

308

INFO50

Les enjeux de la filière uranifère au Québec

6211-08-012



# Uranium -The Saskatchewan Experience-



BAPE Presentation  
September 2014

# Background – Saskatchewan

- World's second largest uranium producer
- History back to 1930's through 3 distinct eras
- Public support of Government and Industry actions



# Background – Current Mines

- Cameco Corporation – operator of MacArthur River, Key Lake, Rabbit Lake, Cigar Lake and the decommissioned Beaverlodge sites
- Areva Resources Canada – operator of McClean Lake and Midwest (in assessment process), decommissioned Cluff Lake



# Background – Regulatory Roles

Uranium mines and mills are regulated:

- Federally as ‘nuclear facilities’ by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
- Provincially by Environment and Labour Relations and Workplace Safety for environmental and worker protection
- Surface lease agreements through the Ministry of First Nation and Métis Relations
- Mineral lease, Crown royalties and Post closure management are the responsibility of the Ministry of the Economy



# Background – Environmental Assessment

- Public Inquiry process of the 1970s
- Federal/Provincial Panel process of the 1990s
  - The Panel provided communication, education for the public impacted public support and perception
  - Provincial response to Panel recommendations
- Current environmental assessment process
- Consultation impacts on public perception

# Background – Public Perception

## Negative Issues:

- Reactor accidents
- Radiation/Safety concerns
- Environmental Impacts
- Weapons Proliferation
- Jobs, training for region
- Abandoned mines



# Responses by Government

- Public correspondence
- Policy development programs (socio-economic)
  - Surface Lease Agreements
  - Targeted funding
  - Training
- Partnering with industry (socio-economic)
- Communication (Environment Quality Committees)

# Responses by Industry

- Accept social license responsibility
- Communication with regional and public:
  - Leading safety record
  - Strong environmental performance
  - Training, business opportunities
  - Largest employer in Northern Saskatchewan
  - Partner with government
  - Nuclear energy is a clean baseload option



# Government/Industry Responses

- Joint programs:
  - Human Resource Development Agreements
  - Northern Labour Market Committee
  - Multi-Party Training Plan
  - Environmental Quality Committees
  - Northern Strategy

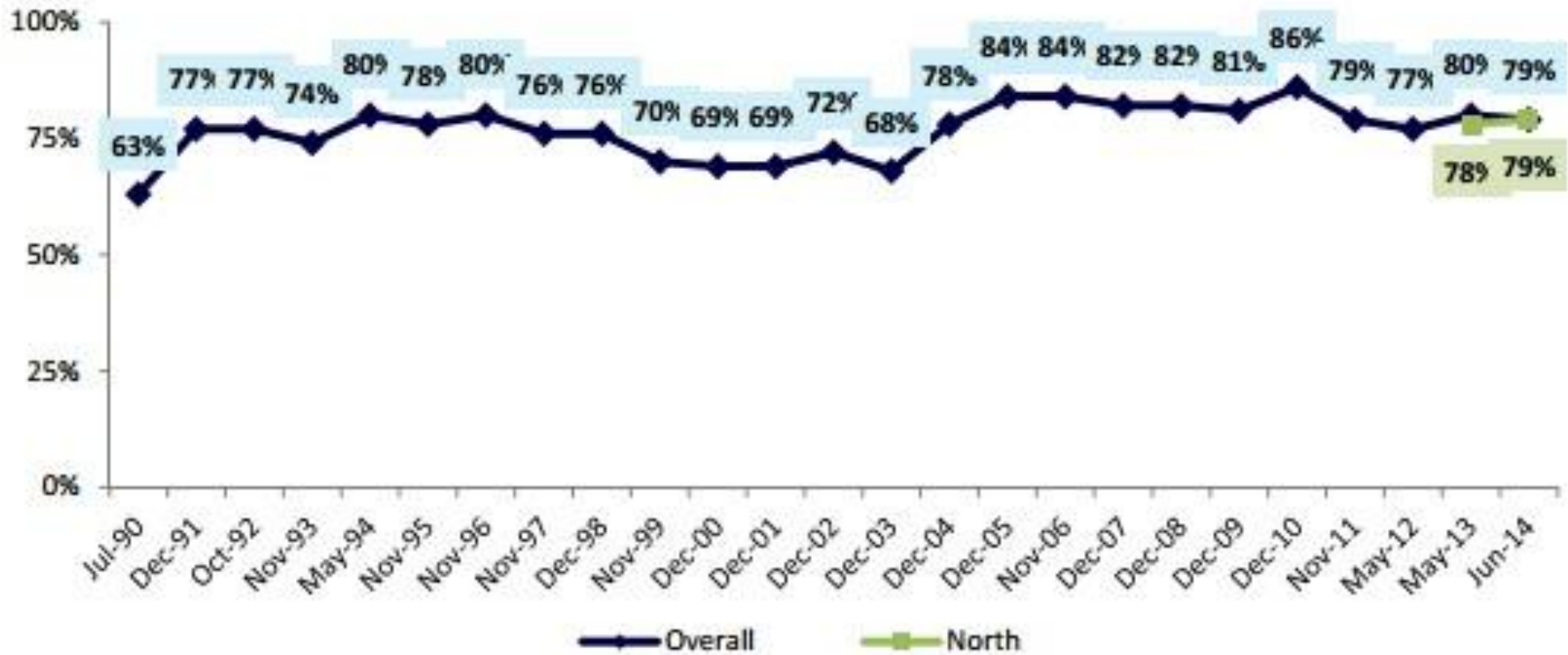
# Outcomes – Public Perception

- Strong support for uranium industry has been attained
  - 79% Provincial
  - 38% strongly in support
- Communication necessary to maintain support

# Outcomes / Assessment – Public Polling

Fast Consulting Survey (1990-2014)

Do you support uranium mining in Saskatchewan?



# Uranium Development Partnership

- The Saskatchewan government established the Uranium Development Partnership (UDP) in 2008 to make recommendations on uranium value-added opportunities.
- The UDP provided recommendations to government in 2009 for capturing opportunities across the uranium value chain.
- The Saskatchewan government undertook extensive public consultations on the UDP recommendations in 2009.

# Future of Uranium Public Consultation

- The Future of Uranium Public Consultation Process (FUPCP) reported back to the Saskatchewan government in September 2009 on the UDP report.
- The FUPCP recommended providing more information on power generation, health, medical Isotopes and improved consultation with First Nations and Métis.
- The FUPCP recommended the government to use mechanisms such as surveys, focus groups and polling on an ongoing basis to assess the needs and views of the public.



# Government Response

- In response to the UDP report and public consultations, the Saskatchewan government provided strategic direction for uranium development in the province.
- The strategic direction includes:
  - Actively supporting uranium mining and exploration;
  - Encouraging investment in nuclear research, development and training opportunities, specifically in the areas of mining, neutron science, isotopes, small scale reactor design, and enrichment;
  - Directing SaskPower to continue including nuclear power in the range of sustainable energy options available for additional baseload generation capacity in the medium and long term.

# Government Actions following the UDP

- A new uranium royalty system was implemented in 2013. The system is profit based and improves the investment environment through recognition of actual costs.
- Established the Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation in December 2011 with funds from the province as an independent subsidiary of the University of Saskatchewan
- Signed MOUs with Hitachi-GE for funding to facilitate and support research in nuclear medicine, materials science, nuclear safety and small reactor design.

# Nuclear Policy Research Initiative Study

- Polling research by the NPRI at the University of Saskatchewan in 2014 included the following results:
  - Trust: 74 % reported a high level of trust in university scientists, followed by government nuclear regulators (39%), environmental groups (34%), industry (17%) and elected officials (12%).
  - Who decides?: 45% indicated the public should have a lot of influence in decisions on nuclear issues, and nearly 30% held similar sentiments with regard to the influence of First Nations.
  - Values: Mixed concerns regarding nuclear power, with more than half expressing some (30%) or high (37%) ethical concerns.
  - Emotion: More likely to identify as excited (52%) by nuclear power in Saskatchewan than frightened (40%) or angry (25%).
  - Nuclear knowledge: Most identified as moderately or poorly informed on nuclear issues, with only 22% rating their knowledge level as good or very good.

# Lessons Learned

## Public Opinion Issues:

- Regional public identify issues of mining uranium:
  - Socio-economic
  - Environmental
  - Safety
- General public identify end use issues of uranium:
  - Nuclear power generation
  - Nuclear safety
  - Nuclear Waste Management

# Lessons Learned

- Education and Awareness increases public support
  - Panel Process in the early 90's
  - Consultations
- Importance of early, effective and regular communication
  - Government/Industry responses to positive and negative feedback
- Uranium mining support linked to nuclear support
  - Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol)
  - Nuclear Safety (Generation, Waste Storage)
- Some opinions have remained unchanged
  - Represent a small, yet vocal, percentage of the population





Thank You