

BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

DATE: February 19, 2016
PREPARED FOR: Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
ISSUE: Daylight Savings Time

SUMMARY:

- **The findings of studies which have analyzed the impact of Daylight Savings Time (DST) on motor vehicle accident rates are inconsistent.**
- **Some studies suggest that DST transitions increase accident rates, while other studies suggest decreases in accident rates.**
- **An ICBC analysis of the effect of the end of DST found there is a 10% increase in the average number of crashes in the Lower Mainland during the late afternoon commute in the two weeks following the end of DST compared to the two weeks preceding the transition.**
- **This crash rate slightly increases outside of the Lower Mainland where challenging road conditions are compounded by less roadside light.**
- **With the exception of Saskatchewan, Arizona and several small intra-jurisdictional areas, all provincial, territorial and state jurisdictions in North America have adopted DST.**

BACKGROUND:

DST is observed in all Canadian provinces, with the exception of Saskatchewan and some of British Columbia¹.

Prior to 2007, DST throughout most of Canada began on the first Sunday in April through to the last Sunday in October. Following the United States, Canadian jurisdictions adopted an extended DST period commencing the second Sunday in March and ending the first Sunday in November. The main reasons for extending the DST period were to conserve energy and remain consistent with economic and social ties to the United States.

A world map is provided in Appendix 1 which indicates those jurisdictions that have adopted DST.

Section 26 of the *Interpretation Act* provides authority to the Lieutenant Governor in Council to prescribe the Daylight Savings period. B.C. Reg. 136/2006, Daylight Savings Time Regulation, provides that the DST period commences at 2 a.m. on the second Sunday of March and ends at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday of November.

DISCUSSION:

ICBC Analysis

ICBC conducted an analysis² of the effect of the end of DST on road traffic incidents. Incident counts were reviewed for two weeks before and two weeks after the DST change over the years 2000-2009. Incidents were broken down into eight, three-hour time periods, commencing at 00:01, making up a 24 hour period. The analysis concluded the following:

- There is no significant statistical difference regarding incident counts in the three-hour time period in the two weeks prior to and following the commencement of DST, with the exception of the time period 3 to 6 p.m. (afternoon rush hour period).

¹ Part of the Peace River Regional District of BC (including the communities of Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope, Fort St. John, Taylor and Tumbler Ridge) is on Mountain Time and does not observe DST.

² "The Effect of Fall Daylight Saving Time Change on Crashes", ICBC, October 2010.

