Planning for the Premier of Ontario. He was part of the Ontario government's leadership team in developing a number of policies, including the Housing Supply Action Plan, the 2018 Fall Economic Statement and the 2019 Budget. He has an Honours Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Toronto, and a Master of Science in Regional Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

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THE HONORABLE JEAN-YVES DUCLOS

The Honorable Jean-Yves Duclos was elected as Member of Parliament for the riding of Quebec in 2015. He was then appointed Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister responsible for Seniors, Homelessness and Housing on November 4, 2015. In his first term, he was the Minister responsible for the establishment of the Canada Child Benefit and the very first National Housing Strategy, two measures which today benefit many citizens. Re-elected in 2019, he is currently President of the Treasury Board and was appointed Vice-President of the Ministerial Committee on COVID-19 in 2020.

Minister Duclos is a well-published author, conference speaker, and economics expert. Prior to 2015, he was the Director of the Department of Economics and a tenured professor at the Université Laval.

In addition to his professorial duties, Minister Duclos held the former Industrial Alliance Research Chair on the Economics of Demographic Change (now the Research Chair in Intergenerational Economics), served as Vice-President of the Canadian Economics Association, and was a member of the Institut sur le vieillissement et la participation sociale des aînés.

He was also Vice-President and Fellow of the Centre interuniversitaire de recherche en analyse des organisations, Senior Fellow of the Fondation pour les études et recherches sur le développement international, and Fellow-in-Residence at the C.D. Howe Institute. He is also the co-founder of the Poverty and Economic Policy Research Network (Partnership for Economic Policy).

Minister Duclos' hard work has been recognized with prestigious grants, including the Société canadienne de science économique's prix Marcel Dagenais and the Harry Johnson Award for best paper published in the Canadian Journal of Economics. In 2014, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the highest accolade bestowed on Canadian researchers. Minister Duclos earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics (First-Class Honours) from the University of Alberta, and master's and doctoral degrees in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

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LIESBETH CASIER

Liesbeth Casier is a Senior Policy Advisor with IISD's Economic Law and Policy Program. She works with the Public Procurement and Infrastructure Finance team on research and advisory services that involve innovation in public procurement. She also works on IISD's Sustainable Asset Valuation. Liesbeth has advised governments in Bhutan, Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, India, Morocco, Paraguay, Senegal, South Africa and the Netherlands.

Liesbeth also works extensively with the European Commission, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on policy frameworks and the business case for sustainable infrastructure. She represents IISD at the OECD Working Group on Leading Practitioners on Public Procurement.

Liesbeth previously worked with UN Environment and started her career as consultant in auditing and corporate finance with a family-owned consultancy business in Belgium. Liesbeth has an academic background in political science and law. She holds a master's degree in development studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (Geneva, Switzerland). She also has master's degrees in complementary studies in business economics and in political science, both from the University of Ghent (Belgium), a bachelor of political science from the University of Antwerp (Belgium), and a bachelor of laws from the University of London (United Kingdom).

Liesbeth works in Dutch, English, French, and Spanish.

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DANIEL SCHWANEN

Daniel Schwanen is an award-winning economist with a passion for international economic policy. He is spearheading Institute programs focused on the link between Canada's international trade and investment policy and Canadians' standards of living. Having earned degrees in economics from the Université de Montréal and Queen's University, Daniel began his career in the financial services industry, becoming International Economist at the CIBC in 1986. He first joined the C.D. Howe Institute in 1990, producing widely-cited research on international trade, Canada's economic union, climate change policy, and the economics of cultural policy. His work in the 1990s earned him foreign visitorships in the United States, Japan and Australia.

After joining the Institute for Research on Public Policy in 2001, Daniel earned the Policy Research Initiative's Outstanding Research Contribution Award for his paper "A Room of Our Own: Cultural Policies and Trade Agreements," and produced, with co-editors Thomas Courchene and Donald Savoie, a major series of papers on North America after NAFTA. In 2007, he co-wrote the independent review of Australia's Progress to Achieve APEC Goals, presenting the report at APEC's Senior Officials meeting as part of APEC's peer review process.

Daniel joined the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) in Waterloo, Ontario in 2005, serving in a number of senior research and executive positions. Most recently, his work there focused on the G20 and international economic policy coordination.

Daniel returned to the C.D. Howe Institute in March, 2011 as Associate Vice President, Trade and International Policy. He was promoted to Assistant Vice President, Research in January 2013, and currently holds the position of Vice President, Research, as of June 2014.

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MARC DUTIL

Marc Dutil was born on December 25, 1964, in St. Georges, Quebec. He graduated from Boston College in 1987 and founded a software firm specialized in the design of electronic exchange systems.

Mr. Dutil joined The Canam Manac Group Inc. in 1989 where he held various positions at the St. Gedeon de Beauce, Quebec, plant until 1995 while also pursuing his studies at various Canadian and American universities.

In 2001, Mr. Dutil was appointed Vice President of The Canam Manac Group Inc. One year later, he was named Executive Vice President of the company and elected to its Board of Directors. In 2003, he was named President and Chief Operating Officer, and in 2012 he became President and Chief Executive Officer of Canam Group Inc.

Mr. Dutil spent 10 years on the Board of the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction before serving as Chairman from 2001 to 2003. He is a member of the Cercle des présidents du Québec and founder and President of the École d'Entrepreneurship de Beauce.

In October 2013, he was awarded the title of 2013 Quebec Entrepreneur of the Year by the International firm, Ernst & Young. At the end of the year, he was appointed Member of the Order of Canada for his achievements as a business leader, and for promoting the well-being of his community and the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Mr. Dutil has also chaired on the boards of not-for-profit organizations. He has equally presided over numerous community fundraisers and is frequently invited to speak at various functions across Canada and abroad.

Mr. Dutil wrote a book entitled *Nos faux combats* that has recently been nominated for the Governor General literary prize.

Marc Dutil and Catherine Larochelle have been married since 1989 and have five children.

BIOGRAPHIES OF PRESENTERS AND MODERATORS

SPECIAL POLICY SEMINAR: LOCAL CONTENT AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT RULES

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm ET

Via Zoom



SARAH PETREVEN

A passionate policy advocate and commentator, Sarah works to advance policies and programs that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while creating jobs and a strong economy. With more than a decade and a half of experience, Sarah is known for her collaborative approach with industry and business leaders to advocate for policy change. A regular media commentator on climate policy, she also regularly appears before government committees. Before joining Clean Energy Canada, Sarah held several senior positions within the Government of Ontario, and worked in environmental philanthropy. She holds degrees in political science with a specialization in public policy. Sarah serves on a number of advisory boards and committees, including Blue Green Canada, and is the recipient of the 2018 Clean 50 Emerging Leader Award, in recognition for her leadership in clean capitalism. She is based in Toronto.



CATHERINE COBDEN

Catherine Cobden is the President & CEO of the Canadian Steel Producers Association representing 100% of Canada’s steel production capacity. Member companies produce 15 million tonnes of steel, pipe and tube products and support over 123,000 jobs in Canada.

Catherine has over 25 years of industry association, regulatory and advocacy experience in Canada’s national capital of Ottawa. Prior to taking the helm of the CSPA, Catherine was President of Cobden Strategies Inc. where she provided strategic advice to many private and public sector clients in the areas of forestry, manufacturing, mining, construction, and renewable energy. Catherine also spent 13 years at the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) where, as Executive Vice President of FPAC, she played a key role in developing the sector’s long-term transformation strategy in response to changing market dynamics and the evolving expectations of civil society.

Catherine is a strong advocate for climate leadership and a founding member of Nature Canada’s “Women for Nature” initiative. In 2021, she was named one of Canada’s Top 100 Lobbyists by The Hill Times.

She is a Chemical Engineer from the University of Toronto and is on the Board of Directors of COREM – a world recognized innovation organization for Canada’s mining sector.

Catherine lives in Ottawa with her husband and two children.

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JODY BECKER

As Chief Strategy Officer, Jody oversees strategic planning for EllisDon. She works in collaboration with EllisDon's senior management and Board of Directors to forecast areas of growth and to develop execution plans. Working directly with the CEO, Jody guides the development of EllisDon's annual strategic planning report and works with all operational divisions to monitor progress with respect to short and long term objectives.

As Executive Vice President of Infrastructure Services & Technology, Jody is responsible for all of EllisDon's Services divisions including Facilities Services, Energy & Digital Services, Project Management, Furniture Equipment & Design and Sustainable Building Solutions. Jody's teams are responsible for delivering EllisDon's "Cradle to Grave" strategy, providing solutions to EllisDon's clients at all stages of a project's lifecycle and complementing our core construction business.

EllisDon's Facilities Services (EDFS) division is one of Canada's largest operators of PPP infrastructure, including some of Canada's most technologically advanced healthcare and judicial facilities. EDFs will also be a co-operator of 3 of Canada's new light rail transit systems, including the Ottawa, Eglinton and Edmonton LRTs.

Jody is also responsible for overseeing EllisDon's Energy & Digital Services (EDS) division which is focused on creating smart and connected infrastructure. Comprised of network architects and systems integrators, the EDS team has quickly become a leader in Smart City technology. With the intent of making EllisDon Canada's most technologically advanced builder, the EDS team works collaboratively with owners, developers, builders and operators to design, build, integrate and maintain intelligent infrastructure.

EllisDon's Project Management division provides project and program management services to clients to ensure on-time and on-budget delivery. Jody is responsible for overseeing all commercial and operational functions of this team across Canada and internationally, including EllisDon's long-standing business in the Middle East.

Leadership in sustainable building solutions is also part of Jody's mandate. Through our dedicated team of sustainability professionals, EllisDon is delivering building solutions that are environmentally responsible, energy efficient and provide valuable returns for our clients.

Jody joined EllisDon in 2007 and was subsequently promoted to the role of Senior Vice President and General Counsel to the EllisDon group of companies and was responsible for all of the legal aspects of EllisDon's business, particularly in relation to the development of projects in the Alternative Financing and Procurement/Public-Private Partnerships ("AFP/P3") market. She has been a key member of the EllisDon AFP/P3 team and has been instrumental in achieving commercial and financial close on numerous successful projects valued at over \$9 billion.

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ERIC MILLER

Eric Miller is President of Rideau Potomac Strategy Group, a consultancy that advises private and public sector clients on North America, Asia and Latin America trade, government affairs, business and geo-political matters. Among his activities, he advises and assists clients with “getting things done” in Washington, DC, Ottawa and other capitals. This includes through the application of procurement rules under trade agreements and in helping clients to pursue government projects and financing support.

Key sectors of focus in recent years have included: forestry, mining, telecom; advanced technology (quantum computing/AI); digital content; cybersecurity; insurance; agri-food; logistics; and automotive. Key policy areas include trade facilitation; foreign investment reviews; trade agreement implementation; and innovation policy.

From 2013-2016, Mr. Miller served as Vice President for North America and Cybersecurity at the Business Council of Canada, which represents the CEOs of the 150 largest companies in the country. From 2008-2013, he was the first representative of Canada’s Department of Industry in the United States, based at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC.

Mr. Miller has extensive international experience, having advised more than 40 governments in North America, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East on trade, transportation, technology and economic policies. Over the course of his career, he has worked on the development of six free trade agreements.

Mr. Miller presently serves on the Advisory Committee to Canada’s Deputy Minister of International Trade where he offers advice on Canada’s trade strategies with respect to Canadian-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), China, and trade diversification.

Separately, Mr. Miller is co-owner of Origin Experts Group, a trade technology firm that is building tools to optimize the utilization of free trade agreements.

He is a Global Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, a Fellow with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and a frequent media commentator.

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KEN NEUMANN

The USW International Executive Board appointed Ken Neumann as National Director for Canada in 2004 following the retirement of Lawrence McBrearty. Ken was reconfirmed as National Director in the 2005, 2009, 2012 and 2014 international elections.

Born and raised in rural Saskatchewan, Ken was a teenager when he first joined the USW, at Local 5890 in Regina, Saskatchewan. Later, Ken's activism and leadership flourished within USW Local 4728, where he began as a steward and eventually was elected Local president. He was an instructor, organizer and then president of the USW Regina Area Council before being hired as a staff representative in 1977. Ken earned a personal reputation for strong service to USW members in Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

Ken was elected USW District 3 Director in 1989 and won every subsequent district election until his appointment as National Director in 2004. Ken increased the USW's involvement in the labour movement in Western Canada, expanded organizing activity and renewed the district's focus on political action, fighting for worker-friendly laws and helping elect several New Democratic Party provincial governments.

One of Ken's first achievements as National Director was his instrumental role in the USW merger with the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA) in 2004. Under Ken's leadership the union has signed strategic alliances with the Alliance of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), the Canadian Region of Communications Workers of Canada, Environmental Defence, the Telecommunications Workers Union, Unite Here and the Ontario Taxi Workers Union.

Throughout Ken's life he has fought hard to make equality, justice and prosperity a reality in Canada. His commitment to political action culminated with Steelworkers playing key roles in the New Democratic Party's historic breakthrough in Canada. Strengthened by Ken's close relationship with Jack Layton, the union helped elect 103 NDP Members of Parliament – including two Steelworkers in the Orange Wave of 2011. As the Official Opposition in Parliament, the NDP is now Canada's "government-in-waiting."

In 2010, Ken launched a National Organizing Project to give more Canadian workers a collective voice in their workplaces. The USW has organized over 16,000 new members in Canada since 2008.

Neumann holds key positions in numerous Canadian and international organizations, including the Canadian Steel Trades and Employment Congress (Co-chair), Steelworkers Humanity Fund (President), Steelworker Trusteed Benefit Plan (President), the International Metalworkers Federation and ICEM (Director), the USW Non-ferrous Industry Conference (Secretary), United Dominion Industries Conference (Chair) and the Canadian Labour Congress (General Vice-President).

One of Neumann's passions is fighting for the dignity and independence of injured and disabled workers. He is co-chair of the National Institute for Disability Management and Research, and he helped develop Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences, the first university of its kind.

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