

NOTES – Economic Recovery Task Force, April 2, 2020

Attending:

Premier John Horgan	Geoff Meggs	Fazil Mihar, DM
Minister Carole James	Amber Hockin	Trevor Hughes, DM
Minister Michelle Mungall (ERTF Attendee list Attached)	Don Wright	
	Christine Kennedy, ADM	
	Lori Wanamaker, DM	

9:30 AM	Opening Discussion	PJH/MCJ
	Updates from Last Week	PJH
	Essential and Critical Services	PJH
	Safe Worksite Guidance Process and Current Guidance Documents	Deputy Minister Trevor Hughes
	Addressing Sector Requests Regulatory Cost Relief Financial Support	Deputy Minister Don Wright
	Roundtable Discussion	All
10:25 AM	Closing Remarks	PJH

NOTES:

- PJH introduction – we sent out a news release to inform the public this group is meeting. Want to ensure you all that we have a plan to tackle this. We are leading the country in terms of public health response. Number one priority is stopping the spread. We want programs in concert with the federal government. Lay out at the outset that we are doing everything we can – and we want to hear from you where there are gaps. We have been from the beginning looking at this with an eye to coming out / recovery on the other side.
- MCJ introduction – we want to reinforce we are on top of this. Everyone is responding quickly. The federal government is announcing new items every day and changing their programs constantly. We are monitoring and trying to ensure our programs complement federal programs. We are closely watching how federal criteria is being developed.
- PJH – overview of actions taken in the last week. Let's discuss how these programs are impacting you during the roundtable portion.

- Trevor Hughes – Safe worksites – We are working with the PHO and WorkSafeBC to come up with set of guidelines on a sector specific basis for safe workplaces. We want to keep the economy moving and people working. So, we are working with all partners to ensure people can work in safe workplaces.
 - Laird – Thanks to all on this. The key is confidence of workers that their workplaces are safe. The guideline document is good. We need prevention officers from WCB to deal with distancing etc on the jobsite. We need a common sense approach.
 - PJH – We are hearing a lot of rumblings on concerns with camp at Site C. It is important public confidence building for the economy that major projects such as Site C keep moving in a safe way.
- Don Wright – sectoral requests – We got a letter from a number of business orgs with a number of large requests. We have a 13-page spreadsheet with all the requests we have received so far. Trying to work through in a systematic and responsible way. Feds are announcing more programming every day. We are trying to determine how those programs unfold. We want to fill in gaps, not duplicate. We will look at issues such as regulation on a sector by sector basis. We have held off on consultations, etc for now. If there are regulatory areas where we can reduce costs, we will look into it. Example – reducing reporting requirements in areas where environmental risk is low. Defer GRRR reporting that is due in June. We will look at delaying all authorizations by one year. We will delay BC Hydro Phase 2 as you asked for. We have heard you that in this state we must minimize the regulatory burden you are under.
 - Geoff – we want to reduce the burden, but we do not want to reduce the standards.
- Lori – We have received requests for delaying/deferring property tax payments. This would likely cost at least \$500 million. We have received a number of other taxation requests. We are starting detailed analysis on all of these. We need to ensure that any actions we take are sustainable for the province. PPT deferment program would be very complex. Could take up to 6 months to develop. And the small businesses being hurt would not necessarily be the benefactors.
 - DW – we need to be deliberate and monitor the federal programs closely to close gaps.
- Roundtable
- Val – BC hydro announcement was very much appreciated by small business and the Chamber. Many businesses are starting to shutter. We are seeing this on the ground. Even missing a couple weeks business with April 1 rent is too much for many to bear. Delays in federal money is a big anxiety for small business. Let's always keep not for profits in mind. They will be so important in recovery.
- Rick – there are many vulnerable people in care communities, the staff as well as the patients. Folks are scared about going to work, and they are not making very much. The federal EI benefits could be more than people make going to work. This is a tough decision to make. These are long-standing wage disparity issues that need to be addressed. Insurance renewal forms right now are difficult to deal with and are intractable.
 - Lori Wannamaker will follow up on insurance issue.
- Anita – Will email all comments later. We need to look at human capital approach and programs coming out of this and towards economic recovery. We could have big skills shortages and/or surpluses. Issue to flag – benefits to commercial operations are not flowing through to tenants. Business park example. This is a significant impact to munis and the provincial government. But we need to take a look how to keep these businesses open.
 - PJH/DW – please send details on commercial/industrial tenants that are being evicted and/or how property tax benefit we have provided are not flowing through to tenants. Same offer to everyone.
- Laird – there is confusion from federal benefits, even with the 75% wage subsidy that we do support. Details are always changing. Differences between traditional EI and CERB – workers are unsure which works for them, which has better benefits for them, and what they are eligible for. On essential services, labour movement has no major concerns at this point. Childcare and essential workers – workers are confused how they get in the priority chain, concerns over the tiers. We are largely in favor of regulatory relief for business if it keeps them going, as long as standards are not minimized. As long as these regulatory measures are not on the backs of workers, WCB, etc. Safety is number one priority.

- Chief Sharleen – concerns from FNMPC include long-term impacts on local economies. Post-COVID era gives us opportunity to bring together FN and major projects in a creative way – benefit local economies, provide benefits to FN. When FN are doing good, so are local communities and small business. We need an open for business approach across all sectors with DRIPA as the foundation. We should not have deferrals; we need forgivable funds. We think there is a COVID case in Fort Nelson, and they are worried about lack of access to information and where this case came from / how to protect their elders and families. Want stricter control of people's movements, partying/drugs, etc. Testing for Site C workers. Local company developing tests.
 - Will pass along additional information to MCJ's office to be shared
 - DW – asks for more information on tests. Sharleen will send along
- Prem Gill – several tech companies are able to continue working from home with innovative solutions; however, many do require a few workers on site, and seek clarity on essential services. They are keeping people employed, and this is important. Ready to ramp up film production as soon as safe – need clarity on ability to travel back and forth to US when allowed. Also seeking clarity on number of people allowed to gather, how they will be able to safely ramp up productions again.
 - PJH – clarification – US film production is looking at BC's response favorably. Answer – yes, they are looking at global jurisdictions where they can come back safely and ramp up production.
- Bridgette – lots of confusion on federal programs. Is there duplication? Which programs to apply to? Timing of getting fed cash major concern. Cash flow is the number one issue for small business, as they are on the brink of permanent closure. They are looking at more relief for small business, such as on the BC EHT. They are going to need long-term recovery options. Use this moment to consider decisions that make life easier for business. Example of liquor delivery. We can do it now, so we should consider why not long term if it makes business easier.
- Queenie – we have not received funding support yet, and are dealing with critical situation in caring for seniors. Property taxes also impact not-for-profits and long-term care facilities. Newcomer services, we are helping to support online navigation for newcomers to access benefits – we are having a hard time to access Service Canada, people on hold for too long. Childcare concern, impacts everyone including those who work from home.
- Greg – government has been doing fantastic job managing this issue so far. Received health briefing from DW last week with a number of CEOs, and thinks the public could benefit from some of the information here. Really worried about mental health. Large number of deaths coming from US and elsewhere, social isolation. Also worried about people gaming the system, not paying rents when they can, taking advantage of others, etc. We need to appeal to the humanity and provide a constant voice from government and business leaders. Offers to help provide consistent message. Issue – how do we match up people with need – there is an opportunity to provide a platform to do this. Childcare is example, grocery delivery is another example. Final issue – how do we think about the path forward? This is very much like post WWII. Coming out of this is no longer the status quo. We need to prepare the public about fiscal situation and some of the policy opportunities coming out of this.
- PJH closing comments – we will be redesigning how we operate gov, business, labour etc – everything. I have optimism in the commonality of people's comments. We can build back with shared values at the core. Mentions Geoff Meggs/Amber Hockin were mistakenly not on list of participants that went out, but are key members of ERTF. The political side and public service side are moving forward together in dealing with this crisis and path forward.

OOP FOI PREM:EX

From: Zacharias, Mark ENV:EX <Mark.Zacharias@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2020 1:05 PM
To: Wright, Don J. PREM:EX; Kennedy, Christine JEDC:EX; Millar, Amy AG:EX; Allan, John FLNR:EX; Mihlar, Fazil EMPR:EX; Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX; Krishna, Kaye MAH:EX
Cc: McGuire, Jennifer AGRI:EX; Jardine, Kevin ENV:EX
Subject: ENV/EAO Draft Regulatory Relief
Attachments: ENV - EAO 2020-03-31 regulatory relief ideas (005).docx; ATT00001.htm

Good afternoon:

Here's the ENV/EAO draft submission. We're still chasing down content but this document gives you the general scope of the opportunities. ENV/EAO/MEMPR have used the same categories for ease of collation. Some caveats:

- Once we have the content nailed down we will prioritize these by ease of implementation, fiscal materiality to business, and public health/environmental risk
- There are ideas here that may be challenging but we've included them anyways
- Many ENV/EAO fees are recovered to vote: As such, relief in these areas will affect ministry budgets

We will continue to chew away at this throughout the day.

Regards, Mark, Kevin and the team

DRAFT Suggestions for Regulatory Relief to Clients

Principles: Identify opportunities that:

- Are financially material that do not unduly compromise environmental or public health
- Result in immediate cost relief
- Can be easily reinstated when economic conditions improve
- Reward good actors
- Expedite authorizations
- Target standardized operations and non-controversial projects
- Can apply to Local Governments similar as businesses

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OOP FOI PREM:EX

From: Nikolejsin, Dave EMPR:EX
Sent: April 1, 2020 12:18 PM
To: Wright, Don J. PREM:EX; Kennedy, Christine JEDC:EX; Allan, John FLNR:EX; Zacharias, Mark ENV:EX; Mihlar, Fazil EMPR:EX; Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX
Cc: Amann-Blake, Nathaniel EMPR:EX
Subject: FW: Regulatory Relief
Attachments: Regulatory relief-EMPR 01Apr2020_1145.docx

Don, per your request for your meeting tomorrow. Attached is a first cut at categorization of the regulatory relief ideas that are coming in.

If this is on the right track it can serve for something you could talk to tomorrow and get industries reaction to, and we will keep working to take this to the next levels to make decisions around. Examples of where we need to go with this:

- Get the numbers in here. We good data on some measures vs others. We also need to be able to decompose the overall numbers to effects on companies, and also be able to roll up various measures by company
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- Need to sync with ENV and OGC, and maybe fed regulators
- Need to sync with FN's. This will be very tricky but essential.
- Need to sync with industry both re our assumptions but also wrt them being strong validators. Perhaps you could canvass this on your call with them tomorrow re how they see this working. E.g are we working with your ctte, BCBC, industry orgs, individual projects and companies? Or all of the above (sure hope not).

Most all – tell me if this is not the right track! Else we will get on with all the above.
Thanks.

From: Amann-Blake, Nathaniel EMPR:EX <Nathaniel.Amann-Blake@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2020 11:58 AM
To: Nikolejsin, Dave EMPR:EX <Dave.Nikolejsin@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Robb, Peter L. EMPR:EX <Peter.Robb@gov.bc.ca>; Mah-Paulson, May EMPR:EX <May.Mah-Paulson@gov.bc.ca>; MacLaren, Les EMPR:EX <Les.MacLaren@gov.bc.ca>; Coley, Simon J EMPR:EX <Simon.Coley@gov.bc.ca>; Carr, Michelle EMPR:EX <Michelle.Carr@gov.bc.ca>; Manahan, Suzanne EMPR:EX <Suzanne.Manahan@gov.bc.ca>; Zacharias, Mark ENV:EX <Mark.Zacharias@gov.bc.ca>; Kennedy, Christine PREM:EX <Christine.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer ENV:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Regulatory Relief

Dave,

I attach our initial cut at identifying areas where there may be opportunity and benefit to a coordinated approach to delay/defer/extend compliance reporting and authorizations. There is also a list of policy items for consideration/delay at the end of the table (more detail available on all of those too).

These are broad categories at this point and we can dig in to any of them that are of key interest.

A couple of notes:
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- We haven't found other jurisdictions doing this (at least publicly). The concern of expiring permits etc has been raised on IGWG calls but not aware of an overall approach to address federally or provincially.
- This ministry's industry association and key players don't seem to be the drivers behind the BCBC letter, some weren't aware of it.

Let me know what you think and where you'd like us to focus for more detailed analysis.

Nate

From: Nikolejsin, Dave EMPR:EX

Sent: March 31, 2020 5:01 PM

To: Amann-Blake, Nathaniel EMPR:EX <Nathaniel.Amann-Blake@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Robb, Peter L. EMPR:EX <Peter.Robb@gov.bc.ca>; Mah-Paulson, May EMPR:EX <May.Mah-Paulson@gov.bc.ca>; MacLaren, Les EMPR:EX <Les.MacLaren@gov.bc.ca>; Coley, Simon J EMPR:EX <Simon.Coley@gov.bc.ca>; Carr, Michelle EMPR:EX <Michelle.Carr@gov.bc.ca>; Manahan, Suzanne EMPR:EX <Suzanne.Manahan@gov.bc.ca>; Zacharias, Mark ENV:EX <Mark.Zacharias@gov.bc.ca>; Kennedy, Christine PREM:EX <Christine.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Regulatory Relief

Nathaniel, you are one of the people I talked to about this earlier today, but the heat is now officially on high. Don W needs some info on this for a meeting he has on Thursday, so he wants to see some analysis by noon tomorrow. He said 12 hours but I'm a MUCH more generous guy!

You have all seen the BCBC letter on this, plus we have seen variations on the same theme from all the various stakeholder groups and associations. The general idea is that we should all stop regulating. That's not going to happen. As we discussed earlier, a better set of questions is:

- What can wait?
- What's the benefit to a company of delaying something? Cash is king for them right now.
- What's the environmental trade off of delay?
- What are other levels of gov doing in that space?
- Etc.

I need you to lead an effort that involves the other parts of EMPR and gets a first order analysis of this done by noon tomorrow. No one expects you to have this done, just something that shows how we are coming at this, criteria, timing (what look easy and early, vs hard, vs not ever/no way, etc.). IF you have time you should work with ENV and compare notes cause they also have lots of stuff in this space. Copying Mark so he can let you know who his lead is on this exercise in ENV. IF we could land on the same templates or whatever that's even better, but if that's asking too much for tomorrow then that can be done later.

Thanks Nate!

Dave Nikolejsin

Deputy Minister

Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

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OOP FOI PREM:EX

From: James, Carole FIN:EX
Sent: April 1, 2020 4:47 PM
To: Wright, Don J. PREM:EX
Cc: Kennedy, Christine JEDC:EX; s.17 Meggs, Geoff PREM:EX
Subject: Re: Draft Agenda, Planning Process and Planning Documents for Weekly Calls

Thanks Don. Like everyone right now, with so much uncertainty, the more information around process and work occurring, even before the details are in place, I find is helpful and appreciated!
Carole

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 1, 2020, at 4:29 PM, Wright, Don J. PREM:EX <Don.J.Wright@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Minister,

Of course we will be bringing this regularly to Cabinet. The point of my bringing the Socio-Economic Framework and High Level Plan Decks to Cabinet was to get them engaged with the overall approach, with the notion that we would be coming back repeatedly as we flesh things out.

Don

From: "James, Carole FIN:EX" <Carole.James@gov.bc.ca>
Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at 3:20 PM
To: Christine Kennedy <Christine.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: s.17 "Wright, Don J. PREM:EX" <Don.J.Wright@gov.bc.ca>, Geoff Meggs <Geoff.Meggs@gov.bc.ca>, "Lawson, Liam FIN:EX" <Liam.Lawson@gov.bc.ca>, "Robinson, Jon PREM:EX" <Jon.Robinson@gov.bc.ca>, Amber Hockin <Amber.Hockin@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Draft Agenda, Planning Process and Planning Documents for Weekly Calls

Thanks Christine. Appreciate the update on structure and the draft agenda. We have been getting questions on when the agenda is coming, so it would be good to get it out early Wednesday for each wk.

I think the biggest pressure will come from those around the table wanting to know the process for assessing options for economic recovery, wanting to be involved with their ideas, and wondering how that will occur, etc so glad that structure and process is being worked on sooner rather than later.

You mention work in progress (sector analysis, etc) to help with economic recovery work.

I think it is important for Don to identify that work on the call, as suggested, to ease the pressure that will come for every idea to be explored.

And I think that same discussion will need to come to cabinet to describe where the Ministers fit in identifying and exploring ideas, and where decisions will be made on ideas and spending priorities for all of govt when it comes to economic recovery

Thanks
Carole

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 1, 2020, at 11:28 AM, Kennedy, Christine PREM:EX
<Christine.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Premier and Minister James,

Don had asked that I send an email with the draft agenda for tomorrow's call with the business / labour / non-profit / First Nations group and an outline of how we are proposing to manage the process for these calls. Our proposed process includes:

1. After each week's call I will send out a note to the participants asking them to identify items they would like to put on the next agenda.
2. We are using the simple agenda planning tool (attached) to plan for the weekly calls, and will add to this as time goes on. I have also included a tracking document that lists some of the measures government has taken on a week-by-week basis.^{s.13}
3. Based on the feedback received from participants, yourselves and Geoff / Don, we will prepare an agenda that would be distributed on Wednesday of each week with any appropriate attachments. Our office would prepare (or work with Ministries to prepare) any distribution items for the meetings and ensure that the Ministers and Deputy Ministers identified in the agenda are set up for each week's call.

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For this week, Labour has developed a a memo explaining the process being used by the Provincial Health Officer, Labour, WorkSafeBC and economic sectors (both employers and unions) to develop safe worksite guidance. This memo and the current safe worksite guidance documents would be distributed to participants with the call agenda.

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A few comments on the proposed agenda for this week:

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We would be glad to discuss any of this, and of course if you have comments on the draft agenda we would be pleased to make any changes.

Don and Geoff, if you could sign off on the proposed agenda I will get it (and the other distribution material) to Jarrett Hagglund and Heidi Reid for circulation.

Christine Kennedy
Associate Deputy Minister | Policy and Coordination
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272 West Annex, Parliament Buildings | Victoria, BC | V8V 1X4

<DRAFT AGENDA - WEEKLY CALL - APRIL 2. 2020.docx>
<AGENDA PLANNING FOR WEEKLY CONFERENCE CALLS - April 1.docx>
<KEY ISSUES TRACKING FOR WEEKLY CONFERENCE CALLS - April 1.docx>
<Process for Safe Workplaces - 59264 - Prepared by TH - Mar 31 2020.pdf>

OOP FOI PREM:EX

From: Wright, Don J. PREM:EX
Sent: April 1, 2020 12:07 PM
To: Kennedy, Christine JEDC:EX
Cc: Meggs, Geoff PREM:EX
Subject: Re: Draft Agenda, Planning Process and Planning Documents for Weekly Calls

Geoff,

You ok with the agenda?

Don

From: Christine Kennedy <Christine.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>
Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at 11:28 AM
To: s.17, "James, Carole FIN:EX" <Carole.James@gov.bc.ca>, "Wright, Don J. PREM:EX" <Don.J.Wright@gov.bc.ca>, Geoff Meggs <Geoff.Meggs@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "Lawson, Liam FIN:EX" <Liam.Lawson@gov.bc.ca>, "Robinson, Jon PREM:EX" <Jon.Robinson@gov.bc.ca>, Amber Hockin <Amber.Hockin@gov.bc.ca>
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