

BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: April 14, 2015
PREPARED FOR: Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
MEETING: Minister Letnick on April 15, 2015
ISSUE: Transport of Livestock on BC Ferries

SUMMARY:

- BC Ferries provides free reservations for those travelling with livestock.
- BC Ferries staff at Duke Point in Nanaimo will give preferential loading to those travelling with livestock, even if the traveller has missed the cut-off arrival time for those with reservations (must arrive more than 30 minutes prior to sailing).
- At the Tsawwassen terminal, BC Ferries staff do not provide the same level of leniency, as there are more sailings, shaded parking areas, water availability, etc.
- That said, if waiting would cause distress for the animals, the livestock transporter can request preferential boarding even though they had missed the reservation cut-off time.
- With respect to the fares for transporting livestock, they are at the non-commercial rates for vehicles with Gross Vehicle Weights less than 5500 kilograms.
- There has been no recent policy change in this respect.
- However, fares for over-length vehicles did go up significantly five years ago, as a result of the elimination of over-height fares.
- These are applied to all non-commercial vehicles that are over-length (i.e., recreational vehicles would be charged at the same rate as those travelling with livestock).

BACKGROUND:

Two concerns about the policies for transporting livestock on BC Ferries have been raised.

DISCUSSION:

BC Ferries provides free reservations for those transporting livestock. This policy recognizes the importance of transporting live animals in a timely way. Minister Letnick has heard concerns from the industry that there are different policies with respect to preferential loading of those travelling with livestock, depending on whether they are travelling from Duke Point or Tsawwassen.

During estimates debate for the Ministry of Agriculture, MLA Lana Popham, Saanich South, raised concerns about an increase in cost for those travelling with livestock.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- None.

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BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: July 16, 2015
PREPARED FOR: Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
ISSUE: Update on Partnerships to support Highway 16 Transportation Initiatives

SUMMARY:

- **The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (Ministry) continues to work with stakeholders to identify solutions and develop community-based transportation services along the Highway 16 corridor.**

BACKGROUND:

The Ministry is involved in the following initiatives that support improved access to transportation along the Highway 16 corridor between Prince Rupert and Prince George:

- (a) The Ministry launched a community web-based portal that provides information on transportation services in 12 main communities along the corridor and continues to identify new information for additions to the site.
- (b) the Ministry provided a \$75,000 contract to the Carrier Sekani Family Services to develop and implement a First Nations Driver Training Program to increase the number of licenced drivers and drivers able to operate community-based multi-passenger vehicles.
- (c) On-going dialogue with a number of provincial ministries and First Nations community partners to determine what types of community-based transportation solutions offer affordable, practical and sustainable service connecting remote, rural communities with major centers along the Highway 16 corridor.

DISCUSSION:

In addition to the engaging Ministry of Health (MOH), Justice, Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR), the Ministry has engaged the following organizations:

Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS)

- CSFS is rolling out the project plan for a First Nations Driver Training Program. The Ministry provided \$75,000 in one-time funding for the program.
- CSFS will determine specific driver training needs of communities, deliver training, and report back to the Ministry by March 31, 2016. The plan calls for three First Nations members to be trained as driver training instructors. They will provide Class 5 and 4 driver training to 30 individuals.
- CSFS is in the process of hiring a new program coordinator (expected mid-July).

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

- Since July 2014, the Ministry has worked with the FNHA to develop a partnership to establish practical transportation solutions for First Nations residents in rural and remote communities along the Highway 16 corridor. Between October 2014 and March 2015, FNHA worked with their membership to gain support for a broad interpretation of their mandate to "plan, design, manage, deliver and fund the delivery of First Nations health programs in B.C." to include support for healthy communities.
- The Ministry has met with FNHA in person and by conference call eight times since 2014. These discussions have explored the issues and themes raised through the Ministry's meetings with community leaders and First Nations in 2014 and focused on developing models and costs associated with FNHA's role in providing transportation services to on-reserve First Nations.



- On May 25, 2015, FNHA confirmed they had support from their members to work with the Ministry to develop transportation solutions to the local challenges.
- On June 11, 2015, FNHA and the Ministry met with representatives from the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW), MOH, MARR, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC), who agreed to work together to pursue community-based transportation solutions.
- As a result, FNHA is developing a project charter with the Ministry for engaging First Nation communities in identifying local transportation needs. FNHA is establishing a transportation working group to guide ongoing discussions on transportation issues. Included in the working group would be representatives from the Ministry, BCAAFC, MACAW, MOH, MARR, Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) and VanCity.
- FNHA is also developing a strategy to engage the First Nations community representatives in discussions to establish a vision for community-based transportation services. They have proposed a transportation symposium to be scheduled for September 2015, with representation from each First Nation community along the Highway 16 corridor.

BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC); Vancity Savings Credit Union

- The Ministry met with the BCAAFC CEO in the fall of 2014, to discuss the themes raised in meetings held with community leaders and First Nations along the Highway 16 corridor and to determine whether there was a role for the BCAAFC in supporting community-based transportation options.
- Vancity Savings Credit Union is a financial partner to BCAAFC, and is receptive to discussing avenues to support financial, social and environmental well-being of communities.
- In May 2015, the Ministry met with BCAAFC CEO and Vancity representatives who provided information on the work they have done in creating community and co-op partnerships with their client agencies. Vancity has offered to assist in facilitating meetings to bring potential partners and sponsors together. Sponsorship opportunities include organizations representing local First Nations that enable community development and independence.
- At the end of fiscal 2014/15, the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV) provided \$1.5 million to BCAAFC to support creating and implementing programs that address priorities in the Provincial Domestic Violence Plan. An additional \$500,000 has been provided through PODV and the Ministry of Housing for women shelters across the province costs related to safe transportation to and from shelters. To-date, none of the funds have been publicly announced.

Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW)

- MACAW provides information, advice and guidance to assist in the development of policy and/or delivery of programs intended to improve the quality of life for aboriginal women across B.C., and addresses the social and economic challenges that expose Aboriginal women to violence. MACAW's Chair has indicated support for the Ministry's initiatives to address transportation options along the Highway 16 corridor and believes industry may be a potential funding source.

Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC)

- In June 2015, Ministry staff met with the OBAC Board in Prince George to provide an update. The Board raised concerns about the lack of transportation service in rural and remote communities along the corridor. At the meeting, the Ministry asked OBAC to provide a representative to participate on the working group and FN transportation symposium under development through the FNHA.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- FNHA has indicated that the transportation symposium will cost approximately \$50,000 for organization, travel and accommodation and is looking for the Ministry to cost share funding.



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BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION**DATE:** July 13, 2015**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure**ISSUE:** Services provided by Uber as compared with Ripe Rides**SUMMARY:**

- **Limousine, taxi and other passenger directed services must be approved by the Passenger Transportation Board (the Board).**
- **Carpools are exempt from Board licensing if neither driver nor operator makes a profit.**
- **Smart phone apps used by any company must reflect Board approved rates.**
- **Uber operates a number of different services via the Uber app, including taxi, commercial rideshare and luxury sedan service. Uber has not applied for a passenger transportation licence to operate limousine services in British Columbia (BC).**
- **Uber X is a commercial rideshare service, where drivers offer rides to passengers in a personal vehicle in return for payment through the Uber app. To date, neither Uber nor any individuals or companies wishing to drive for Uber X have applied to the Board to operate in BC. Uber Black is an app-based luxury sedan service.**
- **Ripe Rides is a luxury sedan, app-based transportation service (similar to Uber Black) that is licensed by the Board to operate in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD).**

BACKGROUND:

A significant number of consumers want to use smartphone apps to get taxis and limousines. Consumers download an app to their smartphones that allows the customer to request a ride. Smartphone apps allow users to get price quotes for their trips, track the driver's location, and some allow users to pay their fare using a credit card number on file and provide options to rate the driver. Many licensed taxi companies in BC have introduced smartphone apps in the last two years.

The *Passenger Transportation Act* requires operators of vehicles that transport passengers for compensation to have a passenger transportation license. ICBC requires a driver to hold a class 4 (restricted) driver's license, and the vehicle must be insured under a specific taxi or limousine rate class. The operator must have a National Safety Code Safety Certificate, and the vehicle is subject to semi-annual commercial vehicle inspections. Municipalities may also have bylaws requiring a business licence for the operator, and a Chauffeur's Permit for each driver.

Uber

Uber claims it is a technology company using a smartphone app to connect passengers and drivers. Uber operates a number of different services via the Uber app including commercial rideshare (Uber X), taxis (Uber Taxi) and a luxury sedan service (Uber Black).

Uber X is a commercial rideshare enterprise, using drivers in their personal vehicle, likely insured for personal use, to provide transportation services. Although Uber claims that it has additional insurance available for drivers and vehicles while operating an Uber service, this insurance may not be acceptable in BC. Uber X is not a "carpool". Carpools may operate in BC without a passenger transportation licence as long as any compensation collected only covers operating costs.

Uber Black is a luxury sedan service through which passengers are connected with drivers, and the trip is charged to Uber through the mobile app. Uber Black could operate in BC if it used licensed operators to provide sedan service and charged Board approved rates. When Uber Black entered the Vancouver market in 2012, they enlisted licensed and unlicensed sedans and limousines to provide

service. The licensed operators were sent cease and desist letters by the Registrar of Passenger Transportation for failing to charge Board approved rates, and Uber was sent a cease and desist letter for using unlicensed vehicles.

Ripe Rides

Ripe Rides is an app-based limousine service licensed to operate 20 luxury sedans in the GVRD. Once Ripe Rides starts operating, consumers will be able to book and pay for a trip via the mobile app. Ripe Rides services will comply with the rates approved by the Board, which are based on time and distance rather than hourly. Rates for short trips are generally higher than taxi rates, but lower than the \$75 minimum hourly sedan rates for limousines. Rates for longer trips are generally higher than the hourly sedan rates.

DISCUSSION:

Uber

While Uber Black or Uber Taxi could be licensed to operate under the *Passenger Transportation Act* (PTA), Uber X (as offered by Uber), would not meet the PTA's or other regulatory requirements, such as the need for a class 4 taxi license, commercial insurance, vehicle inspections, or a license approved by the Board. If Uber enters the market without proper licensing and insurance, it will cause public safety concerns and have a negative impact on the passenger transportation sector.

Over the past several years, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (Ministry) has had a number of discussions and meetings with and about Uber to reiterate the point that a passenger transportation licence is required. Failure to comply can result in a \$1,150 fine issued by the police, Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement officers or Passenger Transportation inspectors at roadside. Repeat offenders can be fined up to \$5,000.

Ripe Rides

On April 27, 2015, the Board approved an application from Ripe Holdings Inc. to provide an app-based luxury sedan service in the GVRD, showing that licensing regulations in BC can support new technologies, improve customer convenience and, at the same time, maintain safety standards. Based on the evidence presented during the application process and a public hearing, the Board found that there is a demand for a luxury sedan service with fares calculated, by an app, on time and distance.

Ripe Holdings Inc. is a transportation service provider operating vehicles supported by an online app. Ripe is a new product and a different service from a taxi. There are significant distinctions between Ripe's application and taxis in terms of service, price and rate separation, payment options and vehicles. Although Ripe's rates for shorter trips are lower than minimum hourly rates for sedan limousines, minimum hourly rates for trips of longer time and distance are competitive with Ripe's rates.

The commercial passenger transportation sector will benefit from providing choice for the consumer and will allow this sector to advance by allowing innovation within the current regulatory regime. To ensure that Ripe Holdings Inc. maintains care and control of its operations, it must retain ownership of its vehicles and not sell shares in the vehicles for five years from the date the licence is issued.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- None

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BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: July 20, 2015

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure

ISSUE: Electric Vehicles in High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

SUMMARY:

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BACKGROUND:

The current HOV lane policy was developed in the mid-1990s. Its primary objective is to reduce the number of single occupant vehicles on the road by providing incentives for carpooling, including reduced commute time and motor vehicle operating costs.

The Ministry has received requests to permit single occupant electric vehicles access to HOV lanes. Electric vehicle owners have indicated that this access will ensure they do not run out of charge when caught in traffic congestion. They also suggest that this could promote the sales of electric vehicles.

ICBC statistics show that as of December 31, 2014, there were 1,674 battery electric and electric plug-in-hybrid vehicles and 32,510 gas-hybrid vehicles registered in B.C.

DISCUSSION:

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Jurisdictional Scan

Currently, 13 states in the United States and the Province of Ontario allow single occupant electric vehicles in HOV lanes. Ontario's initiative was undertaken as a pilot project which expired on July 1, 2015. However, Ontario has extended their program for another year. The program is reviewed annually and will



be cancelled if the number of electric vehicles negatively impacts the HOV lanes' level of service. Initially, California permitted both electric and gas-hybrid vehicles into their HOV lanes but has encountered congestion, and now limits the number of gas-hybrid vehicles in the program.

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- None.

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