

Thailand's mega-infrastructure priorities for 2000-2006

Canadian firms that are familiar with the priority rating of current infrastructure development projects in Thailand will be better able to predict future opportunities in this sector. Infrastructure development has been a priority for Thailand for the past 30 years, with investments averaging 5% to 6% of GDP.

Thailand's National Economic Social and Development Board (NESDB) has prepared a long-term infrastructure investment plan for the next six years assigning priority to projects that:

- improve Thailand's quality of life;
- decentralize regional and rural areas;
- increase national competitiveness; and
- adhere to the long-term National Development Strategy.

So far, 95 mega-infrastructure projects have been prioritized,

representing investments worth \$48.5 billion.

Some projected outcomes include:

- four major interconnected highways
- improved rail service
- 20-km mass transit system in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area
- new international airport
- increased Lam Chabang Port capacity
- increased power production to meet both urban and rural demand
- Thailand as the telecommunications hub of Indochina
- increased water production and capacity for wastewater treatment in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

For further details about specific projects, visit the Bank of Thailand Web site www.bot.or.th/bothomepage/Special/InvestorRelations/Eng/presentations/BOT_paper_eng.doc

For further information, contact the Commercial Section, Canadian Embassy, Bangkok, e-mail: bngkk-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca Web site: www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/bangkok/trade/section-e.htm or Jason Walsh, Southeast Asia Division, DFAIT, tel.: (613) 996-8187, fax: (613) 944-1604, e-mail: jason.walsh@dfait-maeci.gc.ca *

(For the unabridged version, see www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport and click on "Market Studies".)

INPUT ON FREE TRADE INITIATIVE REQUESTED

The Government of Canada is seeking input from Canadians on a free trade agreement being negotiated between Canada and the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

For further details, see www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport and click on "Trade News".

Developing opportunities in Brunei Darussalam

With a population of 350,000 and an area approximately the same as that of Prince Edward Island, the Brunei market is relatively small. But with a per capita income of \$23,000, it is also one of the most affluent societies in the world, and remains a market not to be ignored. GDP is expected to grow by between 3% to 3.5% this year, an increase of 1% over last year.

Oil and gas exports are the motors of the Brunei economy: Brunei currently exports 22,000 barrels of oil and 2.7 million cubic feet of gas per day. The country is also undergoing rapid modernization. Under its National Development Plan, the government plans to spend \$957 million on infrastructure development, with an additional \$200 million set aside to

fund small- and medium-sized projects. Funds will be spent on a wide range of programs, including those related to defence, housing, education, medical services, transportation and communications.

Priorities for next year include:

- commercializing and privatizing government activities to enhance efficiency
- applying information technology to promote economic activity and to encourage direct foreign investment
- increasing market access
- developing technology expertise
- promoting Brunei as an international offshore financial centre
- developing an eco-cyber park
- promoting eco-tourism

So far, trade with Canada has been modest but Canadian activities are increasing in a number of sectors. Main opportunities are in the oil and gas sectors as demonstrated by a \$20 million soil remediation joint venture, which includes Inland Technologies Inc. of Truro, Nova Scotia, and Jacques Whitford Environment Limited of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Inland Technologies also partnered with Canora Inc. and a local company to form CIC Environmental Services. This new company was contracted by Brunei Shell Petroleum Company (BSP) to remediate petroleum sludge and drilling muds at BSP's crude oil production facilities in Seria, Brunei.

Export Award-winning Survival Systems of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, filled an order for their helicopter ditching simulator in Brunei, while Canadian Aviation Electronics is building integrated platform

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