

INFORMATION NOTE

Cliff #: 153478

Date: April 7, 2021

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

ISSUE: Maclure Cabs inquiries of Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant Program

KEY POINTS:

- The owner of Maclure Cabs had a number of questions and concerns about the Business recovery grant program.
- These questions and concerns mirrored other taxi company inquiries.
- Questions focussed on the need for having the company legally registered, proof of company ownership, banking information reflecting the owners name, and investment of the recovery plan funding.
- According to Maclure Cabs, these program requirements are not in keeping with taxi industry normal practice.
- Further, Maclure Cabs did not understand how to invest the program funding into recovery but instead requested investment of funds into current state funding needs, for example insurance and fuel.

BACKGROUND:

The taxi industry has struggled to understand and apply for the Business Grant. This is understandable given the program was not designed specifically for the industry in mind and also the purpose of the program is investment for recovery, not current state funding needs like fuel, insurance and taxi company monthly payments.

Many discussions and meetings have occurred with Maclures Cabs and other taxi companies as they have required significant support. They were provided with tailored information, a dedicated team processing their applications, and direct contact with the Executive Director of Small and Medium Sized Business Grant Program for routing questions.

DISCUSSION:

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Although the taxi industry is not well suited to the Small and Medium Sized Business Grant Program program, after many conversations and much support from the program staff as well as dedicated service providers, legally registered companies including Maclures Cabs are successfully applying and receiving the grant.

CONCLUSION:

Maclure Cabs issues appear to be addressed. No next steps.

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Prepared by: Elizabeth Vickery, Executive Director, Small and Medium Sized Business Grant Program

Reviewed by			
Dir:	ED: EV	ADM: CL	DM: BP

Information Note for Honourable Ravi Kahlon Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

What:

COVID-19 Business Relief Grant launch

Summary:

- Through the COVID-19 Business Relief Grant, we are providing \$52 million to support B.C. restaurants, bars, breweries, wineries and gyms that were impacted by the March 29th Provincial Health Order.
- Business can receive up to \$10,000 in one-time funding to help with fixed monthly costs like rent, insurance, maintenance and utilities.
- It will also help support unexpected costs that may have resulted from the order, such as perishables a restaurant may have purchased.
- The grant is expected to help almost 14,000 impacted businesses.
- Through a yes/no check mark application, a business simply needs to declare they were affected by the March 29th provincial health order, are registered as a B.C. business, demonstrate majority ownership and operations are in B.C. and that they pay B.C. taxes.
- Businesses who opened during the pandemic can also apply and must only have been in operation as of February 1, 2021.
- Registration is online and the application will be open next week and will remain open until June 4, 2021.
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- Eligible businesses who have received support through the Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Program will not have to reapply for this new funding stream.

DECISION NOTE

Cliff #: 153661

Date: April 13, 2021

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

ISSUE: Better Regulations for British Columbians (BR4BC) 2020/21 Annual Report: Draft Content for Minister Review

DATE DECISION REQUIRED BY: April 30, 2021

KEY POINTS:

- The BR4BC annual report is a legislated requirement to provide an update on the regulatory requirements count and an overview of cross-government regulatory and service improvements.
- The report must be published by June 30, 2021.
- The draft report has been prepared for Minister Kahlon's review and input.

BACKGROUND:

The BR4BC annual report (the report) must be published by June 30 as per the *Regulatory Reporting Act*. It must include an overview of Government's regulatory and service improvements throughout the past fiscal year, as well as an updated regulatory requirements count, as of March 31, 2021.

The draft report has been reviewed by JERI's Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) team and is ready for Minister Kahlon's review and input. The individual stories are currently being reviewed by participating ministries. JERI's ADM, DM and Minister will have another opportunity to review the final report in June, before it is published (see: **Appendix A: 2020/21 Proposed Timelines**).

DISCUSSION:

The draft report collates 68 stories of regulatory and service improvements across 15 ministries (see: **Attachment A: Draft Report**). This draft represents the written content only; data visualization and graphics will be created by GCPE once the content is finalized and approved. Some minor updates to the individual stories are expected as ministries review and approve their content. Elements of the report include:

Regulatory Requirements Count

- The regulatory requirements count for 2020/21 is 15 percent below the 2004 baseline, satisfying the Net Zero Increase Commitment.
- The count of 168,475 will be confirmed by April 30; no changes are anticipated.

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COVID-19 Response

- Unique to this year's report is a stand-alone theme highlighting Government's rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic through easing costs, enabling technologies and reducing barriers.
- 29 of the 68 stories submitted by ministries relate to Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BR4BC Gendered Language Amendments

- The 600 instances of gendered language amended through the BR4BC process are highlighted as part of Government's commitment to inclusivity.
- The report signals that this is the first step in an inclusive language initiative that will continue and be expanded upon.

The remaining regulatory and service improvement stories are featured under Government's key mandate commitments.^{s.13}

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OPTIONS:

Option 1: Approve annual report draft without modification

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RECOMMENDED OPTION: Option 1

ATTACHMENTS: Appendix A: 2020/21 Proposed Timelines
Attachment A: 2020/21 Better Regulations for British Columbians
Annual Report – Draft Content

<input checked="checked" type="radio"/> Approved / Not Approved	Date: May 3, 2021
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Minister's Signature:</p>	

Prepared by: Courtney Jeffery, Senior Advisor, Economic and Regulatory Analysis

Reviewed by			
Dir: SC	ED: AC	ADM: CL	DM: BP

Appendix A: 2020/21 Proposed Timelines

April:

- Mid-April: Draft report to JERI Assistant Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister and Minister for review and approval
- Mid-April: JERI to send draft wording of stories to all participating ministries for review and approval of their sections of the draft report by April 26

May:

- Draft report content finalized based on feedback from JERI's executive team and approved language from all participating ministries
- Graphic design of report through JERI's GCPE process
- End of May: Annual Report is complete

June:

- Early June: Final report to JERI Assistant Deputy Minister and Deputy Minister for review and approval
- Mid-June: Final report to be provided to the Minister for approval
- On or before June 30: Final report published on Government website

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Message from the Minister

I am proud to present this year's Better Regulations for British Columbians report. The profiled stories feature the role government plays to help people and businesses adapt to unanticipated events and shifting conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for all of us, and we recognize that some have been especially hard hit. Our focus is ensuring that our province's economic recovery works for everyone. The B.C. government has rolled out a \$10 billion COVID-19 response, which includes StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan – a strategy that protects people's health and livelihoods while supporting businesses and communities.

This report outlines the actions taken to improve our regulations and services over the past fiscal year while we support economic recovery throughout British Columbia. Some of our achievements include caps to rental fee increases, increased childcare spaces, and the launch of the BC Marketplace to help B.C. businesses sell their products and services to online audiences, to name a few.

We have also initiated efforts to address outdated language used in government regulations and policies so that everyone can see themselves in the words used by government. This year we successfully eliminated 600 instances of gendered language within our regulations, the first jurisdiction in Canada to begin this important work. We are committed to reframing our language to build a better B.C., where everyone is included and reflected in government services and policies.

By working together, we continue to create opportunities for people and businesses to build a brighter future for everyone.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE PLACEHOLDER

Honourable Ravi Kahlon

Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

Introduction

British Columbia's long-standing commitment to regulatory and service improvement is supported by three primary goals: to increase access to quality government services that people count on, to promote a modern, efficient, and effective regulatory system, and to enhance accountability for regulatory and service improvement. Central to our ability to deliver these goals is the continued dedication to eliminate outdated regulations and make services more accessible for British Columbians throughout the province.

The Better Regulations for British Columbians annual report highlights government's work in the past fiscal year to improve services and regulations for people and businesses throughout B.C. The stories featured reflect the extraordinary year experienced by all British Columbians in the context of COVID-19, alongside government's ongoing commitment to its key principles. The report is organized into the following sections:

- COVID-19 Pandemic Rapid Response: features government's quick actions to enable technologies, ease costs, reduce barriers, and support people and businesses as B.C. navigates the COVID-19 pandemic and its after effects;
- Commitment to Reconciliation, Equity and Inclusion: highlights initiatives that ensure all people are seen, heard, respected and supported and have equal access and opportunities to develop to their full potential;
- People-First Approach: promotes the people-centred regulatory and service improvements that British Columbians have come to trust and rely on;
- Initiatives to Build a Strong Economy: profiles ^{s.13} economic recovery by supporting B.C. entrepreneurs and businesses, restoring B.C. jobs, and preparing people for careers of the future; and
- Investment in a Sustainable Future: features initiatives that mitigate climate change and increase provincial food security.

The final section profiles government's commitment to maintain accountability and measure progress on regulatory and service improvement. It includes an updated regulatory requirements count and a description of this year's bundled amendment package that featured over 600 updates to gendered language in B.C.'s regulations.

Section One: COVID-19 Pandemic Rapid Response

The COVID-19 pandemic took the world by storm and changed everything in its path. It has had an unprecedented impact on our people and province.

Businesses were forced to act quickly, shifting their delivery models to comply with public health orders to keep British Columbians safe. Some workers were laid off, others lost their jobs, and many more had to adapt to working remotely while simultaneously managing personal and family priorities. The past year has proven how flexible, responsive and resilient British Columbians are, making headlines

s.13 under Dr. Bonnie Henry's guidance to "Be Kind, Be Calm, Be Safe."

Throughout the crisis government has put people and businesses first. In addition to providing financial support to those who needed it the most, the Province initiated many programs to keep supply chains open, protect people's jobs and livelihoods, and ensure businesses were operating in a way that kept the public safe.

Going forward, we will build on these successes. We will also continue to support British Columbians through the pandemic and economic recovery by remaining responsive. This includes reviewing the temporary changes made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that improved service delivery for British Columbians to determine if some of these changes should permanently remain.

This section profiles examples of government's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through the rapid use of new tools and technology, decreased costs to businesses and people in crisis, reduced barriers to accessing services, and continued support for people and businesses.

Tools and Technology

Service Delivery in a Time of Crisis

- A temporary Ministerial Order under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) allowed health-care workers and other provincial public services to quickly adapt to the temporary use of communication technology tools, making it easier to communicate and coordinate service delivery. The same Ministerial Order allowed post-secondary institutions to pivot their teaching practices to include online meetings, discussions and exam formats as an alternative to in-person classes.

Call-Out:

Child and Youth Mental Health services trained all provincial intake teams to offer treatment and therapy services for children and youth by phone and/or virtually.

Access to Justice

Quick action by Legal Aid BC ensured that vulnerable people in the province were able to access important legal aid services during the pandemic while in-person services were restricted. Updates to services include:

- Increased lawyer resources on the Family LawLINE;
- Adjusted duty counsel and family advice lawyers to provide services entirely by telephone;
- Provided summary advice on criminal matters by telephone upon request;
- Increased resources to Prisoners Legal Services to cover increased demand; and

- Launched a remote child support mediation service.

These updates not only helped vulnerable citizens, but also streamlined processes and reduced the potential for a COVID-related backlog that would have slowed service delivery.

Electronic Meetings

Various ministerial and Emergency Orders were put in place quickly, which enabled the temporary use of electronic meetings in several contexts. This flexibility protects public health while also ensuring that business is conducted in a timely and efficient manner. Examples include:

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- Strata corporations were able to hold remote/electronic annual and special general meetings. Owners or residents living without a smart phone or tablet were able to attend meetings in person, or participate by telephone or by proxy.
- Credit unions were able to hold electronic meetings to ensure they remained engaged with membership and conducted business safely.
- Local governments continued to uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, and accessibility while holding public hearings electronically. While different modes of access were used based on local circumstances, public participation and comments were accepted via email, letter, phone, and/or electronically when available. This allowed local governments to provide certainty and ensure decisions were made in a timely manner.

Call-out:

Public in-person hearings are a statutory requirement prior to adopting certain land use bylaws, such as official community plans and zoning bylaw amendments. This order provides local governments with the authority to hold public hearings electronically during the COVID-19 pandemic so that they can continue making important land use decisions and allow development such as housing to proceed. This also provides continuity, certainty, and more predictable timelines to the development industry while

s.13 support economic recovery.

Virtual Industrial Site Inspections for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, regulations under the Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Act (GGIRCA) were amended to extend reporting deadlines and allow for virtual site visits of an accredited third party for industrial operations that emit 25,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gases or an equivalent during each one-year reporting cycle. Third parties review data on how sites measure the release of gases, ensuring consistent and accurate greenhouse gas emission reporting. Having a professional reliance system throughout B.C. ensures that industrial sites are meeting world emission standards and enables B.C. to track progress and meet target commitments. Due to strict compliance guidelines, not all site visits can be done remotely, but of the 102 facilities that required verification for the 2019 reporting year, 50 facilities engaged in virtual verification.

Call-out:

Resulting from positive reviews from industry, verification bodies and accreditation bodies, the regulations under the GGIRCA have been changed to permanently enable virtual site visits. This makes

B.C. the first jurisdiction to allow virtual site visits and reduces the costs and time involved in third party verifiers traveling to remote sites.

Eased Costs

Rental Rate Increases Frozen

Rental rates are frozen until December 2021, saving approximately 1.5 million renters in B.C. 2.6% of their rental costs in 2020 and 1.4% in 2021.

Lowered Liquor Pricing for Businesses

Permanent policy changes now allow restaurants, bars and tourism operators with liquor licences to purchase beer, wine and spirits at the wholesale price set by the BC Liquor Distribution Branch. Prior to this change, hospitality licensees paid full retail price on most liquor purchases.

Call-out:

Reduced liquor pricing better positions the 8,500 business owners in B.C.'s hospitality and restaurant sector, who employ 190,000 British Columbians, to increase revenue as they navigate through the pandemic to economic recovery.

Capped Delivery Service Fees

Delivery service commissions and other related fees charged to restaurants have been temporarily capped at 15% ^{s.13} to put more money back in business owners' pockets. As a result of the impact of COVID-19, restaurants have increased reliance on delivery services to create new revenue streams and stay afloat during pandemic restrictions and physical distancing. The delivery fee caps ensure immediate relief for businesses by placing a cap on the fees that restaurants must pay for this service.

Tax Deferral in a Time of Need

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- Approximately 45 businesses who purchased multi-jurisdictional vehicles before May 4, 2020 and applied for a B.C.-only licence between March 11, 2020 and September 30, 2020, were waived from paying the exit tax on these vehicles. This temporary measure was used to support the commercial transport industry by allowing certain vehicles to change their licensing status in response to COVID-19 without paying the exit tax that normally would be required from the licensing change.
- Changes to the Land Tax Deferment Act and Regulations modernize the property tax deferment program by implementing online applications as well as automatic renewals and equity checks. The online format makes it easier and faster for homeowners to apply, reduces the mistakes that can happen in paper-based applications, and eliminates the need to reapply for future renewal.

Waived Civil Resolution Tribunal Fee Requirements

In response to the hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, B.C.'s Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) on a case-by-case basis, ^{s.13} to waive fees for those who lost their incomes as a result of COVID-19 and who can no longer afford CRT fees. These changes saved successful applicants \$25-\$200 in CRT fees per item as current household income documents at the time would not have been able to prove loss of income and obtain the fee waiver.

Flexibility for Strata Corporations

Updates to the Strata Property Regulation allow strata corporations the added flexibility to postpone meetings ^{s.13} as well as pay for rising insurance costs from their contingency reserve fund, without prior approval from owners, if the payment is required before there is time to arrange a general meeting.

Waived Rent for ^{s.13} Operators

Eligible holders of commercial recreation tenures and park-use permits, such as outdoor adventure businesses, fishing and hunting lodges, guest ranches, ecotourism lodges, seasonal campgrounds and other commercial recreation operators, will have one year of annual base rent waived by the Province between May 1, 2020, and April 30, 2021.

Call-Out:

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Reduced Barriers

Protected Childcare Spaces

Approximately 4,000 Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Educator Assistants received one extra year to complete the professional development and work experience hours needed to renew their certifications. These changes kept people at work in these jobs, and ensured that there was no loss of childcare spaces as a result of workers ^{s.13} to complete requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic when childcare spaces were scarce.

Expanded Food and Liquor Service Areas

Food primary, liquor primary and/or manufacturer licensees (such as wineries, breweries, and distilleries) can apply for a temporary authorization to expand service areas until the end of October 2021. ^{s.13}

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Extended Hours of Sale and Delivery of Liquor Products

The hours of liquor sales and delivery services were temporarily extended to begin at 7 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. ^{s.13}

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Packaged Liquor for Off-site Consumption and Delivery

Permanent changes allow Liquor Primary and Food Primary licensees to sell and deliver packaged liquor for off-site consumption, with the purchase of meals ordered through take-out or delivery options.

These changes open a potential new revenue stream for foodservice businesses ^{s.13}
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Made-in-B.C. Sanitizer

A temporary authorization allowed breweries, wineries and distilleries to use their establishments to manufacture, package, sell and donate sanitizer in response to a recommendation from the industry. Participating establishments were able to pivot their operations, create new revenue streams and help manufacturers who may have had to close their lounge areas or lose sales revenue due to closures in the hospitality industry. These changes increased the production, distribution and availability of these essential health and safety products required by people, businesses, hospitals and other institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and put more sanitizer on the market to ensure B.C. had an ample supply.

Financial Flexibility for Local Governments
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Safer ^{s.13} Local Government Processes

Nearly two dozen Ministerial Orders under the Local Government Act (LGA) were issued to support local governments in conducting safer by-elections and assent votes, such as allowing mail ballots for all eligible voters and enabling oral declarations. The measures were developed directly with local governments to identify specific exemptions to election procedure bylaws or to the LGA to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a result of these changes, local governments continue to implement these important democratic processes safely and successfully for their citizens.

Flexible Designation of Farm Properties

Due to COVID-19, government has waived this year's minimum income requirement for properties that were classed as a farm in 2020. This saved approximately 400 farm properties and 900 developing farms from potentially losing their farm class status. Farm class status provides many benefits, including a significant reduction in property taxes. By waiving the income requirements and the need to submit sales receipts for 2021, the Province helped to ensure the continued operation of many farm properties throughout British Columbia.

Call-out:

There are nearly 18,500 farm properties in B.C., and approximately 5,800 would have been required to submit income reports for 2020. Of these, up to 900 developing farms and approximately 400 farm properties with a history of income below the required threshold would have been most at risk of losing farm class status for 2021.

Streamlined Transportation Resource Request ^{s.13}

To streamline COVID-19 transportation requests, the Province created a web portal so requestors, including health authorities, Indigenous communities, and local governments, could submit their COVID-19 transportation requests online and receive transportation assistance sooner. Examples of requests include health authorities seeking air transport of blood samples from remote communities to labs for

COVID-19 testing, transport of patients from remote communities to COVID-19 prepared hospitals, and Indigenous communities requesting assistance to control traffic into their communities to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Support for People and Businesses

COVID-19 Website

The COVID-19 website has had 4.5 million page views since launch and continues to provide information for residents of British Columbia about COVID-19. Through this page, British Columbians can stay informed about programs and services, how to stay healthy, how to access financial supports, and how to keep their businesses safe and viable throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the website includes topic areas such as:

- COVID-19 immunization plan;
- Provincial restrictions;
- K to 12 education;
- Recovery benefits;
- Travel restrictions;
- Violation tickets;
- Mental health;
- Quarantine requirements;
- Economic recovery planning;
- Provincial Health Officer orders; and
- Links to health information at the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Extensions to the Temporary Layoff Period

Amendments to the Employment Standards Regulation allowed employers and employees to extend the maximum period for a layoff to August 30, 2020, if the layoff was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The extensions also supported employees by allowing them to keep their jobs and employment-related benefits while accessing the federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

Call-out:

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Temporary Foreign Worker Quarantine Program

Seasonal labourers are essential to ensuring a stable food supply in B.C. That's why the Province introduced the Temporary Foreign Worker Quarantine Program to allow agriculture Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) to safely quarantine upon arrival to Canada as required by the federal Quarantine Act. The program is centrally managed and funded through the Province, saving farmers the time and money it would have taken to upgrade their on-farm accommodations to ensure a safe quarantine.

Provided by the Province, TFWs had access to accommodation, food-services, laundry services, wellness walks, interpretation and translation services, health screening and other necessary supports during the 14-day quarantine period. ^{s.13}

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B.C. Business COVID-19 Support Service

Through a partnership with the Government of Canada and the Province, Small Business BC launched the B.C. Business COVID-19 Support Service: a single repository of information and resources for businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Advisors are available by phone, email or through use of a live-chat feature to answer questions and offer support in multiple languages. Advisors offer tailored guidance for businesses on how to benefit from and obtain supports from the provincial and federal governments, industry and community partners. The website also includes updates and other resources, making it faster and easier for businesses to access the information they need for recovery.

Call-out:

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BC Tourism Resiliency Network

The BC Tourism Resiliency Network was established in partnership between Western Economic Diversification Canada, Island Coastal Economic Trust and the provincial government to help B.C.'s 19,000 tourism businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Available resources include online guides to government funding, online courses to assist employers, as well as access to targeted one-on-one support from experts in human resources, finance, marketing, and business strategy and transition.

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BC Marketplace

Through a partnership between the B.C. Government, Western Economic Diversification Canada and Small Business BC, the BC Marketplace was launched to link British Columbians to local products and services available for purchase online. The BC Marketplace is a free, online resource that currently showcases more than ^{s.13} B.C.-based businesses^{s.13}. This service helps boost small businesses' growth and online presence and connects businesses with customers who want to buy local products and services.

COVID-19-related Leave

Amendments to the Employment Standards Act provide the option for unpaid, job-protected leave to employees unable to work because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible employees receive financial support while on COVID-19-related leave through the federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit or Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit. This support helped provide financial security and job protection to employees impacted by COVID-19 and helped reduce the risk of transmission.

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Section Two: Commitment to Reconciliation, Equity and Inclusion

Reconciliation, equity and inclusion are foundational principles of our government that inform all that we do. From signing the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol dedicated to increasing Indigenous students' success, to supporting post-secondary students' mental health, we continue to build towards a B.C. where everyone feels seen, heard and has the opportunity to fully participate.

First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol

The First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol was signed, demonstrating the Province's commitment to working in partnership with First Nations to address systemic barriers facing Indigenous students. Through this partnership, B.C.'s legislation and policies will be reviewed and improved to better support the educational outcomes and well-being of First Nations children ^{s.13}

as they transition from the school system to post-secondary education and/or into the workforce.

Williams Lake Indigenous Court

The establishment of the Williams Lake Indigenous Court will offer better outcomes for those in conflict with the law by providing a holistic, culturally appropriate approach to justice and finding ways to address underlying challenges that may drive criminal behaviour. Indigenous courts are sentencing courts tailored to delivering service specific to the needs of Indigenous offenders, generally adopting an approach to justice that focuses on healing, holding the offender accountable, and reintegrating the offender into the community to achieve better future outcomes.

Call-out:

The Williams Lake Indigenous Court sits once a month, with a judge, Crown, defence lawyer, the client and Elders (Knowledge Keepers) sitting in circle to consider the details of the case and background of an offender. Participants discuss the offending behaviour and its impacts, while working together to develop a Healing Plan.

Indigenous Justice Centres

The B.C. government and BC First Nations Justice Council partnered to open Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC's) in British Columbia. To date, three Indigenous Justice Centres have opened in Merritt, Prince George and Prince Rupert, improving culturally appropriate access to justice for Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Justice Centres provide culturally appropriate information, advice, support and representation directly to Indigenous people at the community level, focusing primarily on criminal law and child protection issues. IJC's take a holistic approach to client and community wellness by facilitating client connections to supports such as housing, mental health and addictions treatment and employment services.

Protection from Household Violence

Changes to B.C.'s Residential Tenancy Act protect renters and roommates and allow them to find new homes and end their fixed-term tenancies early without penalty due to violence or if their safety is threatened by continuing to live in a rental unit.

Law Foundation Legal Clinics

A poverty law legal clinic in Kelowna and the Immigration and Refugee Legal Clinic in Vancouver are now open,^{s.13}

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s.13 The legal clinics have increased access to justice in B.C. by filling a gap in service for vulnerable populations that otherwise would have not been able to access legal support.

Improved Mental Health Supports for Post-Secondary Students

The first of its kind in Canada, Here2Talk, a free and confidential app offers post-secondary students access to mental health counselling and referral services. Masters-level trained counsellors are ready to help any time, any day, as often as needed by phone or through an online chat feature within the app. Here2Talk's call and chat services are provided in English and French, with some additional languages, such as Punjabi, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish and Arabic, being offered based on availability.

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New Domestic Arbitration Act

A new Arbitration Act came into force in B.C. in September 2020, which modernizes, repeals and replaces outdated domestic arbitration legislation. The new Act supports party autonomy to efficiently resolve disputes out of court. Party and court resources have been freed up through a streamlined, simplified appeal process: four rounds of appeal hearings in court under the previous legislation have been condensed to two rounds maximum, with parties given the ability to opt out of appeals altogether.

Section Three: People-First Approach

Our people-first approach allows government to design and deliver the services people count on to keep all people in B.C. healthy, safe and living affordably.

Some of this year's updates include new and improved digitized and streamlined processes, not only to adhere to social distancing practices and help people living with disabilities, but also to serve people in rural or remote communities, as well as anyone who would have difficulty navigating in-person or hardcopy processes.

Remote Execution, Signing and Witnessing of Wills

Amendments to the Wills, Estates and Succession Act enable courts to accept electronically signed wills and allow for the remote witnessing of wills. ^{s.13}
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Better Management for Strata Insurance

Amendments to B.C.'s acts and regulations ^{s.13} further transparency to the strata insurance market and mitigate rising costs so that strata councils can make informed decisions on their insurance policies. These changes will:

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- Allow strata corporations to use their contingency reserve fund when necessary to pay for premium increases;
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- End referral fees; and
- Require insurance agents to disclose their commission amount.

Flexible Use of Basic Respite

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Enhanced Care Coverage Auto Insurance

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Call-out:

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Faster BC Services Card Identity Verification

Remote identity-verification in British Columbia has become even easier. The Province has launched Send Video, the newest way to verify a person's identity in order to activate a mobile BC Services Card and access online government services.

People can use Send Video within the BC Services Card app from their iPhone, iPad, Android phone or tablet to send Service BC a photo and a short video of themselves at any time. A Service BC representative reviews and verifies the person's identity and activates their mobile BC Services Card for online use, eliminating the need to visit a Service BC Centre for in-person identity verification.

Call-out:

British Columbia is the first jurisdiction in North America to use an identity-verification solution using video. These services are another step forward in government's work to help British Columbians conveniently, safely, and quickly access services online. These efforts also support B.C.'s new digital framework, which aims to improve the experiences and interactions people have with government services.

Updates to the Workers Compensation Act

Nearly three dozen legislative amendments to the Workers Compensation Act provide better support to injured workers and their families and enhance WorkSafeBC's ability to investigate workplace incidents, improving the health and safety of workers while keeping employer premiums ^{s.13}

Some of the amendments that directly benefit workers include:

- Increased maximum annual salary amount on which workers' compensation benefits are based;
- Fast-tracked effective date of presumptions for occupational diseases caused by viral pathogens, including COVID-19; and
- Courts are now allowed to hear victim impact statements as part of prosecution relating to occupational health and safety violations.

National Safety Code Online Knowledge Test

To improve road safety, business practices and service delivery, online knowledge tests and resources have been launched as part of the National Safety Code (NSC) application process for commercial vehicle operators to obtain an NSC certificate.

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It can be re-taken as needed at no additional cost. The test is also designed to encourage the customer to refer to the improved and expanded online Carrier Safety Guide which helps users quickly and easily understand the necessary information to operate safely.

Learn2Ride Online

Developed in partnership between TransLink and the Province, Learn2Ride Online is a free web-based bike skills course helping children ages 9-12 learn basic bike safety.^{s.13}

to cycle safely by learning about bike parts, the importance of bike helmets and other safety gear, and how to be aware of surroundings and to communicate effectively when biking.

Clearer DriveBC 511 Signage

DriveBC has replaced a 1-800 number on highway signs with the easier to see and remember 511 number. By dialing 511, callers are now able to access a menu through their phone where they can receive information and updates such as road conditions and events on B.C. highways in real time. Additionally, the 511 number is increasingly used throughout North America, making it safer and more intuitive for travelers visiting from elsewhere to get the information they need.

Variable Speed Limits Using Smart Technology

The Province has launched a new variable speed limit system in the Fraser Valley that adjusts speed limits to align with current congestion or weather conditions. The speed limits are set based on data provided by traffic and road weather sensors installed approximately every 500 metres along the highway. There are also multiple road/weather sensors that measure parameters, such as level of grip on the road, visibility, and temperature.^{s.13}

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Air Quality Subscription Service Expansion

Expansion of the Air Quality Subscription Service now allows people to automatically receive real-time air quality advisories by SMS text message notification. In addition to the sulphur dioxide alerts previously rolled out, the alerts will warn users about poor air quality and smoky skies while also providing health advice and safety suggestions via text message.

Section Four: Initiatives to Build a Strong Economy

As we lay the foundation for economic recovery, we aim to build a B.C. that works for everyone. We continue to support B.C. entrepreneurs and businesses, and encourage investment, growth and innovation throughout the province. We strive to prepare people for future career paths by creating opportunities and supports for all British Columbians to obtain the skills and experience necessary to reach their full potential.

Multi-jurisdictional Registry Access Service

The Multi-jurisdictional Registry Access Service (MRAS), a new online service, simplifies the registration process across provincial lines, making it easier for owners to register their business in multiple provinces. Until now, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had separate processes and systems for corporations and limited partnerships to complete their extra provincial business registrations and maintenance filings. The four provinces are now the first to implement the online MRAS, a hub that allows corporate information sharing between the provinces, making registration in multiple provinces faster and easier for business owners.

Call-out:

There has been a 25% increase in the number of extra-provincial registrations from 248 registrations in the quarter (July 2020 - Sept 2020) before the launch of the MRAS initiative to 311 registrations in the quarter after its implementation.

Digital Marketing Bootcamp

The Digital Marketing Bootcamp, developed in partnership between the B.C. government and Alacrity Canada, is a new online course offered for free to small and medium sized businesses. It provides participants with a foundation in digital marketing, including search engine optimization, paid advertising, analytics, content marketing and more.

Call-Out:

Three months following the completion of the first course:

- 75% of the businesses who participated have had an increase in digital customer acquisition.
- 56.3% of the respondents have had an increase in revenue from their online sales.

In April 2021, the Digital Marketing Bootcamp program received funding to support more participants. It is expected that nearly 5,900 people will be trained s.13

s.13

Building Benefit Companies

Changes to the Business Corporations Act give British Columbians the opportunity to classify their businesses as a benefit company, provided they meet the requirements. British Columbia is the first province in Canada to create the option of benefit companies. This builds a new way to do business that benefits people, communities and future generations. It also offers benefit companies s.13

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greater exposure to consumers who value and want to support businesses dedicated to corporate social responsibility.

Call-out: Did you know?

A benefit company is a for-profit corporation committed to conducting its business in a responsible and sustainable manner, as well as promoting public benefits in addition to serving the interests of its shareholders. For example, the benefits could be artistic, charitable, cultural, economic, educational, environmental, literary, medical, religious, scientific and/or technological.

Business Structures Wizard

The Business Structures Wizard (the Wizard) is a free online tool that helps entrepreneurs select the best entity type when starting their business (i.e., sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation). The tool guides users through a series of 10 easy-to-follow questions and enables entrepreneurs to better understand their options and the implications of each business structure as related to considerations such as liability and financing.

The Wizard was developed in collaboration between the provincial and federal governments and aims to enhance service delivery by providing easy access to government services, avoiding confusion and reducing errors in the registration process so that entrepreneurs can spend more time growing their businesses.

Digital Seals for Engineered Design Drawings and Documents

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Section Five: Investment in a Sustainable Future

B.C.'s economic recovery includes investment and preparation for a cleaner, brighter future that addresses climate change. We continue to work hard to leverage opportunities that create value from our natural and renewable resources and also protect our land, air and water. The harvest of local food keeps jobs and supply chains in B.C. and lowers our carbon footprint. From increased recycling incentives to reduced barriers in the cannabis market, B.C. is well-positioned for a sustainable future.

Modernized Recycling

Changes to the Recycling Regulation support physical distancing and drive increased recycling due to added convenience and incentives. The minimum deposit for all beverage containers has been increased from 5 to 10 cents and can now be electronically paid, such as through e-transfer, cheque,^{s.13}

s.13 These changes are expected to increase container return rates, incentivize participation in recycling programs, and provide ease and efficiency for the consumer.

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Wildfire App

The Province has launched the BC Wildfire Service mobile app which provides real-time wildfire information and an interactive map that users can customize to display a variety of fire-related data.

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Key features of the App include:

- Wildfire interactive map;
- Latest news and advisories;
- Statistics for the current wildfire season;
- Push notifications (including 'Near Me' evacuation orders and alerts); and
- s.13

Call-out:

As of April 2021, there have been approximately four million-page views on the app and over 40,000 app installs. The BC Wildfire Service mobile app is available for Apple (iOS) and Android devices and is free to download in the App Store and Google Play.

New Web Reporting Tool for River Health

The Canada-B.C. Water Quality Monitoring Program is a web reporting tool to help people learn about current water quality and detect future issues that may threaten aquatic life in an easy to read and transparent format. Typically, water quality trend data are published in technical reports and are not easily available to decision makers and the public. This online interactive tool reports water quality trends in key rivers throughout B.C. in a format that is easy to understand for all. It also provides quick access to provincial, regional, and local decision-makers when assessing projects that may impact water quality, while also providing long-term trend analyses to assess potential impacts from resource development, urbanization, agriculture, and climate change.

Improvements to the Pesticide Applicators Certification System

A series of projects were completed to streamline and modernize the way industry and the public obtain training materials, arrange exam sessions, and successfully complete the Pesticide Certification program which is required for applying pesticides.

This included:

- An online ordering platform that allows the public and industry to order required training materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as opposed to being restricted to business hours and having to pay for materials in person or by phone;
- A new exam management system that allows for better tracking and greater efficiency in providing updates and feedback to applicants;
- Software to facilitate exam scheduling and status tracking;
- Redesigned Integrated Pest Management Training and Certification webpage with a user-experience and accessibility lens; and
- Exams translated into additional languages, such as Chinese, Punjabi, Vietnamese and Spanish.

New Emergency Incident Management System Software

As of November 2020, all dangerous good incident reports are being captured, tracked and managed in a new BC Emergency Management System, providing [as.13](#) for emergency managers, responders, stakeholders and partners. The new software provides an emergency incident management platform to enable fast and effective decision-making and response to better protect the safety of B.C.'s responders and the environment. Increased access to information will improve transparency and assist the processing of Freedom of Information requests, litigation, and information sharing with partner agencies and stakeholders.

Efficient Timber Sales

Regulatory amendments allow Timber Sales Managers to immediately re-advertise a Timber Sales License (TSL) that does not receive any eligible bids, with a reduced advertising period of five days, ensuring a timely bidding process. The amended regulation has already been successfully used to re-advertise TSLs which received no bids, making timber more available at the market price (determined by bids) for the forest industry.

Online Access to Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis

The 2020-2022 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis features more than 100 amendments to existing hunting and trapping regulations can now be viewed online. The Synopsis is published every two

years, responding to the most current information available about wildlife populations and sustainability. It features proposed changes to hunting, trapping, motor vehicle prohibitions, and weapons restriction regulations made in consultation with First Nations and stakeholders. The updates ensure the continued conservation of wildlife or habitat, address safety concerns, maintain or enhance recreational opportunities, and uphold the principles of humane treatment of wildlife.

Transparent Walls for Cannabis Retail Stores

Updates to regulations now allow cannabis retail stores to feature transparent walls, provided that all cannabis-related accessories, products and packaging are not visible from outside the store.^{s.13}

Cannabis Prepaid Purchase Cards

Cannabis prepaid purchase cards can now be used at all of a retail store's locations, including online purchases. Previous rules stated that prepaid cards could only be used at the location where the card was purchased. These changes make it more convenient for consumers and make the cards more appealing to buy and sell.

Improvements to Cannabis Worker Screening

Security screening for cannabis workers has moved to expire every five years instead of every two years. The changes ensure that the security screening process for cannabis workers is timely and cost effective, while also allowing provincial security screening resources to focus on the qualification of new workers rather than the requalification of current workers.

Streamlined Recovery Reports

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s.13 Online guidance for how to properly draft Conclusion of Recovery Reports is now available, providing a template to use and making it quicker and easier for people to include the required recovery plan content and meet the regulatory requirements outlined in the Spill Preparedness, Response and Recovery Regulation.

Job s.13 Through New Online Website

The B.C. Farm, Fish and Food Job Connector site links British Columbians looking for careers in agriculture to current job vacancies offered by farmers, seafood businesses and food processors. Available jobs include positions for crop and seafood harvesters, food processing and farm workers, agrologists, large machinery operators and marketing specialists. The site acts as a single hiring resource for employers, offering sector-specific information and guidance to support businesses through the hiring process, saving businesses time and money so they can focus on growing and harvesting food.

Call-out:

- Jobs are available in more than 30 communities in the Fraser Valley, Okanagan, Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island, as well as in the Kootenays, Cariboo and northern B.C.
- There are close to 600 jobs posted on WorkBC in the agriculture, seafood and food and beverage sectors.

- B.C. farms, ranches, seafood and food processing companies generated a record \$15 billion in revenue in s.13

Increased Local Meat Supply in Select Regions

Updates to the Meat Inspection Regulation increase local meat supply and streamline administrative processes. Class D licences are now able to be issued in select regional districts within the Alberni Valley, the Kootenays, and the Robson Valley. Each license adds up to 25 animal units to the local market where the meat was slaughtered, increasing local meat supply for select regions. Additionally, Class D and E meat slaughter licences are now regulated under the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, which will streamline the licensing process for provincial meat inspection for B.C. consumers, ranchers and producers as they no longer have to contact regional health authorities, reducing administrative burden for businesses.

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Updated Contaminated Site Identification Processes

Changes to the Environmental Management Act and Contaminated Sites Regulation streamline the site identification process, eliminating unnecessary steps and making the process clearer and more predictable for practitioners, municipalities and the general public through:

- An automatic requirement for site investigation when a regulated industrial or commercial activity has occurred on a site, and if a person, owner or operator is seeking re-development or shutting down operations; and
- Identification of industrial or commercial sites where owners or operators are undergoing bankruptcy to increase the likelihood that contamination is addressed by the responsible person and not the taxpayer.

Section Six: Accountability and Commitment

Our commitment to better regulations means constantly updating and improving our regulations and services in B.C. to ensure they are modern and inclusive. The stories profiled in this report are a sample of the efforts made in every ministry to improve access to the services British Columbians count on. We're working hard to develop regulations and policies that simultaneously encourage competitiveness, growth and innovation while protecting the environment, public health and safety.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked diligently to make a series of rapid changes to regulations and legislation to help businesses, communities and people in need. Many of these initiatives are featured in this report, such as how we changed liquor regulations to enable restaurants to pivot their service models or when we permitted remote municipal meetings and elections. We continue to respond quickly to ensure flexibility and support for all British Columbians during and after these challenging times.

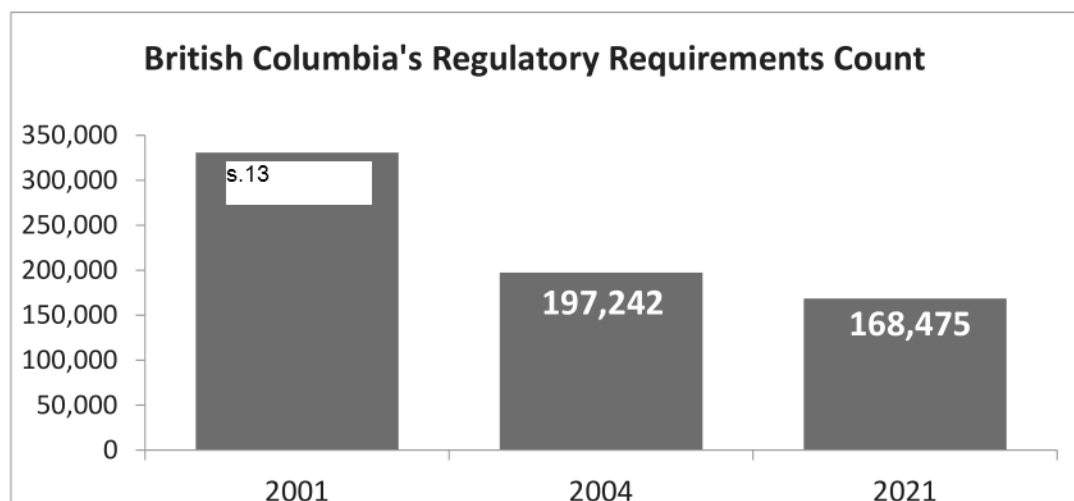
We are proud to share that even with the unprecedented volume of amended and new legislation and regulation due to the pandemic, the regulatory requirements count has remained stable at 15% below the baseline count established in 2004. We are committed to developing better regulations and services that consider impacts to all people and businesses and promote equity, economic recovery, and accessible service delivery.

Regulatory Requirements Count

Our regulatory requirements count and regulatory impact assessment process ensure that we stay accountable in designing modern, effective and efficient laws and regulations. To achieve this, all new or amended legislation, regulations, and associated policies and forms must include analysis of all potential impacts for people and businesses. Any changes to regulatory requirements must be documented.

Call out: A regulatory requirement is any action a person, business or government must take to access services, carry out business or meet legal responsibilities.

To stay accountable to the initial 40% reduction of regulatory requirements achieved between 2001 and 2004, a baseline regulatory count was established in 2004. The Net Zero Increase commitment, in place until 2022, caps total regulatory requirements at the 2004 count of 197,242. As of March 31, 2021, the regulatory requirements count was 15% below this baseline with a total of 168,475.



Better Regulations for British Columbians Amendment Package

The Better Regulations for British Columbians (BR4BC) annual regulatory amendment package allows government to make many small changes at once in a streamlined process, keeping our regulatory framework current. In March 2021 we updated 17 regulations to clarify, modernize or repeal outdated sections.

Inclusive Language Initiative

Demonstrating our government's commitment to equity and inclusion, we also made significant changes to regulations across 15 ministries by updating approximately 600 instances of gendered language through the BR4BC amendment package. Terms such as he, she, mother, father, aunt, uncle, brother, sister and man-made have been updated to more inclusive wording that does not use gendered language. This is typically achieved by a slight rewording of the affected sentence, or using non-gendered substitutes such as parent or sibling. This work is just beginning; there are many examples of gendered and other outdated language within our regulatory framework and policies. We will build on the momentum and success of this year

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Our Commitment

We are committed to continuing our efforts to ensure that B.C.'s laws and regulations are inclusive and representative of all British Columbians, and that all impacts on people, communities and businesses are considered when developing government policy. We will build on our existing regulatory improvement mechanisms by leveraging technology to identify outdated, complex or burdensome language to target our improvement initiatives. Finally, we will continue to collaborate with our partners and stakeholders to identify and address regulations and policies that are a barrier to access, innovation and growth, ensuring that B.C. is known for having better, smarter, and more inclusive regulations.

If you have encountered a regulation or service that you think could be improved, contact us at BetterRegulations@gov.bc.ca.

Call out:

We accomplish more when we work together. Based on recommendations from B.C.'s Mining Jobs Task Force 2018 report, the Province provided funding and support to the Mining Association of British Columbia to develop a BC Mining Innovation Roadmap. Over 280 people from mining, government, environmental and Indigenous groups worked together to share ideas and build the Roadmap's themes. The Roadmap was released in March 2021^{s.13}

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Through the Roadmap and the future Mining Innovation Hub, government, communities and the mining industry are working together to position B.C. as a global leader in regulatory excellence and mining innovation, prepare for future jobs in an inclusive mining industry, and protect B.C.'s land, air and water through sustainable practices.

INFORMATION NOTE

Cliff #: 153743

Date: April 15, 2021

PREPARED FOR: Bobbi Plecas, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

ISSUE: British Columbia's (B.C.'s) input in Canada's 2021 World Trade Organization (WTO) subsidy notification

BACKGROUND:

As a Member of the WTO, Canada is obligated to abide by the transparency requirements of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM). Under the Agreement, WTO Members are required to notify specific subsidies that have been granted within their territories, including at the sub-federal level, every two years. Canada's last notification in 2019 included submissions by all provinces and territories.

Subsidies' notification serves as an important tool in enhancing transparency. As a trade-dependent economy, Canada benefits from its trading partners' adherence to this notification requirement. ^{s.16}

^{s.16}

^{s.16} Canada, the European Union, the United States, Australia, and Japan, among others, have been strong proponents of robust subsidies' notifications.

Over the past decades, there has been a greater focus on sub-federal subsidy notifications, in recognition of the important role provincial, territorial and local authorities play in industrial and development policy.

In January 2021, Finance Canada requested provinces and territories provide it with information on certain programs to help the federal government fulfill its commitment to notify Canadian subsidies under the two-year cycle that covers the fiscal years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. Subsidies subject to this notification will be the subject of review and discussions at the WTO ASCM Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Finance Canada requested B.C. to revise the list of B.C.'s programs included in the 2019 notification and update the information as necessary. ^{s.16}

^{s.16}

In preparation for Canada's comprehensive subsidies' notification, Trade, Policy and Negotiations (TPN) solicited input on provincial programs pre-identified by the federal government from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation. TPN also consulted with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development, and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, and requested input on the programs they run. Information on all programs is publicly available via B.C. legislation (e.g. *Income Tax Act*, *Mining Exploration Tax Credit Regulation*) and the official website of the B.C. Government.

The submission that TPN proposes to provide to Finance Canada consists of six programs identified by Finance Canada for the 2021 notification exercise and an update on the programs submitted in the 2019 subsidies notification that are still active.

NEXT STEPS:

TPN staff will submit the 2021 subsidies information for B.C. to Finance Canada.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: B.C. programs to be notified

ADM Contact: Selena Basi, (778) 974-5951

Prepared by: Ganna Drozd, Manager, Trade and Industry Development Division

Reviewed by		
Dir: JJ	ED: SA	ADM: SB

Attachment 1 - B.C. programs to be notified

Mining exploration tax credit

1. Mining exploration tax credit
2. This credit was available in FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20.
3. The purpose of the credit is to provide support to mineral resource companies, supporting early-stage mineral exploration in the province to improve the long-term outlook of the mining sector.
4. Funding is provided under the authority of the B.C. Ministry of Finance, through the *Income Tax Act* and its *Mining Exploration Tax Credit Regulation*.
5. Assistance is provided in the form of a refundable tax credit.
6. The credit is available to individuals, corporations and active members of partnerships that undertake mineral exploration. The credit is calculated as 20% of qualified mining exploration expenses less the amount of any assistance received or receivable. An enhanced rate of 30% is available for qualified mineral exploration undertaken in prescribed Mountain Pine Beetle affected areas.
7. The program disbursed \$12 million in FY 2018/19 and \$38 million in FY 2019/20.
8. The credit was introduced in 1998 and was made permanent in 2019.

Mining flow-through share tax credit

1. Mining flow-through share tax credit
2. This tax credit was available in FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20.
3. The purpose of the credit is to provide an additional financing tool for mineral resource companies, supporting early-stage mineral exploration in the province to improve the long-term outlook of the mining sector.
4. Authority is provided under the authority of the B.C. Ministry of Finance, through the *Income Tax Act*.
5. Assistance is provided in the form of a non-refundable tax credit.
6. The tax credit is available to individuals who purchase flow-through shares from a corporation. An individual can claim a non-refundable B.C. income tax credit equal to 20% of the B.C. flow-through mining expenditures that are transferred each year.
7. The program disbursed \$10 million in FY 2018/19 and \$20 million in FY 2019/20.
8. The credit was introduced in 2001 and was made permanent in 2019.

B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program

1. B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program
2. This credit was available in FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20.
3. The program provides specialized business planning support to enable existing B.C. producers and processors to make more informed decisions or complete disaster recovery planning.
4. Assistance is provided under the legislative authority of the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries; and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

5. Assistance is provided in the form of subsidized business planning services, and business recovery planning services.
6. Support is directed to Primary Agriculture Producers and Agriculture and/or Food and Beverage Processors in B.C. (for Specialized Business Planning), and Primary Agriculture and/or Seafood Producers (aquaculture and commercial fisheries), Agriculture, Food and Beverage, and/or Seafood Processors (for COVID-19/Disaster Recovery Business Planning).
7. This program disbursed \$76,950 in FY 2018/19 and \$79,500 in FY 2019/20.
8. The program started in FY 2018/19 and is ongoing.

Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Program

1. Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Program
2. This credit was available in FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20.
3. The program is designed to accelerate the pace of agri-food-related innovation to enhance the sector's competitiveness, sustainability, productivity and resiliency.
4. Assistance is provided under the legislative authority of the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.
5. Assistance is provided in the form of a grant.
6. Support is directed to the following organizations that have a head office or are registered to do business in B.C.:
 - B.C. agri-food sector producers and processors
 - Industry associations/organizations
 - Retail and food service businesses
 - Input, technology, and support services providers
 - Academic institutions and/or other organizations and private sector businesses
 - Regional districts and local governments
7. This program disbursed \$170,6733.04 in FY 2018/19 and \$216,7294.57 in FY 2019/20.
8. The program started in FY 2011/12 (originally under Growing Forward 2) and is ongoing.

Greenhouse Carbon Tax Relief Grant

1. Greenhouse Carbon Tax Relief Grant
2. This notification covers FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20.
3. This program provided carbon tax relief to B.C. commercial greenhouse operations.
4. Funding is provided under the authority of the B.C. Ministry of Finance, through the *Carbon Tax Act* and its *Carbon Tax Regulation*.
5. Assistance is provided in the form of a grant.
6. Assistance is directed to eligible commercial greenhouse growers including vegetable growers, floriculture growers, wholesale nurseries and forest seedlings growers.
7. This program disbursed \$8,108,341.34 in FY 2018/19 and \$8,164,631.05 in FY 2019/20.
8. This assistance was first provided in March 2013 and is ongoing.

Orchard Replant/Tree Fruit Competitiveness Program

1. Tree Fruit Competitiveness Program
2. The notification covers FY 2018/19 and 2019/20.
3. This assistance invests in enhanced competitiveness initiatives through infrastructure, innovation, marketing, and research.
4. Assistance is provided under the legislative authority of the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture.
5. Assistance is provided in the form of a grant.
6. Funding is directed to the B.C. apple and tree fruit growers.
7. This program disbursed \$0 in FY 2018/19 and \$0 in FY 2019/20.
8. The assistance was first provided in 2012 as the Orchard Replant Program, which ended March 2015. Tree Fruit Competitiveness launched December 2018 and is ongoing to December 2023.

BRIEFING NOTE

InBC Investment Corp. – Program Introduction Event Studio – April 27, 2021

Briefing Note

What:

The Premier and Minister Ravi Kahlon will announce InBC Investment Corp. shortly after the Minister introduces legislation in the House to support the operations of this new Crown corporation.

This media event will be held in the event studio. It will be preceded by a media technical briefing with officials.

Who:

The event will involve Premier John Horgan, Minister Ravi Kahlon, and three stakeholder validators: Dr. Wal van Lierop, Executive Chairman of Chrysalix; Wendy Hurlburt, President and CEO of LifeSciences BC; and Greg D’Avignon, President and CEO of the Business Council of British Columbia.

The validators will attend the event via Zoom.

Executive Summary:

InBC Investment Corp. is government’s new \$500 million strategic investment fund. Although it was first announced as part of “StrongerBC” last September, it did not receive much media attention at the time, nor has it done since. The introduction of the *InBC Investment Corp. Act* on April 27, 2021 by Minister Kahlon is the first real opportunity to introduce and explain InBC to the public. It also allows some key stakeholders to explain how this strategic investment fund will make a difference to businesses and sectors in this province.

BRIEFING NOTE

InBC Investment Corp. – Program Introduction Event Studio – April 27, 2021

Background:

On September 17, 2020, as part of B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan, "StrongerBC", the Premier and then Minister of Finance announced a new strategic investment fund for British Columbia. Called InBC, it was announced that the fund would initially be capitalized at \$500 million and would have a mandate to invest in promising B.C. ventures with a focus on scale-up.

On November 26, 2020, Minister Kahlon's mandate letter called on him to "[launch] a strategic investment fund to support our government's objective of building a more innovative low-carbon economy by investing in high-potential B.C. businesses to help them scale up and grow here."

As mentioned in the Speech from the Throne on April 12, 2021, "[d]uring this session, your government will introduce legislation to support the operations of InBC Investment Corporation. This new strategic fund will help promising B.C. companies scale up, anchor talent – keeping jobs and investment at home in British Columbia." That legislation will be introduced by Minister Kahlon on the same day as this media event.

The *InBC Investment Corp. Act* will codify aspects of InBC operations such as the independence of InBC's Chief Investment Officer and the requirement for InBC's investments to realize financial, social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Budget 2021 detailed how InBC will be capitalized: \$100 million this fiscal year, \$200 million in 2022-23, and a further \$200 million in 2023-24.

Recommendation(s):

None.