

Exclusif

Activity Report Overview

2013-2014

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RENAUD CARON
Chair of the Board of Directors,
2013-2014



FRANÇOISE BERTRAND, o.c., c.q.
President and Chief Executive
Officer

AN INFLUENTIAL NETWORK, A COMMITTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

In 2013-2014, we revamped the governance of the FCCQ in an effort to better fulfill our dual role as a federation of more than 140 chambers of commerce and a provincial chamber of commerce with 1,100 corporate members.

At the provincial level, we took action on a number of fronts, including the state of government finances, the development of natural resources, Québec-based oil exploration and production, the new industrial policy and revival of the manufacturing sector, the setup of the Gazelles program and employment insurance reform, business ownership transfers and the proposed secular charter. We also drafted several reports and recommendations in order to provide input to the business program and taxation review committees in the fall of 2014; we continue to observe developments in this area very carefully. Keenly aware of the challenges in the labour market, we

have also been proactive in our dealings with the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) and the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CPMT).

On the federal scene, the FCCQ strengthened ties with the Government of Canada, as well as various department officials and government agencies, through a series of meetings with caucuses and a private event attended by several senior public servants.

In an effort to promote trade between Québec and the northeastern U.S., we also revitalized our Trade Corridors, implementing a number of initiatives to cater to the development needs of Québec companies that export to our neighbours south of the border. The coming year will see some innovative approaches in this regard come to the fore.

Members of the Québec business community have also taken part in numerous private meetings, political

debates, a symposium, regional visits and an economic development mission in China. And, last but certainly not least, the 34th annual Mercuriades Awards celebrated the success, excellence and expertise of some of our top businesses.

Yes, there are challenges ahead, but we will face them with the same drive and determination in order to catalyze sustainable economic development and contribute to the prosperity of business across Québec.

THE FCCQ

The Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) is the province's premier business network, representing more than 60,000 businesses and 150,000 businesspeople involved in all sectors of the economy throughout Québec.

THE POWER OF THE NETWORK



Key Issues in 2013-2014

Critical concerns, an engaged organization

In an attempt to cultivate a competitive business environment and an investment-friendly economy, the FCCQ made strides on a number of points, both in the public sphere and directly with decision-makers.

ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCE: A MATTER OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

If companies are to continue to grow and contribute to our collective wealth, we need to sharpen the competitive edge of every economic sector and ensure that Québec remains open for business.

- **Economy and public finance :** public advocacy and provincial government lobbying efforts; participation in consultations prior to

the tabling of two provincial budgets and one federal budget; galvanization of the various committees and submission of a position paper to the program review committee.

- **Québec pension plan :** presentation to the parliamentary committee of recommendations to overcome the deficit without putting increased pressure on business; organization of a tour of chambers of commerce with Alban D'Amours; participation in talks organized by the labour and workforce advisory committee; support for the government in passing Bill 3.
- **Revenu Québec and employment agencies :** participation in a Revenu Québec task force, presentation of an argument against declaring

expenses and creating more red tape for employment agencies; lobbying of the federal government to ensure employment agencies can be granted privileged creditor status.

- **International tax planning :** presentation of a solution to the federal government to make the Canadian plan more efficient, equitable and competitive.
- **Foreign trade :** support for economic and trade talks with such countries as South Korea; favourable response to the trade agreement with the European Union.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING: A PRIORITY

The labour shortage is affecting a growing number of sectors, regions and employers. In response to this, during the course of the year, the FCCQ:

- raised the awareness of the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities about the potential, the costs and the limits of the workforce recruiting process;
- stressed the importance of simplifying access to workforce training, incorporating health and safety courses into vocational programs and increasing training-oriented funding for businesses;
- continued to represent employers as a member of the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CPMT);
- rallied chambers of commerce in every province to address the changes made in federal programs and federal-provincial agreements;

- emphasized the role of immigration in meeting Canada's labour needs;
- played an active role, once again this year, in the work done by the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST), with a seat on the Board of Directors and several other committees; developed 14 training programs on various topics related to workplace health and safety.

TAKING THE LEAD IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

We undertook a number of initiatives to promote the sustainable economic development of our natural resources and energy technologies:

- several meetings with ministers and deputy ministers at the provincial and federal level concerning the mining sector, pipeline projects and the development of petroleum resources;

- ramping up of advocacy efforts to show the benefits of exploring and developing Québec's oil resources; publication of the Manifesto in favour of developing our oil for everyone's benefit;
- public defence of plans to reverse the flow of the Energy East and Line 9 pipelines;
- participation in the parliamentary committee to reiterate our support for developing shale gas in Québec, plus a visit to Alberta to gain a better understanding of the industry;
- public support in favour of reviving the Plan Nord and stimulating the forest and mining sectors, through projects aimed at developing uranium, aluminum, nickel and the Arnaud mine.

AND MORE:

- participation in the advisory committee on Québec's future industrial policy and the research and innovation strategy;
- efforts to raise government awareness to ensure the Gazelles program reflects the reality of Québec businesses;
- vigorous opposition to the federal government's plan to create a single Canadian securities commission;
- opposition to the tax barriers in the Income Tax Act that discourage the transfer of a business from one family member to another;
- invitation to the Québec government to turn increasingly to the private sector as

- a complement to the public healthcare system in order to improve access to service;
- criticism of the federal and provincial governments' intentions to impose discriminatory surtaxes and neutral packaging requirements on certain consumer goods;
- ongoing fight against contraband tobacco;
- pressure to ensure the agrifood sector also has access to tax measures and credits designed to promote productivity and innovation;
- support for the creation of a transportation agency and proposal of solutions to maximize investments

- in infrastructure development and maintenance;
- request to review the federal program to renew regional air transport infrastructure;
- support for the emerging green building industry;
- request sent to the Government of Québec to postpone the second phase of the carbon exchange program for oil and gas distributors;
- efforts to raise the Government of Québec's awareness about the possible repercussions for the business community of lowering the greenhouse gas reduction target by 20% to 25% of the 1990 threshold.

Events for an active network!

2014 MERCURIADES AWARDS: CELEBRATING THE QUÉBEC BUSINESS COMMUNITY



Some 800 businesspeople were on hand to applaud the 15 businesses honoured at the 34th edition of Québec's most prestigious awards program for business, commerce and entrepreneurship. The Mercuriades Awards celebrate the vision, spirit and know-how of Québec businesses. The winners of the coveted title of Business of the Year were Telus Québec and Jalbert Automatisation, in the large business and SMB categories, respectively. Denis Richard, President of La Coop fédérée, served as the 2014 honorary chair. The evening also featured a tribute to Jean-René Halde, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Business Development Bank of Canada, for his pivotal role in supporting the Canadian business community.

The full 2013–2014 activity report (in French) is available in the Publications section of fccq.ca.

JOURNÉE RÉSEAU : BRINGING CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE TOGETHER

2013: Building a stronger network

Featuring discussions, workshops and visits to some of the pillars of the regional economy, the Journée réseau event in Saguenay on October 15 and 16 helped strengthen bonds between chambers of commerce within the provincial network and look toward the future. The Chamber of Commerce of the Year award was presented to the Chambre de commerce de Val-d'Or.



2014: Advancing your agenda

Held in Lévis on June 16, this event focused on how chambers of commerce can increase their capacity to take action, namely by presenting compelling arguments to decision-makers and the public, upping membership numbers and negotiating sponsorships. In addition, Minister Jean-Denis Girard gave a talk about the problems related to business transfers. The Chambre de commerce Baie-des-Chaleurs was recognized as the 2014 Chamber of Commerce of the Year.

AND MORE!

- During the provincial election campaign, the FCCQ invited representatives of the three main political parties to debate three issues—public finance, natural resources and manufacturing—in front of an audience of business professionals.
- The FCCQ held a symposium in Bromont for manufacturing industry stakeholders to discuss opportunities and challenges on the horizon for this key driver of our economy.
- As part of our Trade Corridors program, a symposium was held to shed light on the opportunities and challenges facing businesses interested in exporting to the U.S.

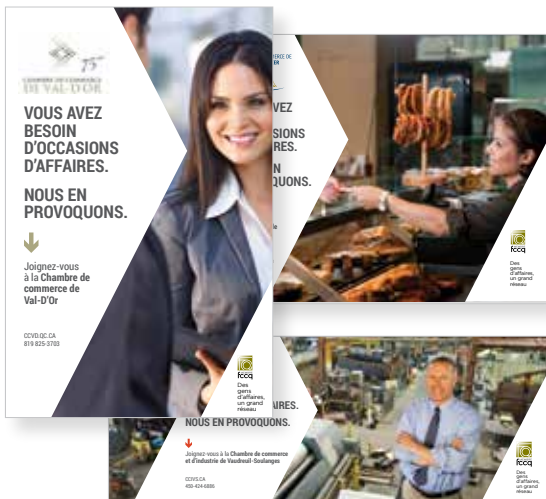


REVAMPING OUR GOVERNANCE

The unanimous adoption of the FCCQ's new governance marks the culmination of a comprehensive review of our structures and practices, the main goal of which is to encourage a more active level of participation by both chambers of commerce and businesses and to strengthen the consistency and complementarity of our efforts as an organization and as a part of the broader chamber of commerce movement. Our Board of Directors is now composed of 15 of Québec's leading chambers of commerce, 17 regional directors, 16 sector representatives and 17 executive members.

YOU ARE LOOKING FOR BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES. WE CAN HELP YOU FIND THEM.

The FCCQ has developed a wide range of tools to support chambers of commerce in their efforts to recruit new members and develop a more dynamic image.



10 talks

137 new members

800 attendees at the 34th annual Mercuriades Awards

100 news releases

24 FCCQexpress newsletters sent to close to 5,000 subscribers

19 sector committees, with more than 380 corporate members and several chambers

20 open letters

16 briefs submitted to government bodies

10 private *Rendez-vous* events

9 partners for chambers and their members

5 FCCQ resolutions passed by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce

3 political debates

3 opinion surveys

2 symposia

1 economic study

2 tours: one in Québec and one in New England/New York State

1 exploratory trade mission to China

THE POWER OF THE NETWORK



fccq | Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec

The FCCQ is both a federation of chambers of commerce and a provincial chamber of commerce. Its members—be they chambers of commerce or businesses—all share a common goal: to foster an innovative, competitive business environment.

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