

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HONOURABLE FRANÇOIS ROLLAND REGARDING HYDRO-QUÉBEC'S COLLECTION PRACTICES IN FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT COMMUNITIES IN QUÉBEC

1. COMMUNICATION

Hydro-Québec should improve its communication approach in order to rebuild strong trust among Indigenous consumers and to respond adequately to their needs and requests regarding electricity bills and service.

2. DISPUTE PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION COMMITTEE

Hydro-Québec should establish a dispute prevention and resolution committee composed of representatives from Hydro-Québec and Indigenous communities, supported by a neutral mediator or facilitator to ensure the prompt resolution of disputes.

3. LIAISON OFFICERS

Hydro-Québec should provide all communities that do not yet have one with liaison officers to ensure effective communication between Indigenous consumers and Hydro-Québec's customer service.

Hydro-Québec should offer Indigenous communities that request it, through liaison officers, information in economics and home budgeting. The Québec government should contribute to this project.

4. SINGLE BILLING

Hydro-Québec should offer communities the option of single billing through the band council.

5. ELECTRICITY BILL ARREARS

Hydro-Québec should transfer the non-prescribed arrears of electricity bills to the First Nations and Inuit so that they can decide for themselves whether they wish to collect them. Rooted in the spirit of economic reconciliation, this recommendation seeks to strengthen new partnerships founded on mutual respect, trust and an honest understanding of the historical and contemporary realities facing First Nations and Inuit peoples. It would help implement the minimum standards of UNDRIP article 21, which recognizes the importance of improving Indigenous peoples' economic and social conditions and eliminating the disparities carried over from their history.

6. ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

Hydro-Québec should enhance the funding of its energy efficiency programs for First Nations and Inuit in order to improve their homes' energy efficiency and thereby reduce their electricity and heating costs. This measure, which could be supplemented by a subsidy to offset the high cost of living in the North, aims to ensure greater equity while

taking into account the fact that energy resources are located on Indigenous ancestral lands. The Québec government would have a role to play here.

7. ELECTRICITY METERS

Hydro-Québec should work with First Nations and Inuit representatives to complete the installation of meters in accordance with current regulations.

8. TRAINING OF HYDRO-QUÉBEC MANAGEMENT AND STAFF ON INDIGENOUS REALITIES

Training must be provided to Hydro-Québec management and staff.