

June 12, 2006
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

Federal Parent Crown Corporations Subject to New Obligations under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of the Environment and Minister responsible for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, announced today that federal parent Crown corporations are now required to conduct environmental assessments of their projects. These new obligations stem from an expansion of the definition of "federal authority" introduced in the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (the Act) in October 2003 and which came into effect on June 11, 2006.

The 41 Crown Corporations that will now be subject to the Act represent a broad diversity of commercial and non-commercial interests and activities, with offices and potential projects stretching across Canada, and internationally.

"These changes will apply the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act more consistently and fairly across federal institutions," said Minister Ambrose. "Bringing federal parent Crown corporations under the Act will ensure that they carefully consider the environmental effects of their projects and have the same obligations under the Act as other federal departments and agencies."

The amendments to the Act in 2003 also provide the authority to develop a regulation, where appropriate, to tailor the environmental assessment process set out in the Act for individual or class of Crown corporations. A regulation to vary the environmental assessment process for Crown corporations involved in providing commercial loans, was published in the Canada Gazette, Part II on May 31, 2006 and also came into effect on June 11. The Crowns Corporations Involved in the Provision of Commercial Loans Environmental Assessment Regulations apply specifically, at this time, to the Business Development Bank of Canada and Farm Credit Canada.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has been working with federal Crown corporations to deliver training and guidance to assist them in implementing their new obligations.

For more information on how federal Crown corporations have become subject to the Act and on the regulations, a backgrounder is available on the Agency's Web site.