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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.16

Title: School Bus Safety

Issue: s.13,s.16

Key Messages / Points:

- **Riding in a school bus in Canada is extremely safe, with less than 1% of all collision related deaths of school aged children occurring in a school bus.**
- **School buses traditionally are not equipped with seat belts due to the design of the bus focusing on compartmentalization, which is extremely effective in front and rear collisions.**
- **School buses can be ordered with seat belts, but the driver is then responsible to ensure that everyone on board is wearing the provided belts.**
- **TC has begun the formation of a task force in January 2019 to look at effective measures available to increase safety for passengers on school buses.**
- **BC supports the implementation of a Task Force on school bus safety and intends to be a contributing member of the Task Force.**

Background:

- Transport Canada completed a study in 1984 regarding the applicability of seat belts on school buses, which has become the most widely cited study in North America as a reason not to install seat belts on school buses.
- Compartmentalization of the bus (high seat backs, seats closer together, curvature in the roof) have been raised by TC in the past as being preferable to seat belts. However, compartmentalization is only effective in front and rear collisions, doing little for side impact collisions and/or roll overs.
- TC has made seat belts mandatory for all newly manufactured motor coach buses (excluding school buses) starting September 2020
- There is a manufacturing standard available for seat belts on newly manufactured school buses, and there are many in service in Canada, however, this is voluntary by the school district ordering the bus, and increases the purchase cost of the bus.
- The CBC Fifth Estate investigation was released Oct 14, 2018.

Provincial Position:

- **s.13,s.16**

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Positions of other Provinces/Territories:

- **s.16**

Position of Transport Canada:

- s.16
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APPROVALS:

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Kathy Kirby, ED TPL
Deborah Bowman, ADM TPP

Date: January 14, 2018
Date: January 15, 2018
Date

ADVICE TO MINISTER

**CONFIDENTIAL
ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Updated: Sep 12, 2018

Minister Responsible: Claire Trevena

CVSE – Humboldt Broncos Bus Crash

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- **Safety is our ministry's top priority, and our deepest condolences go out to all those affected by this tragedy.**
- **At this time, the cause of the crash is not known, so we don't want to speculate on what went wrong.**
- **In B.C. we take motor coach safety very seriously, which is why we conducted a Motor Coach Safety Review in 2016.**
- **The review found that B.C.'s motor coach industry has some of the most stringent regulations compared to other provinces.**
- **The Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Branch (CVSE) conducts regular inspections on motor coaches throughout the province, and motor coaches are required to be mechanically inspected every six months.**

If asked about seatbelt regulations:

- **The BC Motor Vehicle Act regulations require drivers and passengers to use seatbelts if a seatbelt is provided.**
- **The majority of newly manufactured buses come with seatbelts, and if seatbelts are installed, passengers are required to use them.**
- **As of September 1, 2020, Transport Canada will make it mandatory for seatbelts to be installed on medium and large highway buses.**
- **We are supportive of the rule being applied in B.C. as it would further increase safety.**

If asked, how will B.C. enforce Transport Canada's new seatbelt regulation for medium and large highway buses?

- **The BC Motor Vehicle Act Regulations require motorists and passengers to use seat belts for all seating positions in which a seat**

belt is provided. (For example, if a motor coach has passenger seat belts in place, passengers are required to use them.)

- It is each person's responsibility to ensure a seatbelt is being worn when equipped – expect to see enforcement from police and CVSE.
- We will continue to work with our federal partners to make sure the motor coach industry is as safe as it possibly can be.

If asked about seat belts on school buses:

- Transport Canada is responsible for safety standards in terms of design and manufacturing of school buses.
- School buses are designed differently, using a system called compartmentalization in which the seats and bus interior form a protective compartment.
- Any further questions about seatbelts on school buses should be directed to Transport Canada.

If asked about changes in training for commercial drivers:

- Applicants for a Class 1 commercial driver's licence in B.C. are required to undergo robust testing, mandatory air brake training, and driver record screening prior to being issued a licence.
- B.C.'s current commercial driver training model is consistent with all Canadian jurisdictions, except Ontario which implemented a Class 1 commercial driver training program in 2017.
- ICBC is reviewing the current Class 1 commercial driver training program in B.C. We will be looking at the recommendations from that review to see what improvements can be made, and how we can work with ICBC and all necessary stakeholders to implement changes.
- Any further questions regarding changes to training for commercial drivers should be directed to the Ministry of Attorney General as this topic falls under ICBC.

KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

On Friday, April 6, 2018, the Broncos junior hockey team from Humboldt, Saskatchewan was involved in a fatal crash, when their bus collided with tractor-trailer in rural Saskatchewan. Twenty-nine people were on board the team bus. Fifteen people were killed, including many young players and team personnel, and many others were seriously injured.

The driver of the tractor trailer unit, Jaskirat Sidhu, was subsequently charged with 16 counts of

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- **School buses traditionally are not equipped with seat belts due to the design of the bus focusing on compartmentalization, which is extremely effective in front and rear collisions**
- **School buses can be ordered with seat belts, but the driver is then responsible to ensure that everyone on board is wearing the provided belts**
- **TC is proposing a task force be formed to look at effective measures available to increase safety for passengers on school buses**

Background:

- Transport Canada completed a study in 1984 regarding the applicability of seat belts on school buses, which has become the most widely cited study in North America as a reason not to install seat belts on school buses.
- Compartmentalization of the bus (high seat backs, seats closer together, curvature in the roof) have been raised by TC in the past as being preferable to seat belts. However, compartmentalization is only effective in front and rear collisions, doing little for side impact collisions and/or roll overs.
- TC has made seat belts mandatory for all newly manufactured motor coach buses (excluding school buses) starting September 2020
- There is a manufacturing standard available for seat belts on newly manufactured school buses, and there are many in service in Canada. However, this is voluntary by the school district ordering the bus, and increases the purchase cost of the bus.

Provincial Position:

- **s.13,s.16**

Positions of other Provinces/Territories:

- **s.13,s.16**

Position of Transport Canada:

- **s.16**

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APPROVALS:

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ADVICE TO MINISTER

**CONFIDENTIAL
ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Updated: April 16, 2018

Minister Responsible: Claire Trevena

CVSE – Motor Coach Review

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- **We have a responsibility to periodically review the motor coach industry to make sure it is as safe as possible.**
- **The Motor Coach Safety Review (2016) found that B.C.'s motor coach industry has some of the most stringent regulations compared to other provinces.**
- **Crash rates in B.C. are relatively low and have been trending down for the last 10 years – an average drop in crash rates of 5.4% a year.**
- **The Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) branch is providing good oversight for the industry.**
- **Regular roadside inspections are carried out on motor coaches throughout the province, and the Out of Service rate stemming from these inspections is generally lower than other jurisdictions.**
- **CVSE also conducts National Safety Code audits on the worst performing carriers.**
- **In B.C., motor coaches are required to be mechanically inspected to ensure compliance with vehicle safety standards every six months. This is consistent with the National Safety Code.**

What is B.C. doing to further improve safety for the motor coach industry?

- **We are working together with the federal government as they review emerging technologies and safety improvements.**
- **Transport Canada now requires newly manufactured commercial vehicles (including buses) to have electronic stability control.**
- **Transport Canada is also considering new requirements for electronic logging devices and making it mandatory to install passenger seat belts for all new motor coaches in Canada.**
- **We welcome the incorporation of these best practices to Canada, to continually improve safety standards in the industry.**

Why not put in the mandatory seat belt rule yourself? (Why wait for the federal government?)

- **The BC Motor Vehicle Act Regulations require motorists and passengers to use seat belts for all seating positions in which a seat belt is provided. (For example, if a motor coach has passenger seat belts in place, passengers are required to use them.)**
- **But when you look at a regulation that would require manufacturers to install seat belts on all motor coach buses – this falls under federal jurisdiction.**
- **In the U.S., all new motor coaches manufactured must have passenger seat belts as a standard feature.**
- **Transport Canada is considering a new requirement to make it mandatory to install passenger seatbelts for new motor coaches in Canada. A final decision on this is expected later this year.**
- **We are supportive of this rule being applied in B.C., as it would further increase safety.**
- **We will continue to work with our federal partners to make sure the motor coach industry is as safe as it possibly can be.**

If asked about seat belts on school buses:

- **Transport Canada is responsible for safety standards in terms of design and manufacturing of school buses.**
- **School buses are designed differently, using a system called compartmentalization in which the seats and bus interior form a protective compartment.**
- **Any questions regarding whether school buses are being considered in Transport Canada's upcoming seat belt mandate should be directed to Transport Canada.**

KEY FACTS REGARDING THE ISSUE:

On July 16, 2015, the ministry put out a news release, stating that the ministry was starting a Motor Coach Safety Review in B.C. to ensure that travelers on B.C.'s highways are as safe as possible. This was announced following two high profile motor coach bus crashes on the Coquihalla which occurred in 2014/15: Universal Coach Lines bus crash (June 2015); Western Bus Lines crash (August 2014).

The review took longer than expected to release, as it was supposed to be released in early 2016, and it was Nov. 25, 2016 when it was released. Overall, the Motor Coach Safety Review conducted by Stantec Consulting Ltd. identified the motor coach industry in B.C. aligns well with other jurisdictions reviewed. B.C.'s 5.4% annual decline in crash rates is comparative to other jurisdictions, including Alberta at an annual decline of 3.3%, Ontario at an annual decline of 4.0%, and Canada as a whole with an annual decreasing trend of 2.9%.

