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Title - Regulatory Transparency, Accountability and Credibility: Benefits of Transitioning to a Full-Time Board.

In 2013, the Government of the Province of New Brunswick (Canada) restructured the New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board, by eliminating all eight of its part-time Board appointments. Three new full-time member positions were created to join the incumbent full-time Board Chair and Vice-Chair. The Board now consists of exclusively full-time members.

The restructuring also dramatically altered the Board recruitment and selection process, by eliminating government's previous sole political discretion. A non-political nominating committee, with the assistance of a professional recruiting firm, presents a list of qualified candidates to government, whose final appointments are limited to those candidates presented by the nominating committee.

This presentation will discuss the Board's structural transition and the appointment process. It will illustrate how these changes have enhanced the Board's transparency, accountability and credibility, in terms of its mandate to exercise its discretion in the public interest.

Should governments consider similar transitions for energy regulators that currently employ part-time members in their makeup? How might an exclusively full-time structure help to win public trust in the energy regulation process?