



Western Canada Trade Gateways & Corridors Initiative

Canada's port of entry to Asia

Executive roundtable discussion:
Meeting highlights

Canadian Construction Association (CCA), Export Development Canada (EDC)
and the Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA)

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INTRODUCTION

There is the infrastructure we want like parks and hockey rinks, the infrastructure we need like schools and hospitals, and then there is the infrastructure that pays for these things – and that is trade infrastructure.

Western Canada is the country's "port of entry" to the vast and largely untapped Asian market—making the region indispensable to Canada's trade profile and to its economic health and prosperity. The investments that came out of the 2006 Asia-Pacific Gateway Corridor Initiative (APGCI) helped build and modernize many of Western Canada's port facilities. Combined with upgrades to highways and bridges, the APGCI dramatically increased freight volumes¹ and allowed for the more efficient movement of goods to domestic and international markets.

While the APGCI was a clear success, much has changed over the past 15 years. As countries adjust to the economic, political and environmental shifts created by the COVID-19 pandemic, competition for a greater share of international commerce is heating up. Other nations are now much further ahead in building the trade infrastructure to capitalize on and expand into new global markets. In analyses by the World Bank and World Economic Forum, the reliability and readiness of Canada's trade infrastructure has fallen from 10th best in the world in 2009 to 26th today. When looking at just transportation, Canada ranks 32nd.

Even though demand for Canadian products remained strong during the pandemic—and is projected to grow in the years to come—improving our country's trade reputation, growing our economy and protecting our national security interests can't happen without substantial and sustained federal recapitalization of national trade gateways strategy and funding programs.

The proposed Western Canada Trade Gateways & Corridors Initiative (WCTGCI) aims to boost domestic, continental and international trade, particularly in Asia, through a multi-year national program that brings both public and private investments to Western Canada's multi-modal trade transportation network. That includes investments in existing trade gateways and corridors, plus the long-term build-out of new marine and inland ports as well as road, rail and air transportation assets that will support the freight and passenger flows required for international trade.

On September 8, 2021, the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), Export Development Canada (EDC) and the Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA) jointly hosted an online roundtable discussion. Leaders from regional industry associations, think tanks, port authorities and other organizations were invited to share their thoughts about the WCTGCI and what will be needed to make its vision a reality. This report reflects the proceedings of the 90-minute session.

1 From 2010 to 2020, the total carload transportation of goods increased 50 per cent and the number of carloads originating in Canada (initial departures) increased by 47 per cent, ([Rail Trends 2020](#))

OPENING REMARKS AND PRESENTATIONS

CCA President **Mary Van Buren** welcomed attendees on behalf of CCA, EDC and WCR&HCA. She emphasized the importance and timeliness of this discussion on investing in trade infrastructure—and how the voices of the Canadian leaders at this roundtable² will be critical to building momentum around the WCTGCI and capitalizing on the Asian export opportunity, which will create real value for Canadians for years to come.

The Asian export opportunity

Peter Hall, EDC's Vice President and Chief Economist, began his presentation by noting the rise of Asia's middle class, which is growing by seven million people each year in Indonesia, 20 million in India and 35 million in China—equivalent to the entire population of Canada.

Why does this matter to our country? Peter Hall explained that when people enter the middle class, they buy more (and higher value) goods and services. Countries whose economies are growing as quickly as those in Asia tend to lose the capacity to meet all of their needs domestically, meaning they have to import more goods from other countries to fill the gaps.

Today, the United States is the primary customer for Canadian products, accounting for about 75 per cent of all merchandise exports. Unlike Asia, the U.S. and other traditional export markets are already quite mature, with demographics that are not favourable to high future growth that matches the scale in the Asian markets. As an example of the Asian opportunity, the discussion went into a deeper dive on China. While China represents only 5 per cent of Canada's current trade, if the growth rate seen over the last two decades holds, it will surpass the U.S. as the top destination for Canadian goods by 2048. And if Canada can achieve even just half of Australia's market share for Chinese imports, Peter Hall said the point at which China becomes our top destination could be reached much faster—by 2036.

In the 1980s, Australia made a policy decision to focus less on the major European markets (which accounted for the bulk of its exports at the time) and instead target China. That bet paid off. China is now the country's largest trading partner, even with recent trade bans and sanctions, with Australia's exports to China eclipsing those to Europe and Japan. Peter Hall said it may not be a coincidence that, until the pandemic hit, Australia had not experienced a recession for nearly 30 years.

Hall concluded by noting that if Canada is to make similar gains into China, it will require more than just policy decisions. A massive scale-up will be required from Canadian businesses, starting with those that export metals, wood, energy and food—supported in parallel by a massive scale-up in our country's trade infrastructure.

Key takeaways on Asia:

- The fastest annual growing middle class is in Indonesia (7 million); India (20 million); and China (35 million)
 - The rate of middle class growth in Asia outstrips its economies' capacity to fill domestic needs, thereby creating new trade markets
 - Growing exports to Asia will require a massive scale-up of trade infrastructure
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Insights into the Chinese market

Drawing on his experiences as Canada's former ambassador to China, **Guy Saint-Jacques** gave an overview of China's political/economic landscape and what it means for future trade opportunities for Canadian exporters.

² See attendee list attached in Appendix 'A'

China's leader, Xi Jinping, is facing an important deadline: at the October 2022 National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), he will need to receive the blessing of the party to serve an unprecedented third term as general secretary. While that will likely happen barring extraordinary circumstances, Guy Saint-Jacques said there are several "black clouds" on the horizon that Xi will need to navigate.

When he came to power nearly a decade ago, Xi was concerned about how the inequalities in Chinese society could lead to instability. Those concerns remain, so Xi is promoting "common prosperity"—and wanting high-wealth businesses and individuals to give back to help bridge the gap between the rich and poor. This comes alongside crackdowns against some of the country's tech giants such as Alibaba, with the goal being to bring them into greater alignment with CCP policy.

While China has recovered well from COVID-19, Guy Saint-Jacques said consumption has not picked up as much as expected and industrial production is slowing down. There are also demographic challenges to address. Fewer people are getting married and the birth rate is at its lowest since the 1960s. Graduates are finding it difficult to find jobs. And young people are fed up with the "9-9-6" system (working 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., six days a week) used by many big companies, opting instead for smaller jobs with fewer hours that pay just enough for a one-bedroom apartment.

Canadian exports to China were up 23 per cent in the first half of 2021 compared to 2020, led by barley, coal, copper and canola. As China places more sanctions against Australia, Canadian exporters are stepping up to meet demand. That said, food products now make up 31 per cent of Canada's total exports to China, far greater than the global average of 8 per cent—meaning there is an opportunity to diversify into other areas, such as energy³ and manufacturing, where Canada lags behind other countries. A growing market exists for liquefied natural gas, hydrogen and cleantech solutions (such as carbon capture and storage) as China transitions away from coal. A fast-growing middle class is also boosting demand for consumer products and financial services.

To capitalize on these and other market opportunities, Canada must build the infrastructure required to bring Canadian products to tidewater. Guy Saint-Jacques also noted that Canadian companies will need to pay closer attention to environmental, social and governance (ESG) concerns, including the potential use of slave labour and whether the companies they work with in China have the right political connections.

While China is and will remain an important market for Canada, Guy Saint-Jacques concluded by saying a new engagement strategy will be needed to ensure it can be a reliable trading partner for Canadian companies. To that end, Canada should look to align its policies with the U.S., learn from Australia's experiences, and work with partners to reinforce the predictability of the world's multilateral trade system—ensuring the same rules apply to all countries equally.

Key takeaways on China:

- China is facing a number of economic and demographic challenges
 - Canada must diversify exports to China, with areas for growth including energy and cleantech
 - Canada needs a new engagement strategy to bring more reliability to its trade relationship with China
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3 Diversifying Canadian exports: China's and India's main imports are mineral fuels and mineral oils accounting for 19 per cent of total imports with a value of \$303 billion dollars and 30 per cent of total imports with a value of \$144 billion dollars a year respectively.

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Prior to attending the roundtable discussion, panelists were asked to consider four key questions:

1. Why is an efficient Western Canada trade-enabling infrastructure with Asia important for Canada?
2. Who needs to be persuaded to invest in the WCTGCI? What messages do they need to hear?
3. How do we move from a vision to a plan—and can we link the projected export businesses to the needed infrastructure?
4. How can we improve the current systems and policies of Canada’s trade infrastructure?

Each panelist was then given an opportunity to summarize their views (and/or those of their respective industries/associations) on any or all of those questions. By the end of the session, a number of key themes, issues, needs and challenges had emerged:

- Long-term planning and strategy
- Strategic infrastructure investments
- Ports and railways
- Supply chain disruptions and capacity issues
- Permits and approvals for major projects
- The Canadian brand
- Free trade
- Building the business case
- Partnerships

Long-term planning and strategy

- Canada requires a long-term plan for overcoming reliability issues in supply chains and trade corridors, along with proportional investments in infrastructure.
- Strategic investment in key trade infrastructure is required to provide efficient access of Canadian exports to the Asian market. Doing so will require the setting of hard goals and targets related to export volumes, not just aiming for incremental improvements of a few percentage points each year.
- As Canada recovers from the pandemic, too much emphasis is being placed on short-term gains on the consumer side of the economy, with insufficient thought toward long-term economic growth. What’s needed is an ambitious, forward looking, long-term strategy, developed in partnership with businesses, to attract and retain both talent and investment and in the process help ensure sustainable growth.
- Any strategy for growth and investment comes down to people and talent. From the perspective of post-secondary institutions, the pandemic has brought Canada’s labour force to an interesting crossroads: while schools must continue to develop talent for the future, there is also a pressing need to retrain talent for the needs of tomorrow. Increasingly, highly skilled people are going back to school to upgrade their credentials to become more employable and productive.
- Going forward, developing policies that reflect emerging technologies such as autonomous vehicles and the Internet of Things will be key to realizing an aggressive, ambitious growth strategy.

Strategic infrastructure investments

- Infrastructure investment must be tied to a growth plan, as Canada moves forward in its recovery from the pandemic. It is deserving of national priority policy interest and investment, as we see emerging, for example, in the United States where President Biden is committing trillions of dollars to infrastructure investment

including green infrastructure and R&D. The President's goal: return government investment in infrastructure to a fixed percentage of GDP.

- Importers and exporters have ambitious expansion plans—but realizing them depends on Canada's ability to leverage private sector investment. To that end, strategic—not necessarily per capita—infrastructure investments are required so that the right infrastructure is built to fully enable Canada's efficient, cost-effective and reliable participation in global trade. To that end, Canada's Infrastructure Bank can and should play a key leadership role.
- Western Canada should be looked at not as four separate provinces, but as a single global import/export corporation—one that needs sustained, predictable, strategic investments in trade infrastructure to ensure it can get its products to market in a timely, cost-effective way.
- Improving Western Canada's trade productivity and efficient connectivity to the Asia markets, will benefit Canada. In the process, investment in western trade infrastructure assets will materially help generate the income that pays for 'the infrastructure we want and the infrastructure we need.'

Ports and railways

- The right infrastructure needs to be put in place, especially given how expensive it can be to get a container out of Asia (as much as \$40,000 per container compared to \$14,000 for Mexico). Canada should strive to be the preferred port for other countries—for example, having the U.S. ship to Asia through Canadian ports.
- In 2020, 20 out of the top 25 largest container ports by share of outbound trade were located in the United States while only three are in Canada. Canada's share of total North American exports that pass through ports is 14.2 per cent. Given that container volume at the Port of Vancouver is already up 18 per cent in 2021, there is a clear need for an infrastructure plan with goals that match the nation's needs for growth.
- Ports are integral to Canada's trade agenda and its ability to unlock new markets. The Port of Prince Rupert is the third-largest port in the country and should surpass Montreal for second place within the next decade. Roughly \$50 billion in trade flows through the port each year, with its broader transportation system bringing benefits to communities all across Western Canada.
- Canada's railways touch more than 50 per cent of the goods exported out of Canada. But rail is a capital-intensive industry, with about 25 per cent of total revenues re-invested into infrastructure—more than \$30 billion over the last 20 years. Likewise, more than half of investments which reached 1.2 billion dollars in 2019 go to the maintenance and repair of tracks and roadway (39 per cent) and buildings, machinery and equipment (19 per cent).
- Given how difficult it can be to move trains in and out of major urban centres, there is a need to continuously innovate when it comes to infrastructure. In 2020, CN and CP each moved 30 million tonnes of grain exports. Those record numbers were made possible by investments in new looped track layouts at ports and terminals as well as investments in innovative high-capacity hopper rail cars—many of which were made here in Canada, bringing spin-off benefits in terms of jobs in the domestic manufacturing sector.

Supply chain disruptions and capacity issues

- The export opportunity for Canada is constrained by its supply chain capacity. While the vast majority of Western Canada's supply chain functions well, there are significant bottlenecks to overcome at the first and last mile—that is, in the urban centres and ports.

- One of the unintended consequences of COVID-19 is that consumers have come to realize that the availability of certain products they took for granted before the pandemic is no longer guaranteed. There is an opportunity for political leadership to unclog supply chain disruptions and bottlenecks, thereby supporting the efficient movement of goods to and from market.
- Exporters have been talking about rail and port capacity issues for years, well before the current supply chain disruptions of the pandemic. Labour issues and overly long approval processes for major projects continue to present challenges.
- Canada's supply chain is seen by some to be fragile at best, with any disruptions that affect the movement of goods placing a considerable burden on importers and exporters in the form of fees and delays.
- In the U.S., there is talk about providing incentives to have electric batteries manufactured domestically to avoid the supply chain disruptions that come with being so reliant on Asia for imports.
- With the ongoing supply-chain disruptions, there is a need for better tracking and dissemination of data at borders, ports and airports.

Permits and approvals for major infrastructure projects

- The OECD's product market regulation (PMR) indicator measures a country's regulatory barriers to competition; Canada's PMR index classifies Canada as less business friendly than the OECD average due to complex regulatory systems.
- Over the past 10 years, the Port of Vancouver has played a direct role in permitting approximately \$3 billion in upgrades and improvements, with the typical timeline for delivery being 180 business days. This is in stark contrast to the slow pace of large, nationally strategic "designated" projects. In the container space, for example, one such project is now in Year 7 of the permitting process.
- Bringing more efficiency to the regulatory process for large, complex infrastructure projects will also help Canada access and compete for global capital. At present it can take seven years or longer from the concept stage to full operations, which creates risk and uncertainty for private sector investors. The biggest issues found in the PMR report for Canada are the rules of public procurement and the governance of state-owned enterprises, which fall short of the OECD best practices which hinder competitiveness.

The Canadian brand

- Canada is getting a reputation for not being able to build things in a predictable, timely manner. As a result, capital is moving elsewhere. Unprecedented regulatory complexity, combined with an aging population leading to a workforce shortage and a growing infrastructure deficit, are also affecting Canada's global brand and leading to a further flight of capital.
- Western Canada is home to some of the most trade-dependent provinces in one of most trade-dependent countries in the world. That's why the WCGTCI as part of a national trade gateway investment strategy is so important: Canada's domestic market is small, so we must sell to other markets globally to grow and succeed.
- Given a level playing field, Canadian companies can compete with anybody. A big reason for that is the Canadian brand, which signifies quality, safety and reliability. But if Western Canadian products are unable to get to global markets due to unreliable trade infrastructure, those markets will choose to purchase from our competitors. However, if exporters can get their assets to market in a timely, cost-effective way, they will be better able to support the Canadian brand and create new jobs, resulting in a wealthier, more prosperous country.

- While the pandemic heightened our dependency on global supply chains, we must be selective where we invest in domestic production. Using personal protective equipment as an example, the U.S. can produce face masks at a cost of eight dollars a box, while China and Mexico can do it for less than two dollars a box. Canada can't and shouldn't try to compete in that space. But there other areas where we can compete—we just need to be clear about what sectors and customers make the most sense to target. Because Canada's brand is associated with quality, we should be looking for more affluent markets for our products.
- In creating a growth plan for Canada, it will be important to link domestic production to the country's sustainability goals—and to consider how our ability to produce and export more cleantech will affect our climate change commitments.

Free trade

The exporters of Canadian agri-food products—beef, pork, grains, cereals, oilseeds, pulses, canola, etc.—are calling on the government to address five key priorities:

- Resolve issues related to the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union that are hindering access to trade for Canada's agri-food exporters.
- Create a "Chief of Trade Implementation" position at Global Affairs Canada to better coordinate with the agri-food industry on how to remove barriers to trade.
- Ask the Ottawa Group to reinstate the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body in order to protect a trading environment based on rules.
- Hold immediate talks about launching free trade agreements with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Kingdom.
- Enhance advocacy capacity to promote the science behind Canada's world-class agri-food sector.

Partnerships

- Any long-term planning effort must be backed by a collective effort that recognizes the strengths the private sector can bring to the table alongside governmental planning efforts.
- Enabling trade requires a partnership and alignment between business, associations, educators, communities and governments. By working together, we can leverage our collective expertise and build the consensus to secure the necessary level of investment.
- In developing an infrastructure plan, engagement with Indigenous groups and developing win-win scenarios with First Nations communities across Western Canada will be key.
- There is a need to strengthen partnerships throughout the supply chain, including with ports and communities throughout Western Canada, especially those with ties to the agriculture, forestry and mining sectors. A national-level strategy will be key to achieving that and delivering real economic benefits.
- Post-secondary institutions are a source of innovation, which is vital to turning ideas into commercial products that can be sold globally. In addition to the discovery-based research conducted by universities, companies should increasingly tap into the applied research being done at Canada's polytechnic institutes.
- Greater coordination is needed among Western Canada's trade gateways and corridors, possibly replicating (and improving upon) Montreal's CargoM logistic and transportation cluster.

CLOSING COMMENTS

The final word of the day went to **Todd Winterhalt**, EDC's Senior Vice President of Communications and Corporate Strategy, who thanked all of the panellists for their contributions. He indicated there is solid agreement that strategic investment in infrastructure is key to taking advantage of the trade opportunities that are available to Western Canada.

According to EDC, Canada's share of global exports continues to fall—costing the country billions of dollars each year. Todd Winterhalt echoed the panellists' call for a long-term trade strategy, noting that EDC recently completed its first-ever 10-year strategy rather than the usual three-year lookahead. Creating such a strategy will require many more conversations in the future about specific trade gateways and export growth in general, involving industry champions from the private sector as well as political leaders and government agencies at all levels.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The business case for trade-based economic growth is clear—its time for action.

A strong business case supports the WCGTCI. We need to develop the strategy to bring the vision to life. This will necessitate gaining the federal government's commitment to long-term, predictable investment, including recapitalization of the national trade corridor fund and strong alignment with the provinces and the private sector on policy, planning and investment.

- **Aggressive, ambitious, visionary leadership** is needed to strategically invest in the trade-enabling infrastructure Canada requires to compete and succeed on the global stage, including efficient access to Asian market opportunities.
- Canada needs a **long-term investment plan/strategy** that ties trade-enabling infrastructure investment to trade diversification and therefore economic growth.
- Current regulatory complexities and process inefficiencies are creating a global perception that Canada lacks **reliability, certainty and predictability**. This discourages foreign capital investment in Canada.
- Government needs to **work closely and partner with the private sector**, harnessing industry expertise and insights when developing the trade infrastructure investment strategy.
- **Specific goals and targets** for trade infrastructure investment must be part of a plan/strategy.
- **Supply chain disruptions** are affecting every aspect of Canada's economy (exporters, importers, consumers) and require strategic investment attention. Resilient, reliable core and trade transportation infrastructure is key to Canada's ability to adapt to climate change and prosper.
- **Red tape requires de-cluttering** for trade-supporting projects of national significance to support Canada's global trade value proposition.
- Investments must be made **strategically** to deliver the greatest impact.
- Investments in **research and innovation** are as important as investments in technology and equipment.
- The **Canadian brand** is waning globally and requires redress. Manufacturers and exporters need confidence in their ability to move products to/from existing and emerging markets. Investors need to experience a welcoming investment climate.

APPENDIX 'A': ROUNDTABLE ATTENDEES

Panellists and Presenters	
Ray Bassett Chair, Canadian Construction Association	Perrin Beatty President and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce
Marc Brazeau President and CEO, Railway Association of Canada	Claire Citeau Executive Director, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance
Carlo Dade Director, Trade and Investment Centre, Canada West Foundation	Chris Dekker President and CEO, Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership
Diane Gray President and CEO, CentrePort Canada	Leann Hackman-Carty CEO, Economic Developers Alberta
Peter Hall Vice President and Chief Economist, Export Development Canada	Goldy Hyder President and CEO, Business Council of Canada
John Law Senior Fellow, Canada West Foundation	Chris Lorenc President, Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association
Mariette Mulaire President and CEO, World Trade Centre Winnipeg	Greg Orbanski Chair, Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association
Bruce Rodgers Executive Director, Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association	Guy Saint-Jacques Former Canadian Ambassador to China
Shaun Stevenson President and CEO, Prince Rupert Port Authority	Jim Szautner Dean, School of Transportation, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
Mary Van Buren President, Canadian Construction Association	Todd Winterhalt Senior Vice President, Communications and Corporate Strategy, Export Development Canada
Peter Xotta Vice President, Planning and Operations, Port of Vancouver	
Observers	
David Bhamjee Vice President, Public Affairs and Corporate Secretary, Export Development Canada	Rod Gilbert Vice President, Public Affairs, Canadian Construction Association
Kenny Leon Director, Marketing, innovation and Events, Canadian Construction Association	Mark Livingston Regional Vice President, Export Development Canada
Trevor McOstrich Advisor, Stakeholder Relations, Export Development Canada	Matt Pitcairn Vice President, BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association

Panellists and Presenters	
Kelly Scott President, BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association	Marie-France Senécal Principal Advisor, Public Affairs, Export Development Canada
Anna Tuygunova Associate Advisor, Export Development Canada	Catherine Mitchell Manager, Policy and Communications, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association



Ray Bassett

Chair, Canadian Construction Association

Ray Bassett has been in the construction surety industry since 1984. He has led both the “claims” practice and the “underwriting” practice for leading national surety companies in Canada. Over the past 36 years, through several economic cycles, Ray has learned from construction companies of all sizes, in all sectors and all regions of Canada and the U.S. His current role with Travelers Canada includes client relationships with national and larger regional construction companies, strategic initiatives in product development and technology, professional development of staff, and business strategy for the Construction Services group for Travelers in North America.

Ray has served on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) since March 2010, has chaired the MS&S Council, and has chaired an executive committee focused on federal prompt payment. Ray was elected as First National Vice-Chair of the CCA Board in spring 2020.

A large part of Ray’s focus since joining Travelers in 2007 has been improving collaboration and value among stakeholders in the construction industry, including public and private project owners, the construction and project finance lending community, financial ratings agencies, consultants, the construction law bar, and the surety industry. Some recent examples include CCA’s initiative on prompt payment leading to the Federal Prompt Payment Act, participating as an advisory group member on the review leading to the updated Ontario Construction Act, and is a speaker in York University’s Osgoode Professional Development’s Continuing Legal Education Program. In 2017, Ray was honoured by his colleagues in the Canadian surety industry with the Surety Association of Canada’s President Award.

Ray studied philosophy and English literature at the University of Toronto and has done executive programs at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and the London Business School.

Ray and his wife Janice have three adult children and live in Jackson’s Point, Ontario on the south shore of Lake Simcoe.



Honourable Perrin Beatty, PC, OC

President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Chamber of Commerce

The Honourable Perrin Beatty, PC, OC, is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the 200,000-member Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Canada’s largest and most representative national business association. Before joining the Canadian Chamber in August 2007, Perrin held the same role at Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME).

A descendant of one of Canada’s most prominent manufacturing families, he grew up in Fergus, Ontario and graduated from the University of Western Ontario in 1971.

Perrin was first elected to the House of Commons as a Progressive Conservative in 1972.

During his 21 years in Parliament, he served as Minister in seven different portfolios, including Treasury Board, National Revenue, Solicitor General, Defence, National Health and Welfare, Communications and External Affairs.

In 1994, Perrin joined a number of private sector boards and worked as a consultant in communications. In addition, he was an Honorary Visiting Professor in Western University’s Department of Political Science. From 1995 to 1999, he served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

In keeping with his long-standing interest in education, Perrin served as Chancellor of the University of Ontario Institute of Technology from 2008 to 2015. He has received honorary Doctor of Law degrees from Western University, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Wilfrid Laurier University.

Perrin is currently a member of the board of directors of Mitsui Canada and in 2018, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada for his lifetime of public service and for his devotion to the development of our nation as a community leader and corporate visionary. In 2020, the Government of Japan awarded Perrin the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, in recognition of his many distinguished achievements in international relations and advancements in Canada-Japan business relations.



Marc Brazeau

President and CEO, The Railway Association of Canada

Marc Brazeau is the President and CEO of The Railway Association of Canada (RAC), one of Canada's leading trade associations, representing more than 50 freight and passenger railway companies. Marc brings close to 30 years of experience in the transportation industry to his leadership role with the RAC.

Prior to joining the RAC, Marc was the Vice-President of Sales and Marketing at Uni-Select where he brought significant growth to this North American auto parts distributor. Previously, Marc served as the President and CEO of the Automotive Industries Association of Canada where he was responsible for delivering a number of important industry initiatives and programs aimed at growing the automotive service and repair industry in Canada for 20 consecutive years.

As a natural leader, Marc has successfully led a number of strategic initiatives for national trade associations as well as overseeing the growth of a leading publicly traded auto parts company in Canada.

Marc is a graduate in Public Relations from Humber College and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Communications) Degree from the University of Ottawa.



Carlo Dade

Director, Centre on Trade and Investment Policy at the Canada West Foundation

Carlo Dade is the Director of the Centre on Trade and Investment Policy at the Canada West Foundation, a pan-western Calgary-based think tank which focuses on increasing growth and profitability in western Canada's export economy. His areas of current work focus include North American and pan-Pacific trade, infrastructure and competitiveness, and role of provinces as international actors. Previously, Carlo served as the Executive Director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and Canadian chair of the bi-national Canada-Mexico Initiative. He is also a frequent witness at parliament and media commentator on Canadian trade issues including the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Pacific Alliance, trade agreements and the role of the private sector in international development.

Carlo began his career in the Latin American and Caribbean region Technical Department at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. and subsequently ran Haiti/Dominican Republic/Caribbean operations for the Inter-American Foundation, a U.S. government foreign aid agency. He is a founding member of the Enterprise Research Institute, a Washington D.C. think tank specializing in Private Sector Development and Corporate Social Responsibility issues.



Chris Dekker

President and CEO, Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP)

Chris Dekker assumed the role of President & CEO with Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP) in May 2015. He obtained an Honours Degree in Commerce from the University of Saskatchewan and worked in marketing with Maple Leaf Foods in Edmonton before joining the provincial government in a number of executive positions including Chief of Staff to the Leader of the Opposition. In 1996, he was appointed to the position of Manager of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs and Special Projects for the City of Saskatoon. Chris returned to the Government of Saskatchewan in 2009 as Senior Vice President of Marketing and Investment Attraction for Enterprise Saskatchewan and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2010. Before joining STEP, Chris served as the Associate Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Economy. He is an Accredited Public Relations Practitioner (APR), and two-time winner of the prestigious Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service.



Diane Gray

President and CEO, CentrePort Canada Inc.

Ms. Diane Gray is the founding President and CEO of CentrePort Canada Inc. CentrePort is a 20,000 acre tri-modal inland port and Foreign Trade Zone in Winnipeg's capital region.

Ms. Gray previously worked for the Province of Manitoba from 1995 to 2009 and simultaneously served as Deputy Minister of Finance, Deputy Minister of Federal-Provincial and International Relations, and Deputy Minister of Trade. She has received the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Excellence in Public Administration, the Women of Distinction Award for Management and Leadership, and was recognized by the Supply Chain Management

Association as one of the 100 Influential Women in Canadian Supply Chain.

Ms. Gray currently serves as Chair of Mitacs and the Manitoba Technology Accelerator, and is co-Chair of World Trade Centre Winnipeg. In addition, Ms. Gray serves on the boards of UM Properties; the Public Policy Forum of Canada; the Canada West Foundation; and the Associates of the Asper School of Business.

Ms. Gray is a graduate of the University of Manitoba's and University of Winnipeg's Joint Masters of Public Administration Program and has an undergraduate degree in political studies.



Leann Hackman-Carty

CEO, Economic Developers Alberta

With a diverse background in the private, public and non-profit sectors, Leann has refined her unique, entrepreneurial ability to establish partnerships across various sectors, industries and borders; anticipate emerging and ongoing business needs; design new ways of providing goods and/or services; as well as conceptualize, plan and implement innovative initiatives. Leann started her career as Executive Assistant, Community and Economic Development, for the Mayor of Calgary, serving in that capacity for over a decade.

Leann has provided business and economic recovery services to municipalities post-disaster; business development services to the State of Mississippi and State of Georgia; leadership for the Organization

of Women in International Trade; organized and hosted numerous international trade delegations; worked with economic developers and elected officials throughout the province of Alberta; developed business and marketing plans for small-medium sized enterprises; and worked on a number of high profile community investment projects. Since 2009, Leann has been the CEO of Economic Developers Alberta. In that capacity, she has worked with numerous Alberta flood-impacted communities, and the Fort McMurray region on their business and economic recovery efforts. She has ‘Canadianized’ the Community Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency, designed to help communities prepare for and recover from economic disruptions, and brought a community resiliency training program to Canada. At the end of December 2017, she released her Master Your Disaster series of guidebooks on Amazon, designed to help individuals, businesses and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. She also hosts the MYD Global YouTube Channel where she talks “all things disaster”.

In addition to her work at EDA, she is Founder of Concrete Global Ventures, an import/export company focused on providing personal protective equipment (PPE); and Principal of HackmanCarty and Associates, a consulting firm focused on community capacity building, resilience and recovery.



Peter Hall

Vice-President and Chief Economist, Export Development Canada

Peter Hall joined Export Development Canada (EDC) in November 2004. With over 30 years of experience in economic analysis and forecasting, Mr. Hall is responsible for overseeing EDC’s economic analysis, country risk assessment and corporate research groups. In addition to preparing strategic advice for senior management at EDC, Mr. Hall is a featured speaker at conferences, international roundtables and policy forums, and regularly appears in television, radio and print media commenting on the world economy and Canadian international trade issues.

He produces a widely circulated print and video weekly commentary covering an eclectic range of current global economic issues. Prior to joining EDC, Mr. Hall directed the economic forecasting activities of the Conference Board of Canada. Mr. Hall has served as president of both the Canadian Association for Business Economics, a 600- member national association of professional economists, and its largest local chapter, the Ottawa Economics Association. He has also been a volunteer board and committee member for two Ottawa area private schools. Mr. Hall has degrees in economics from both Carleton University and the University of Toronto.



Goldy Hyder

President and CEO, Business Council of Canada

Goldy Hyder is President and CEO of the Business Council of Canada, a non-partisan association composed of the chief executives and entrepreneurs of more than 150 leading Canadian companies. Previously he was President & CEO of Hill+Knowlton Strategies (Canada). Earlier in his career he served as director of policy and chief of staff to The Right Honourable Joe Clark, former prime minister and leader of the then federal Progressive Conservative Party.

Mr. Hyder serves in many charitable and non-profit organizations, including as chair of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada’s Asia Business Leaders Advisory Council and as board member of the Business

+ Higher Education Roundtable. He is a regular commentator in the Canadian media on business, politics and public policy. In 2013 he received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in recognition of his contributions to Canada.



John Law

Senior Fellow, Canada West Foundation

Mr. Law is a recognized leader in Canada's transportation and infrastructure sector having played a significant role in the development of national and interprovincial transportation policy. During his career he has served a number of senior positions in industry and government including President of the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) and Chair of the Canadian Council of Deputy Ministers responsible for Transportation and Infrastructure. He was the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Saskatchewan's Global Transportation Hub as well as the Deputy Minister of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure. In 2010, he received TAC's prestigious lifetime achievement award in recognition of his valuable contribution to transportation development in Canada.

Mr. Law served for 10 years as the President of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, the Crown Corporation responsible for asset management and building construction for the Province of Saskatchewan and was also the Province's first Chief Information and Services Officer. His public service career included staff advisory positions to Treasury Board and Cabinet with the Government of Canada, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Mr. Law is currently the President of Lawmark International, which he founded in 2012 to provide integrated business development, logistics, and regulatory support services to his clients in Western Canada. Mr. Law has written and facilitated think tank discussions on the importance of Canadian trade infrastructure with organizations including the Canada West Foundation, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Construction Association.



Chris W. Lorenc, B.A., LL.B.

President, Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association

A lawyer by background, Chris Lorenc has been President of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA) since 1991 and President of the Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association since 1995.

Mr. Lorenc served on Winnipeg City Council from 1983 - 92, and served on the Executive Policy Committee and a number of its standing committees.

Mr. Lorenc has sat since 2000 on the Manitoba Employers Council; is a founding member and past Chair of the CentrePort Canada Board of Directors; founding Chair of the SAFE Roads Committee; and founding member of the Manitoba Construction Sector Council.

Since 1991, Mr. Lorenc has been active with the Canadian Construction Association. He has been a leading advocate championing the links between strategic investment in infrastructure and economic growth.

In 2011, Mr. Lorenc chaired the Infrastructure Funding Council Report for then Mayor Sam Katz and the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. The Mayor's Trade Council report he chaired (2007 - 08) for Mayor Katz is often cited as the genesis of CentrePort Canada.

He was a member of the Winnipeg Football Club Board of Directors (2014 – 2020); and served as employer representative on: the Manitoba Labour Board, the WCB Act Legislative Review Committees, and the WCB Board of Directors.

Mr. Lorenc has served on several civic and provincial policy task forces and is often invited to speak to a variety of forums.



Mariette Mulaire

President and CEO, World Trade Centre Winnipeg

Mariette Mulaire is the President and CEO of the World Trade Centre Winnipeg, Manitoba's leading trade organization. She has spent most of her career developing economic and trade initiatives and is the founding President and CEO of three economic development organizations as well as four editions of an international business-to-business forum called Centrallia.

Mariette has been elected as Vice-Chair of the World Trade Centre Winnipeg's association Board of Directors, and brings a unique trade perspective to her roles as a Director on the Bank of Canada Board, the Canada West Foundation board as well as TV5 Canada-Québec.

Over the years, Mariette has volunteered on many boards and committees in a variety of sectors, such as health, sports, culture, francophone affairs and economic development. Her many awards and recognitions (Women of Distinction, Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Award, Order of the Francophones of the Americas, Prix Riel, Prix Maurice-Gauthier, Award of Excellence – Promotion of Linguistic Duality from the Commissioner of Official languages.) demonstrate her dedication and contributions to the community. She was the spokesperson for the 200th anniversary of Université de St. Boniface (2018) as well as for the national project: Les Rendez-Vous de la francophonie 2017, 2018).



Greg Orbanski, B.A, CET

Chair, Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association

Greg Orbanski is the President & CEO of Tri-Line Construction Ltd., a roadbuilding/earthmoving contractor which has been proudly building infrastructure in the Province of Manitoba for over 60 years. Greg is the current Chair of the Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (2019 – Present) and also serves on the Board of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association as an Executive Director.

Greg is very active in the heavy civil industry in Manitoba and participates in numerous boards and committees. He was first elected to the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA) Board of Directors in 2003 and Chaired the Heavy Equipment Rental Rates Committee from 2003 to 2017. He then served on the MHCA Board Executive Committee as Secretary/Treasurer (2013 – 2014) and Vice-Chair (2015 – 2016). Greg was elected Chairman of the MHCA Board in 2017 and held the position for two years.

Greg was also active with the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) and served on the Board of Directors for two years 2017 – 2018. On the CCA Board he held the role of Provincial Vice-Chair for Manitoba and served on several committees including the Civil Infrastructure Council, the Business & Market Development Committee, and the Industry Advocacy and Regulatory Affairs Committee.

Greg is active in the Agri-culture industry in Manitoba. Along with his family, he currently owns and operates Orbanski Farms Ltd., a 4000 Acre Grain & Oilseed Farm Operation in the Manitoba Interlake Region. Greg also served on the Board of Directors of Paradigm Farms Ltd. from 1997 to 2011.

Greg studied economics at the University of Manitoba and obtained his Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree in 1989.

Greg also studied civil engineering technology (CET) at Red River Community College and Graduated with Honors in 1993.



Bruce Rodgers

Executive Director, Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association

Bruce Rodgers has been an active participant on the Board of Directors for CIFFA since 2009, and became Executive Director in October 2018. Bruce has several years of senior executive experience with several large transportation organizations, where he successfully bolstered revenue and maximized profitability by combining his high level of business acumen, strong leadership and a continued focus on results. Bruce is well-known for his high level of commitment to anything he becomes involved in, strategic approach, mastery in considering multiple perspectives and solving problems, and ability to connect and collaborate with others

at all levels.

Bruce also believes in giving back to the communities he's involved in, and for much of his career has served on the Board of Directors of various industry associations including the Toronto Transportation Club and Canadian Courier & Logistics Association.

CIFFA represents some 260 small, medium and large freight forwarding companies in Canada, and has in excess of 160 associate members offering products and services to regular members. Please visit www.ciffa.com for details on CIFFA's robust education programs, including professional training on Transport Canada's Air Cargo Security, accredited Dangerous Goods training or workshops on various subjects in addition to accredited Certificate and Advanced Certificate programs. All CIFFA education programs are available to freight forwarders, importers, exporters and third-party service providers.



Guy Saint-Jacques

Consultant and Administrator, Xebec Adsorption Inc. and of the Foundation of the Montreal Clinical Research Institute

Guy Saint-Jacques provides strategic advice on China. He sits on the board of directors of Xebec Adsorption Inc. and of the Foundation of the Montreal Clinical Research Institute. He is a Fellow of the China Institute of the University of Alberta, the Institute of International Studies of Montreal and the C.D. Howe Institute. In addition, he is the Honorary Chairman of the China Policy Centre in Ottawa.

Previously, Mr. Saint-Jacques worked for Global Affairs Canada for nearly forty years, serving in Kinshasa, Hong Kong, Beijing, Washington, DC and London. He has served as Deputy High Commissioner in London and as Deputy Head of Mission in Washington. In Ottawa, among other things, he has worked in the divisions dealing with Science and Technology and Energy and Environment, in the Associate Deputy Minister's Office and has been Director of Assignments and Director General of Personnel Management. In addition, Mr. Saint-Jacques was

Canada's Chief Negotiator and Climate Change Ambassador from 2010 to 2012 and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in the People's Republic of China from 2012 to 2016. Mr. Saint-Jacques speaks Mandarin.



Shaun Stevenson

President and CEO, Prince Rupert Port Authority

Shaun Stevenson was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of the Prince Rupert Port Authority in August 2018. Mr. Stevenson joined PRPA in 1997 assuming progressive roles in helping lead the Port of Prince Rupert in its transformation and growth as a global trade gateway. In his previous position of Vice President, Trade Development and Public Affairs, he played a leadership role in setting the strategic direction for the growth of the Prince Rupert gateway and development of numerous port projects and related infrastructure, advancing the growth and expansion of the Port of Prince Rupert to become Canada's third largest port, anchoring in excess of \$60 Billion in trade. Shaun holds an MBA degree from Simon Fraser University and lives in Prince Rupert with his wife Cindy and two children Brendan and Zosia.



Jim Szautner

Dean for the School of Manufacturing and Automation, School of Transportation and Dean of Apprenticeship, The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)

Jim brings over a decade of post-secondary leadership experience. He is a champion for inclusive apprenticeship education and supports the skilled trades at all levels. He is a board member to Skills Alberta, the chair for the National Council of Deans for Apprenticeship, Trades and Technology (NCDATT) and a member of the Alberta Deans of Apprenticeship and Trades (ADAT).



Mary Van Buren

President, Canadian Construction Association

Mary Van Buren is the president of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA). Mary is a proven leader with an exceptional track record in advancing member interests by introducing innovative world-class member services, promoting the value of the profession and advocating adoption of technology and standards to improve professionalism. She excels at creating and communicating a compelling vision combined with focusing on developing and empowering people to generate positive outcomes for members.

An expert in marketing, communications, strategy and digital, she has worked in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors and has held executive roles at leading associations and not-for-profits, including the Canadian Medical Association's subsidiary, MD Financial Management, and Export Development Canada. In her previous role as vice-president of marketing and IT at the Canadian Real Estate Association, Mary led a team of 60 to grow its premier services, REALTOR.ca and WEBForms® in the double digits, collaborating with over 90 boards and associations across Canada, significantly generating member value and promoting the value of REALTORS®.

In addition to her broad business experience and financial acumen, Mary holds an MBA in international business from McGill and a B.Com from the University of Ottawa, is bilingual and is a Certified Association Executive.



Todd Winterhalt

Senior Vice-President, Communications and Corporate Strategy

Prior to his current role, Mr. Winterhalt was EDC's Vice-President, Global Trade, a group whose launch he oversaw in 2016. Since joining EDC in 2002, he held a number of roles of increasing responsibility, including: Vice-President, International Business Development; Vice-President, Human Resources; Chief International Research Advisor, Financing; and, Director, Political Risk Assessment. Prior to joining EDC, Mr. Winterhalt served in the Canadian diplomatic corps where he held several roles, including Consul and Trade Commissioner at the Canadian Consulate General in São Paulo, Brazil.

Mr. Winterhalt holds a Honours B.A. from the University of Western Ontario, and a M.Sc from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He was the inaugural recipient of EDC's Excellence in People Leadership Award and is a past-President of the Canadian Association of Professional Intelligence Analysts.



Peter Xotta

Vice President of Planning and Operations, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority

In his role as vice president, planning and operations, Peter Xotta is responsible for the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's long-term planning, land and marine operations, security, and trade development activities.

For the past decade, Peter has led the port authority's gateway infrastructure programs, and the funding thereof, to deliver an enhanced Lower Mainland road and rail network to better facilitate trade through the Port of Vancouver. He also leads the port authority's data-capture and supply chain visibility work.

Peter has held diverse portfolios including business development and leading strategic port projects. He was previously president of Modalink Distribution Hub Ltd., a multi-modal logistics facility in South Richmond, British Columbia. He is the former chair of Canada Place Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority. He is on the board of the Freight Management Association of Canada.

Peter has a Masters in Business Administration from Simon Fraser University's Segal Graduate School of Business and is an active mentor in the program.