

Luncheon Keynote at Tourism Industry Association of BC Conference

Location: Cason Ballrooms B and C
Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC

Event Summary: Focus on the Future: Steps for a Better Industry Tomorrow," this year's conference will seek to enhance business and industry competitiveness in the short term while at the same time strategizing for long term success.

Key Message: The success of the tourism industry is key to the success of our provincial economy and the BC Jobs Plan. The Tourism Sector Strategy lays a path that brings us together to focus on specific products and markets where we know we can get the best results.

Action/Visual: Speaking from the podium.

Audience: Approximately 400 delegates from across the tourism sector.

Dress: Business

Date: Tuesday, October 25th, 2011

Start Time: 12:00pm

Time	Event Itinerary
12:00pm	Premier arrives and proceeds to her seat at the head table NOTE: As the Premier enters she will have an opportunity to meet the winner of the DMO Professional Excellence Award and take a photo with the recipient (this award is being presented after she leaves).
12:15pm	Lana Denoni, Chair of the Council of Tourism Associations goes to the podium to introduce the Premier
12:17pm	Premier gives her remarks
12:35pm	Premier concludes her presentation
12:36pm	Premier is thanked by Lana and given with a thank you wine basket NOTE: They are aware that the Premier is departing immediately following her remarks
12:38pm	Premier does media if necessary
12:45pm	Premier departs back to the legislature

MLAs:

Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs Tourism and Innovation and MLA for Prince George-MacKenzie

Contact names and telephone numbers:

S22

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Materials	Required	Received	Additional Notes
Speaking Notes	Yes		Just a brief one pager
Q&A	No		
Backgrounder	No		

EVENT COORDINATOR – Katherine Bergen

CELL: S17

**BC Tourism Industry Conference
BC Jobs Plan: Tourism Strategy
Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2011**

Event: What is it?

- Key note address to release the tourism sector strategy for the *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan* during the BC Tourism Industry Conference.
- The BC Tourism Conference is hosted by the Tourism Industry Association of BC and is the only province-wide event that brings together all the related tourism sectors.
- This announcement fits well with the conference theme "Focus on the Future: Steps for a Better Industry Tomorrow."
- A Premier has not attended this event for the past several years.
- The Premier will be introduced by Lana Denoni, chair of the board of directors TIA-BC (pronounced Tie-Ah.)

The Audience:

- 350 to 400 people representing destination marketing organizations and community marketing associations, tourism business owners, industry association representatives (taxi, hotel, guide outfitters etc), and tourism students.
- Media

Key Messages:

- The success of your industry is important to the success of our province as a whole and it is an important part of our BC Jobs Plan.
- The Tourism Sector Strategy lays a path that brings us together to focus on specific products and markets where we know we can get the best results.
- Although the strategy is important, it is your pride and passion that breathes life into our landscape for our visitors. And it is your skills and knowledge that enhance our global visibility and reputation.

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BC Tourism Industry Conference

Tuesday Oct 25

Length: 25 minutes

Introduction:

Thanks Lana for the introduction.

And thank you to everyone in the audience for joining me today.

I'd like to acknowledge my caucus members in attendance, as they stand up - please give them a warm round of applause.

It's been a pretty good couple weeks for families in this province.

Two weeks ago, the National Energy Board approved the first ever export license for liquefied natural gas for a project in Kitimat.

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This will create 1,500 person-years of work during the construction phase and 120-140 permanent positions once the terminal is in operation.

The mayor up there says it feels like going from “doom town” to “boom town.”

And then, last week Western Forest Products announced \$200-million of capital investment for Vancouver Island mills.

That was pretty good.

And then Seaspan brought home an \$8 billion ship building contract that will drive an entire industry for a generation.

In BC, it feels like we are on a roll.

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So is GREAT to be here to today.

Just like natural gas, forestry and ship building, the tourism industry is so important to the future of BC.

You have an enormous impact on our economy. 127,000 people have jobs because of the work you do.

But there's something unique about tourism. The impact of your work goes far beyond the tourism industry.

The impression you leave with visitors defines B.C. It influences whether people want to live, invest and work in our province.

Take John Eckland as an example.

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John's first visit to BC was on a fishing trip. He liked it so much that in 2006, he came back through our Provincial Nominee Program.

He put \$2.8 million into buying and renovating the historic Kaslo Hotel and he now has 24 employees and a good business going in the Kootenays.

It all started with that fishing trip... but we were the ones who lured him in.

All the people in the tourism industry – from hotel operators, to tour guides and cab drivers – every one of you are an ambassador for our province.

You tell the story of who we are to the world.

CANADA STARTS HERE

A few weeks back we launched a plan to defend and create jobs in BC. Our plan is called "Canada Starts Here."

We chose this name because we know British Columbia can pull Canada into the next century – we know we can lead this country like never before.

It lays out how we will grow our connections with emerging markets in Asia... to defend and create jobs ... and attract that first new dollar into BC.

In many ways, our success rests on our ability to build on the advantages that come with our diversity – our historic family and business connections to India, China and other Asian countries.

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And it rests on our collective ability to do what you all do each and every day...

To tell the world who we are and what we have to offer so they realize that Canada Starts Here.

Our Key Focus

Our plan is centered on bringing what we call the “first new dollar” to British Columbia.

This means bringing new investment here so each new dollar can grow, and multiply and circulate – circulate from the initial investment, to our value added sectors, to our small businesses and, finally, to dinner tables, rec rooms and ice rinks from one end of BC to the other.

To do this we have identified eight sectors with the greatest opportunity to bring that first new dollar into British Columbia.

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Tourism is one of those sectors, and it's a **BIG** one.

When Pat Bell and I were working on the Jobs Plan this summer, we knew the Jobs Plan had to benefit every region and every community in BC.

Tourism does that.

Growing this sector will help businesses small and large that are the engine of job growth and create the greatest number of spin-off jobs.

And that means everyone wins.

Tourism Strategy

When we released the BC Jobs Plan earlier this year, we talked about creating sector specific strategies that would help guide our work.

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As part of the BC Jobs Plan, I'm pleased to be here today to announce the first of those strategies – a new five-year tourism strategy called 'Gaining the Edge.'

It will maximize economic growth and job creation across our province.

<<Hold up a copy of the document>>

You have put an incredible amount of work into this and it belongs to you as much as it does government. So give yourself a round of applause.

This tourism strategy lays out a plan to capitalize on our recent world-wide exposure from the 2010 Games and deliver the best results for British Columbia's tourism industry.

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And like the BC Jobs Plan itself, it is focused, it is targeted, and it leverages our strengths.

It will grow tourism industry revenues by five per cent a year, up to \$18 billion by 2016.

It outlines five areas that will drive growth in tourism.

First, we are going to focus on the key tourism products where BC has a competitive advantage, like aboriginal tourism, outdoor adventure and eco-tourism, touring vacations, conventions and meetings, city experiences and our great winter skiing and snowboarding.

Second, this strategy targets markets where our products have the greatest existing and future potential.

This means focusing on existing markets like Ontario, California, Australia, the UK and Japan, as well as emerging ones like China, India and Mexico.

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As Pat Bell likes to say, this strategy is designed to fish where the fish are.

With China granting approved destination status to Canada in 2010, visitor growth from China is expected to be in the 15 to 20 per cent range each year.

Third, the strategy focuses on facilitating world-class experiences.

This means more partnerships with local government and businesses to make sure we are market ready.

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And it means better research for growth and planning and working closely with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to grow and promote the authentic First Nations experience.

Fourth, it means working with industry to remove barriers for growth, taking action to ensure you have workers with the skills and training your industry needs.

And fifth, it means creating an action plan for stable and predictable funding.

I am committed to providing the best marketing support for BC's tourism industry.

Pat Bell and staff at his Ministry have been working hard to gather your thoughts on options for a new Provincial Destination Marketing Organization.

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And TIA-BC is providing us with advice and industry representation in this process.

I know some people would like a quick decision, but I believe that quick doesn't always mean you get the best results.

We want a marketing plan that industry can stand up and support... that will provide a long term future for strong marketing.

While these actions are specific to the tourism strategy, the BC Jobs Plan includes other actions that will grow BC's economy across all the sectors.

So I'd like take a moment to tell you about those as well.

BC Jobs Plan: Three pillars

Our BC Jobs Plan is based on three pillars.

The first pillar is enabling job creation with a commonsense government that opens doors instead of closing them, that makes things simple for business by getting out of the way when we can.

The second pillar of our jobs plan is about continuing to build smart infrastructure.

We can't generate those first new dollars if we can't get our products, ideas and resources to growing markets.

The third pillar of our jobs plan is about opening up markets for BC goods.

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I am going to lead a trade mission to China and India in November, so that I can make sure we're working with the right people, with the best ideas, to open up and expand markets for BC.

We will reach out to help B.C. companies entering Asian markets. We will be better equipped to welcome foreign investors through a new hosting and business development program.

Twin foundations – skilled workforce and fiscal responsibility

So these three pillars – enabling job creation, building smart infrastructure and opening new markets – stand on two key foundations.

We need a skilled workforce and we need to keep our province on a solid footing, building on a foundation of 10 years of strong fiscal management...

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...To keep those things that make us a safe harbour for investment right now.

So what makes B.C. a safe harbour?

A safe harbour means keeping our triple AAA credit rating, it means a low-tax regime and it means a stable banking system.

State of the Tourism Industry

The tourism industry just like the global economy is always shifting and changing.

While this year's visitor numbers haven't been great, there are opportunities to expand our markets and create a more stable industry in the long term.

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In this business, you have to keep on top of the most recent trend without losing focus on what got you to where you are in the first place.

It is a pleasure to see TIA evolving along with the needs of your industry.

I want to congratulate you on your efforts to reset and refresh your association.

I agree with Minister Bell, we need a strong sector association and we are commitment to working with you to achieve success.

After all, government doesn't create jobs, you do.

Building on our strengths is what our BC Jobs Plan and Tourism Strategy will do.

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And one of those strengths is your industry, and your people.

In the coming weeks we will be launching our \$1.1 million North American Winter Ski Campaign for this 2011/12 winter season.

The content for this campaign was brought together by working with our 13 ski resorts.

It will target those areas where we can attract the most skiers: Ontario, California and Washington State.

The tagline is "*Get Above it All in British Columbia.*"

It's an innovative campaign where we will turn elevators and escalators into ski lifts in a targeted event in Toronto, and utilize online advertising and travel media relations across all markets.

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And it showcases what BC is known for: our great snow, our spectacular and pristine mountains, our world-class resorts and most importantly our warm hospitality.

Because when it comes to tourism, who we are matters.

Your pride and passion as British Columbians breathes life into the landscape for visitors.

And your skills and knowledge enhance our global visibility and reputation.

CONCLUSION

By working together with the ski industry, we expect good results with this campaign.

We expect even better results next year when our Tourism Strategy is fully underway.

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And I'd like to think that of the thousands skiers and snowboarders who will hit BC's slopes this year... maybe there will be a few "John Ecklands" among them.

BC is at a crossroads and every region of our province is home to so much potential.

We are facing a generational opportunity, and we are going to lead Canada into next century.

This is our time.

This is our chance to lead.

This is our moment.

When it comes to building the future, in British Columbia,
Canada Starts Here.

-End-