

Building a StrongerBC *for everyone*

Pitch for: launch of the COVID-19 lessons learned review announcing review and public engagement of government's response to COVID-19

Ministry: PSSG (EMBC)

GCPE lead communications person: Jordan Turner

Corporate calendar ID: EMBC-105831

Purpose

Emergency Management BC will lead the launch of the "COVID-19 Lessons Learned Review," a review and public engagement of government's operational response to COVID-19 over the past two years.

The goal of the review and public consultation is to gather lessons learned about how government agencies worked together to address the effects of COVID-19 that impacted people in B.C. Three long-time, former senior leaders of the BC Public Service have been appointed to lead this independent review: Bob de Faye, Dan Perrin and Chris Trumpy.

The project team will look at best practices and engage with government agencies, First Nations, Indigenous organizations, stakeholders, partners and independent regulators that have been involved in responding to the pandemic on behalf of British Columbians.

A public engagement will open the same day as the public announcement. People in B.C. can provide written feedback on how they, or their business or organization, has been impacted by government's response. A report with a comprehensive summary of findings (no recommendations) is expected by Sept. 30, 2022.

What is the desired approach/rollout?

Information bulletin to factually announce the review that will include a backgrounder with the project team's biographies and a link to the Terms of Reference. This will be translated into Chinese, Punjabi, and French, as a minimum, to match what the Ministry of Health does for the COVID-19 daily updates. General approach will be reactive to media.

The public engagement will be open for six weeks and will be supported with social media content, sharable graphics and an MLA Kit. The public engagement including a short survey will be posted to GovTogetherBC, the survey will be translated into 12 languages.

Timing

March 9, 2022 is the preferred date by the project team. Alternatively, sometime in early March so the project team can meet the Sept. 30 deliverable date.

Products

Media Advisory

☐ Opinion-Editorial

Press Conference

Please submit completed version to: Heather Finn, Rick Devereaux, George Smith, Tim Chu
Government Communications & Public Engagement
Last updated: December 17, 2021

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News Release

☐ News You Can Use

☐ Tech Briefing

☒ Info Bulletin

☐ Statement

☒ Digital Content

What within the announcement is new?

Launch of review and public engagement. This is the first review in B.C. of the broader public service response to COVID-19. There will be significant media interest in the review, its scope and results.

What is the problem we are trying to solve for British Columbians?

Now that we're two years into the pandemic - we have an opportunity to learn the important lessons to make sure we're ready for the next pandemic or emergency.

What is the main theme of the announcement that fits the message guide?

☐ Affordability

☒ Improving Services

☒ Building a secure future

What's the overarching narrative?

Connect

Now that we're two years into the pandemic - we need to make sure we're ready for the next pandemic or emergency.

Contrast

The COVID-19 pandemic was unexpected, and its impact has been incredibly challenging for people. Our government responded as best we could during rapidly changing and uncertain times.

Solve

By learning from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will build B.C. back stronger than ever, and be ready for future emergencies.

These steps align with government's goals of improving services and building a secure future.

What supporting/sustaining announcements or activities are planned?

Timing	Event	Status	Notes
MONTH			
March 9	Information bulletin with backgrounder to factually announce independent review, scope and the independent team undertaking the review. Translated into several languages. Social media, sharable graphics, MLA Kit.	Status: the project is confirmed to proceed Lead: EMBC with collaboration from Health, other ministries as needed	

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March 9-April 20	Social media reminders for people to share feedback via govTogether. Engagement closes April 20	Status: Confirmed Lead: EMBC/GCPE Digital	
Fall TBD	Report with findings expected by Sept. 30. Will be made public in the fall.	Status: Confirmed Lead: EMBC	

Spokesperson(s):

- Minister Mike Farnworth
- Minister Dix (secondary)
- Punjabi and Chinese spokespersons to be identified

Products for translation

- ☐ Media Advisory ☐ Opinion-Editorial ☐ Press Conference ☐ Other (Please list):
☐ News Release ☐ News You Can Use ☐ Tech Briefing
☒ Info Bulletin ☐ Statement ☒ Digital Content

Languages

{Consult with media relations, then check all boxes they recommend}

- ☒ French ☒ Traditional Chinese ☐ Simplified Chinese ☒ Punjabi
☐ Farsi ☐ Tagalog ☐ Korean ☐ Other (Please list):

Risk considerations

- Will get questions on timing of the review as the pandemic is still ongoing and government's response to the evolving pandemic will still be critical. May get questions about getting input from people when mental health is challenged and people feeling impacted by two years of the pandemic.
- There will likely be criticism of scope of the review, which doesn't include examining decisions made by government, the Provincial Health Officer or WorkSafeBC.
- May get questions around why this review won't be putting forward recommendations, like the ones done by B.C.'s Senior Advocate and Alberta.

For Approval: Wednesday COVID-19 Review launch

From: Turner, Jordan GCPE:EX <Jordan.Turner@gov.bc.ca>, Turner, Jordan EMBC:EX <Jordan.Turner@gov.bc.ca>
To: Maartman, William PSSG:EX <William.Maartman@gov.bc.ca>, Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX <Andrew.Douglas@gov.bc.ca>, Karimi, Nina PSSG:EX <Nina.Karimi@gov.bc.ca>, Maher, Melissa PSSG:EX <Melissa.Maher@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Wey, Melody GCPE:EX <Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: March 11, 2022 12:08:46 PM PST
Attachments: govTogetherBC COVID-19 Review - Mar 2022 Draft.docx, COVID-19LessonsLearnedTOR-09MAR22.docx, IB COVID-19 Review - Mar 11 2022 Draft.docx, QA COVID-19 review - Mar 11 2022 Draft.docx

Hi all,

Please find attached the COVID-19 materials for Wednesday. We'll be booking a time for the IB release shortly.

These have been reviewed approved by Tara and the independent project team. Also reviewed by MIRR, Labour, and Finance who are all good. Shared with Health GCPE, but haven't heard back from them yet. Will let you know if any issues there.

Attached includes:

- Information bulletin
- Q&As
- govTogetherBC web page
- Terms of Reference

Thanks,

Jordan Turner

Communications Director | EMBC

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Phone: (236) 478-0210 **Cell:** (250) 896-1928

COVID-19 Lessons Learned Review

Get Involved

What is this engagement about?

The Province is launching an independent review and public consultation on its operational response to COVID-19, to better inform preparations and response to future emergencies. We value your input and would like to know what aspects of the B.C. government's response to COVID-19 from March 2020 to now you think worked well. This includes the B.C. government's preparedness, engagement, communication, and implementation activities.

We would also like to hear from you about the changes government made to improve operational effectiveness as the pandemic evolved, and what improvements can be made to better prepare for future pandemics and emergencies.

The goal is to gather lessons learned about how government agencies worked together to address the effects of COVID-19 that impacted everyone, changed rapidly, and continues to cause a high level of uncertainty.

This is an opportunity to provide feedback on your overall experience through an online survey. Depending on your responses, the survey will take under 12 minutes to complete. Your feedback will be kept confidential.

Feedback will be accepted until 4 p.m. on April 20, 2022.

To learn more about the scope of the engagement, please read the Terms of Reference [\[hyperlink\]](#).

How can my contribution make a difference?

We value your input. Feedback gathered will help the independent project team, and in turn, the B.C. government, better understand how government's response to the pandemic was experienced by people in British Columbia. By learning from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic thus far, government will be in a better position to be ready for future emergencies.

A report with a comprehensive summary of findings will be delivered to government by fall 2022 and will be shared on this page.

Details of the Consultation:

Date: March 14 to April 20, 2022

Status: Open

Location: Province-wide

Category: families-residents, government, public safety

Type: Online

Get Involved

COVID-19 Lessons Learned

Terms of Reference

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of the BC government and the broad BC public sector throughout 2020, 2021 and into 2022. The provincial government intends to undertake a review of government's operational response to the pandemic to capture lessons learned to date. Not only will this help to inform preparations for and the response to the next pandemic, which will inevitably occur in the future, but also contribute to planning and operational readiness for responses to the full range of risks of disasters and emergencies, which include earthquakes, climate change-induced extreme weather and wildfires, and many other situations that may affect large areas of the province.

Scope

The objective of this review is to improve the provincial government's ability to respond to future emergencies of all kinds.

This review is focussed on operational response to the pandemic by the BC government since January 2020. The term "operational response" is chosen to focus the review on cross-government efforts to identify the implications of the pandemic, to make timely and informed decisions, and to implement those decisions in accordance with public health guidance and government policy direction.

The scope of the review excludes an assessment of economic recovery and public policy decisions made by government to deal with the consequences of the pandemic and decisions made by the independent Provincial Health Officer. The review will, however, look at how these decisions were made.

The review seeks to find what can be learned from how provincial government agencies responded and worked together to directly address the effects of a public health emergency that affected everything, changed rapidly, and created a high level of uncertainty. And what aspects of preparedness, engagement, communication, and execution worked well, what changes were made to enhance operational effectiveness as the pandemic evolved, and what improvements can be made to be better prepared for the next emergency.

Structure

The review is a cross-government initiative. A senior external project team will conduct the review and prepare the public report. They have extensive experience in government operational management and knowledge of how public sector service delivery is structured in BC. The client for the report is the Deputy Minister to the Premier. The consultants will be supported by Emergency Management BC, which will be the lead agency in government for this initiative.

There are three aspects to the review:

- How were the implications of the pandemic identified?
- How timely and informed were decisions made in response to the pandemic?
- How were those decisions communicated and implemented, consistent with public health guidance and government policy?

FINAL

The project team will research best practises and engage extensively, including:

- Reviewing internal assessments of the operational response undertaken by all ministries and select provincial government agencies. These will build upon any lessons-learned reviews already completed to avoid duplication of effort and be guided by a common statement of scope, objective, and questions to be addressed.
- Engaging First Nations, Indigenous organizations, external stakeholders, partners, and independent regulators that played a role in delivering the response or were affected by the response. These engagements will ensure input on the operational response by government agencies is considered in identifying lessons learned. Appendix A is an initial list of groups that will be engaged, with additional groups added as necessary during the process. MLAs from all parties will also be engaged.
- Engaging the public through an online portal where individuals and organizations will have the opportunity to submit written input.

Other Reviews

Given the scope of the COVID-19 response, and the number of public organizations and agencies that contributed to the overall response, there will likely be a variety of reviews undertaken by independent entities.^{s.13}

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-The

report will be informed by these reviews and best efforts made to avoid duplication and overlap.

Timing and Report

The final report to be submitted to government by September 30, 2022.

The final report will be a comprehensive summary of findings developed from best practices research, the internal operational assessments and stakeholder/public input and is intended for public release. It will not make recommendations.

Appendix A

Groups to be engaged by the project team are:

- Indigenous representative and service delivery organizations
- Health authorities and health service delivery providers
- Social service providers, including those for vulnerable populations and childcare providers
- Education providers and representative organizations in both the K-12 and post-secondary sectors
- Public sector unions and employee representative organizations
- Industry associations and representative organizations across the full range of economic sectors
- Provincial Crown corporations, public sector service providers and regulatory organizations
- Local governments and representative organizations

Additional groups to be engaged will be identified as the review proceeds.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

[release number]
March 16, 2022

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor
General
Emergency Management BC

Province launches COVID-19 lessons learned review

VICTORIA – The Province is launching a review and public consultation on its operational response to COVID-19, to better inform preparations and response to this pandemic and future emergencies.

Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General has appointed an independent project team to conduct a review of the B.C. public sector's response to COVID-19 since January 2020.

The project team conducting the independent review includes three long-time, former senior leaders of the BC Public Service, Bob de Faye, Dan Perrin and Chris Trumpy. Together, they will bring extensive expertise in large-scale public-sector governance and operations.

The goal of the review and public engagement is to gather lessons learned about how government agencies worked together to address the effects of COVID-19 that impacted everyone, changed rapidly, and continues to cause a high level of uncertainty.

The review will include what aspects of preparedness, engagement, communication and implementation worked well, what changes were made to improve operational effectiveness as the pandemic evolved, and what improvements can be made to better prepare for future pandemics and emergencies.

The project team will^{s.13} and engage extensively with government agencies, First Nations,^{s.13} Indigenous organizations, stakeholders, partners and independent regulators that have been involved in responding to the pandemic on behalf of British Columbians.

Starting today until April 20, people in British Columbia can provide written feedback on how they, or their business or organization, has been impacted by government's response.

The scope of the review does not include an assessment of the public policy decisions made by government to deal with the consequences of the pandemic and decisions made by the Provincial Health Officer. Decision made on economic recovery, such as supports for small businesses and families will not be part of the review. This review will, however, look at how these decisions were made.

A report with a comprehensive summary of findings is expected by fall.

By learning from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic thus far, the B.C. government will be in a better position to build B.C. back stronger than ever and be ready for future emergencies.

Learn more:

To read the terms of reference for the review and participate in the public engagement starting today until 4 p.m. on April 20, 2022, visit: engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/covid-19-lessons-learned-review

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

Emergency Management BC
Media Relations
250 880-6430

BACKGROUND

Project team biographies leading the operational review of the B.C. government's response to COVID-19

Bob de Faye has enjoyed a thirty-two-year career in the British Columbia public service, including nine years as a deputy minister for the following ministries: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations & Reconciliation; Ministry of Small Business and Revenue; Public Sector Employer's Council; and Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. He was associate deputy minister and chief administrative officer at the Ministry of Health and served for two years as chair of the BC Medical Services Commission. For the last ten years, he has been a strategic advisor and executive consultant in public policy analysis and development. He has worked for First Nations, local governments, the resource industry and for the BC Government on governance and operations reviews.

Daniel (Dan) Perrin is a public policy professional, active in providing public policy advice in British Columbia since 1981 through a wide range of activities. As founding principal of Perrin, Thorau and Associates Ltd., established in 1994, he has undertaken hundreds of assignments for all manner of provincial public sector entities, ranging from ministries to crown corporations and authorities, to local governments and First Nations. These assignments relate to issues across the spectrum of provincial and local government responsibility and share a common thread of financial and economic considerations. During this time, he has also facilitated numerous independent, expert reviews charged with addressing, among other things, improvements to the budget process and financial administration for the Province of BC, real estate regulatory reform, money laundering in real estate, tax competitiveness, replacing the revenues associated with eliminating MSP premiums, reforming disability assistance and the Expert Panel on Basic Income. Prior to founding Perrin, Thorau and Associates, he held a series of increasingly senior positions in the BC public service, including in the Ministry of Finance, Premier's Office and the Ministry of Social Services.

Chris Trumpy retired from the BC Public Service in 2009 after 30 years of service including time as the deputy minister of the ministries of Finance, Environment, Provincial Revenue and Sustainable Resource Management. Since then, he has been involved in several projects including industrial electricity policy, forest contractor sustainability, public school funding formula review, BC Transit governance and ICBC investment management. He has also served on not for profit and for-profit boards since retirement.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

Key Messages

- The Province is launching an external, independent review of the B.C. public sector's operational response to COVID-19, since January 2020.
- The review will be conducted by three senior consultants, and former leaders within the BC Public Service, Bob de Faye, Dan Perrin, and Chris Trumpy.
 - They will deliver a report with their findings of lessons learned this fall.
- They will look at best practices and engage with government agencies, stakeholders, partners and independent regulators as well as Indigenous governments, organizations and agencies that have been involved in responding to COVID-19 on behalf of British Columbians.
- Open now until April 20, people in B.C. are invited to provide written feedback on how they were impacted by government's response.
- By learning from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will build B.C. back stronger than ever, ready for the next emergency.

Questions and Answers

Why are you undertaking this review now? Shouldn't you be focused on responding to the pandemic?

- The purpose of the review is to help government to be better prepared, operationally, for future pandemics and other emergencies, especially in terms of mitigating risks and having the processes in place to support decision-making, communications and government operations as the emergency unfolds.
- We want to undertake this review while information about government's response to the first and second waves is still fresh in people's minds, and the corporate knowledge is available from stakeholders, partners, government agencies, and independent regulators.
- We recognize that COVID-19 is not over but it is important to capture the lessons from early days of the pandemic to inform how we respond to the next pandemic or emergency.
- The project team is specifically being asked to focus on the operational response, not government or PHO decisions, and two years' experience is sufficient to understand what operational processes worked well and where there was room for improvement.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

Secondary:

- While we continue to respond to COVID-19, we want to get a review of our response thus far underway – and not wait until the pandemic is over to learn lessons.
- We've reached the two-year mark since the pandemic began and there are important lessons to be learned from that time.

Will you do another review when the pandemic is over?

- This will likely be the only operational review for government since its purpose is to help us respond as effectively as possible when a new emergency arises.
- After two years' experience, we can learn from what worked well in the initial stages, what has been adjusted over time to improve the response and what things could still be further improved.

Will there be any recommendations made in the report? And if not, why not?

- The goal of the review is to support government in learning lessons from the past two years.
- The project team will gather evidence on what has worked well, what improvements were made to operational effectiveness as the pandemic evolved, and what further improvements can be made to be better prepared for future pandemics, emergencies, and natural disasters.
- By gathering this information, we can find solutions and make improvements to operations, practices, or policies within the government sector.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

- Reviewing decisions, which were made with often limited information available at the time, is unlikely to help prepare for next time. This includes decisions around economic recovery, as different supports may be needed for the next emergency.
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Are public servants and health employees allowed to give feedback through this process? Will there be a separate process for gathering that?

- Anyone who wishes to provide feedback is welcome to do so.
- All ministries and public sector agencies will be conducting an internal assessment on their COVID-19 response as part of the review. This will inform the final report.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

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How much money has been budgeted for this review?

- This review will be funding through Emergency Management BC's existing budget.

Government could spend a lot of money on reviews of pandemic response, what are you doing to coordinate that so you get the most out of the work and money that will inevitably be spent?

- Everyone has been impacted one way or another by COVID-19 and how the Province and various sectors involved have responded deserves a full review when the time is right.
- We will make sure that each and every review adds value, so we learn all of the lessons, so we are better prepared for the next pandemic or emergency.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

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How are Indigenous people or communities being engaged?

- The project team will engage with First Nations, Treaty partners, and Indigenous organizations. Anyone who wishes to provide feedback is welcome to do so.
- As a government, one of our key priorities is to establish meaningful and trust-based partnerships with First Nation communities.
- This report will help us better understand the challenges the Indigenous people have faced because of COVID-19.

Once the report is completed, will you implement changes to the Province's COVID-19 response, if the pandemic is still ongoing?

- The purpose of this review is help us understand what we can improve now so we are better prepared for the next pandemic and future waves of this current one.
- The report will be shared publicly.

B.C. has been urged to call a public inquiry into the handling of COVID-19 by a key figure in Canada's inquiry into the SARS outbreak. Why not do a public inquiry?

- Our approach with this independent review aligns with what other provinces and jurisdictions in Canada are doing.
- We think the best approach is do undertake an independent review of the B.C. public sector's operational response to COVID-19 to look at how decisions were made, communicated, and implemented.
- The review will be conducted independently by three senior consultants and there will be a public engagement where people can share how they were impacted by government's response.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS/KEY MESSAGES
Review of government's operational response to COVID-19
March 2022

So many people have been hit hard during the pandemic... are you going to look into the impacts of isolation on people's mental health or on seniors, or people with disabilities?

- We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected certain people disproportionately.
- The purpose of the review is to help government to be better prepared, operationally, for future pandemics and other emergencies, especially in terms of mitigating risks and having the processes in place to support decision-making, communications and government operations as the emergency unfolds.
- There have and will be other reviews to examine specific sectors, such as the one done into outbreaks in long-term care and assisted living during the first year of the pandemic.

Will this review lead to any changes in how B.C. treats and retains healthcare workers who are burning out, and being asked to work even when they have COVID?

- I acknowledge the burnout and exhaustion healthcare workers are experiencing, especially after two long years of this pandemic.

RE: MMF Statement

From: Turner, Jordan GCPE:EX <Jordan.Turner@gov.bc.ca>, Turner, Jordan EMBC:EX <Jordan.Turner@gov.bc.ca>
To: Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX <Andrew.Douglas@gov.bc.ca>, Karimi, Nina PSSG:EX <Nina.Karimi@gov.bc.ca>, Maartman, William PSSG:EX <William.Maartman@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>, Maher, Melissa PSSG:EX <Melissa.Maher@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Wey, Melody GCPE:EX <Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: March 16, 2022 4:05:33 PM PDT
Attachments: STATE COVID-19 review March 16 2022 Draft.docx
Sorry – please use this version.

Thanks,
JT

From: Turner, Jordan GCPE:EX
Sent: March 16, 2022 4:02 PM
To: Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX <Andrew.Douglas@gov.bc.ca>; Karimi, Nina PSSG:EX <Nina.Karimi@gov.bc.ca>; Maartman, William PSSG:EX <William.Maartman@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>; Maher, Melissa PSSG:EX <Melissa.Maher@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Wey, Melody GCPE:EX <Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: MMF Statement

Hi Andrew,

As discussed, statement attached. It's my understanding that we won't be sending this through editors. But just sending to people who requested interviews.

My understanding is that is just Rob Shaw and CKPG.

But please review asap.

Jordan Turner

Communications Director | EMBC
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Phone: (236) 478-0210 **Cell:** (250) 896-1928

STATEMENT

For Immediate Release
[release number]
March 16, 2022

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor
General
Emergency Management BC

Minister Farnworth's statement on the COVID-19 review

VICTORIA – Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, has released the following statement about the independent review and public engagement taking place on government's response to COVID-19:

"In every major event, the Province does a review to learn about what can be improved for the next emergency. As we reach the two-year mark of this health emergency, it's important to acknowledge that people in B.C. have been through a lot and want to have their voices heard.

"We want to be sure that in the future, government operations are as efficient as possible when responding to the requirements of British Columbians in times of need.

"This review includes decision-making processes, which will help as we prepare to do even better when the next emergency happens.

"While we're still in the pandemic and there are ongoing health concerns both here and globally, it's important to begin the conversation and information gathering now."

"By doing so, we can find solutions and make improvements within the government sector to ensure British Columbians are protected in future emergencies."

Contact:
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