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INTRODUCTION

The Minister of Transportation appeared before the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions on September 7, 1993. At that time, he described the history of territorial regulation of commercial vehicles, and discussed the federal deregulation of the Canadian transportation industry from 1987 to 1992.

Since this deregulation, the workload of the NWT Highway Transport Board has been greatly reduced. The few functions remaining could be handled by the Motor Vehicles division of the Department of Transportation.

As a result, the Minister has proposed eliminating the NWT Highway Transport Board. This would be accomplished by repealing the *Public Service Vehicles Act*, and incorporating some of its provisions into the *Motor Vehicles Act*.

The Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions would like to thank the Honourable John Todd, Minister of Transportation, Bruce Rattray, Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation, and their officials for their presentation and their response to Committee Members' questions and concerns.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We recognize that, with the deregulation of Canada's transportation industry, the Highway Transport Board's role has been greatly reduced. According to the Department of Transportation, eliminating the board will save approximately \$30,000 per year, and will allow the department's Motor Vehicles division to manage all aspects of transportation regulation in the NWT.

As well, in keeping with the spirit of deregulation, this initiative should help foster healthy competition in the NWT transport industry.

We also recognize that the NWT Motor Transport Association supports the Minister's initiative.

We support the Minister's proposal to eliminate the Highway Transport Board. We do have some recommendations, and we assume the enabling legislation to be tabled by the Minister will deal with them adequately.

Recommendation 1

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
RECOMMENDS:

**THAT FEES CHARGED BY THE HIGHWAY TRANSPORT BOARD SHOULD BE
TRANSFERRED INTO THE *MOTOR VEHICLE ACT* FEE SCHEDULE UNCHANGED.**

With the elimination of the board and the transfer of the licensing function to the Motor Vehicles division, an adjudicator position would be created to hear appeals from decisions by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. However, the Committee has no information regarding the nature of this position: to whom the adjudicator will report, and whether the position will be a permanent position within the government, a contract position, or an addition of responsibilities to an existing position.

Recommendation 2

THEREFORE, THE STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

**THAT PRIOR TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A POSITION OF ADJUDICATOR, THE
MINISTER MUST CLARIFY AND JUSTIFY THE NATURE OF SUCH A POSITION.**

Finally, the Committee feels the Minister's figures concerning the amount of money to be saved by eliminating the Board may be incomplete, especially concerning hidden costs.

Recommendation 3

THEREFORE, THE STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

**THAT PRIOR TO ANY LEGISLATIVE CHANGES, THE MINISTER MUST PROVIDE
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WITH MORE DETAIL REGARDING THE FINANCIAL
EFFECT OF ELIMINATING THE BOARD.**

Recommendation 4

TO ENABLE THE MINISTER TO RESPOND TO THESE RECOMMENDATIONS, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS :

THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 93(5) THE MINISTER SHALL TABLE A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THIS REPORT.

