

ACHIEVING A MODERN REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

B.C.'s Regulatory Reform Initiative

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT | 2015/2016

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Foreword

British Columbians deserve government services that are easy to access and simple to use.

Our provincial government's ongoing commitment to reducing unnecessary regulatory requirements has made us a recognized leader in Canada – for the fifth year in a row we received top marks for red tape reduction from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Since 2001, we've reduced the total amount of regulatory requirements by 47% and completing over 275 streamlining projects. This report outlines the progress we've made over the past year including eliminating more than 500 requirements.

For example we've replaced the need for sworn statements with a simple signed statement in more than 20 instances.

This report highlights our successes, including: streamlined forms and applications for programs such as Community Employer Partnerships or the Provincial Nominee Program, more support for small businesses that operate in multiple communities through the expansion of the mobile business licence program and BizPaL, simplified processes such as making it easier for military drivers to transfer their truck driving credentials to the commercial sector, and enhanced customer service at Service BC locations through co-location with social development services and an extended hours pilot.

We're improving how citizens interact with the provincial government – whether it's a form, a website or at a front counter – and giving them a more meaningful experience that makes their lives easier.

In addition, our B.C. government reached out to British Columbians last fall for their ideas to reduce red tape. Over six weeks more than 5,900 people participated and we received more than 400 ideas from citizens, businesses and stakeholder groups. We listened and are taking more than 60 actions to improve service delivery. Plus, we launched a suggestion button on the B.C. government homepage so that British Columbians can share their ideas to help cut red tape all year long.

I want to thank all of my colleagues across government who have made reducing red tape a priority in their ministries. Our combined efforts are improving customer service, streamlining processes and making it easier to access services.

We will continue to build on our commitment to regulatory reform because we know that reducing red tape encourages economic growth and innovation, supports job creation and improve services for citizens.

Sincerely,

CORALEE OAKES
Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
And Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch

Our Goals

British Columbia's long-standing commitment to reduce unnecessary red tape is supported by three primary goals.

The first is to *Modernize British Columbia's Regulatory Regime*. This goal is underpinned by a belief that an efficient regulatory regime that avoids placing an undue burden on citizens and businesses is in the best interest of British Columbians, and a key pillar for economic growth.

An efficient regulatory regime is especially important for small businesses, which are challenged to keep track and comply with provincial requirements due to their limited staff size. This point is especially important as the overwhelming majority of businesses in B.C. are small and medium, with approximately 75% of businesses employing under five staff.

The second goal is to *Streamline Processes and Enhance Access to Services*. This goal is supported by a combination of process, technology improvements and new investment to facilitate streamlined access to services across the province.

The third, foundational goal is to *Strengthen Public Accountability for Red Tape Reduction*. This involves maintaining an accurate picture of the regulatory requirement count and reporting on the progress the B.C. government is making to reduce unnecessary red tape.

Central to delivering on this goal is frequent, meaningful engagement with British Columbians to identify irritants relating to service delivery as well as solutions to improve the lives of citizens.

- 1 MODERNIZE
REGULATORY REGIME
- 2 STREAMLINE AND
ENHANCE ACCESS TO
SERVICES
- 3 STRENGTHEN PUBLIC
ACCOUNTABILITY FOR
RED TAPE REDUCTION

"[Y]our government's leadership and commitment to reduce red tape is getting international attention. I was recently invited to Washington, D.C. to give ... a speech on B.C.'s approach to controlling red tape to a group of small business owners, who described it as a *breath of fresh air*."

LAURA JONES, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategic Officer Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Our Accomplishments

NEW MINISTRY

In July 2015, the Province renewed its commitment to regulatory reform by creating the Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. As the Minister responsible, the Honourable Coralee Oakes is reaching out to all ministries for their assistance in reducing unnecessary red tape.

REFRESHED REGULATORY POLICY FRAMEWORK

Over the past year, B.C.'s [Regulatory Reform Policy](#) was refreshed, with the goal of ensuring that all new or amended statutes, regulations, and supporting policies and forms are developed in a manner that is not overly burdensome for citizens, businesses and government.

Integral to this new policy is a small business lens. This lens supports ministries in assessing the impact of any changes they are considering on small businesses, which are disproportionately affected by inefficient regulations. A [Companion Guide](#) was also created to assist provincial staff in applying the Regulatory Reform Policy.

RED TAPE REDUCTION DAY

March 2, 2016 was the first-ever Red Tape Reduction Day in British Columbia and in Canada. To celebrate Red Tape Reduction Day, 37 outdated or unnecessary regulations were repealed, removing more than 200 regulatory requirements for British Columbians. For example, sworn statements have been replaced with signed statements in over 20 processes. A parent who wants to enrol their child in a francophone school no longer has to go to the trouble of getting a sworn statement. More detail on the improvements that were implemented is available in the [news release](#) for the event.

RED TAPE AWARENESS WEEK

Each year, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) publishes a Red Tape Report Card, which grades the red tape reduction efforts of Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments. For the fifth year in a row, B.C. was awarded an "A" rating for its regulatory reform leadership.

In assigning this grade, the CFIB recognized the Province's outstanding political leadership and renewal of its commitment to a net zero increase. British Columbia supported the CFIB's initiative by formally declaring Red Tape Awareness Week via proclamation.

TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES

The [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#) will help strengthen accountability, promote cost control, and ensure that provincial public sector organizations operate in the best interest of taxpayers. In 2015/2016, the final group of Crown Corporations, BC Assessment, BC Games, Royal BC Museum, Destination BC, BC Immigrant Investment Fund, and Forestry Innovation Investment implemented taxpayer accountability principles and performance measures into their service plans.

IM/IT CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

The B.C. government considers how projects align with strategic priorities, streamline processes, improve outcomes or make services easier to access for citizens and businesses before making decisions on which information management and information technology projects they will prioritize and invest in.

REDUCING RED TAPE FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS

Over a six week period in the fall of 2015, British Columbians were asked for ideas on how to reduce red tape and enhance service delivery. Over 400 ideas were received during the engagement - from minor issues to complicated challenges, along with proposals to address these irritants. The [Red Tape Reduction Engagement Report](#) outlines the major themes that emerged from the process, and highlights the first batch of actions government is taking to improve service delivery.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU: Allow red tape results to be submitted all year and track results.

WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT: Created a button on the government website for you to use 24/7.

Infographic:

Reducing Red Tape Final Engagement Totals

Oct 22 – Dec 3, 2015

Since Launch

WEBSITE VISITS 5,973

BLOG COMMENTS 192

EMAILS 63

TWITTER #helpcutredtape 514

IDEAS BEING REVIEWED 284

TOTAL RATINGS thumbs up / down 603

AVERAGE SITE VISIT min/sec 6:28

“I was very impressed with the thoughtfulness and practicality of the ideas submitted. We heard ideas about how to improve customer service, how to modernize programs, how to streamline processes and how to make services more accessible.”

CORALEE OAKES, Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction And Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch

MAINTAINING NET ZERO INCREASE

Monitoring the number of regulatory requirements is a key performance measure of the regulatory reform initiative in British Columbia. *A regulatory requirement is any action citizens, businesses, or government must take to access government services, conduct business, or meet their legal responsibilities.* The methodology for the count requires that each ministry count each instance where a business, citizen or the provincial government must take some action. The number of requirements in all B.C. statutes, regulations, and associated policies, and forms is recorded and tracked in a database.

Periodic checking and cleaning of database holdings is good data practice. During 2015/16, a review of the regulatory requirements database focused on ensuring alignment between the database and all B.C. statutes and regulations and removing all out of scope statutes and regulations. The result of database review was a decrease of about 30,000 to the 2001 and 2004 baseline values. At the end of the 2015/16 fiscal year, the regulatory requirements count was 173,439 – a decrease of 547 requirements compared with the previous year, or 47% below the 2001 baseline and 11.6% below the 2004 baseline.

To ensure the regulatory burden does not increase, a regulatory cap, known as the Net Zero Increase Commitment was established in 2004. This commitment means when a new regulatory requirement is introduced, an existing requirement must be eliminated. In January 2015, the B.C. government extended the Net Zero Increase until 2019.

“British Columbia is at the head of the class when it comes to cutting red tape for small businesses, earning an A grade from CFIB for the fifth consecutive year. B.C.’s grade reflects outstanding political leadership: it’s the first province to declare a ‘Red Tape Reduction Day’ and it also renewed its no-net-new regulation commitment through to 2019.”

LAURA JONES, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategic Officer\ Canadian Federation of Independent Business

MODERNIZING REGULATION

Creating a modern regulatory environment is not simply about reducing regulatory requirements. It is about reducing the time and cost of regulatory compliance and providing easy access to government information and services. Provincial legislation must reflect current trends, address emerging issues in today's world, and accommodate technological changes. Effective consultation with stakeholders during the review and development of legislation provides insight into the regulatory challenges faced by citizens and businesses and helps inform the Province's decision-making.

Here are some examples from this year where the B.C. government has modernized rules and requirements:

IMPROVED PENSION PLAN COVERAGE AND SECURITY

Modernized standards are intended to improve pension coverage and security for more than 1,108,000 British Columbians covered by employer sponsored pension plans. And for the first time, former plan members who demonstrate financial hardship will have access to locked-in Registered Retirement Savings Plans and life income funds.

Pension benefits standards protect the financial health of workplace pension plans and the interests of plan members. The new *Pension Benefits Standards Act* applies to all employment pension plans registered in British Columbia, and plans registered elsewhere that have members employed in British Columbia. The new Act improves plan governance and accommodates alternative plan designs, such as target benefit plans and plans jointly-sponsored by employers and employees.

LIQUOR POLICY REVIEW

Focused on reducing red tape and increasing convenience without sacrificing health and public safety, B.C.'s [Liquor Policy Review](#) is an example of the provincial government listening to its citizens and industry. With forty-one of the seventy-three recommendations already implemented, the choices available to consumers are expanding, and new development opportunities are being created. Some examples of modernized regulations are as follows:

- Distilleries, wineries, and breweries with licensed lounges or special event areas can now sell a limited amount of liquor they don't produce, for customers to enjoy during their visit. This change means, for example, customers hosting a wedding at one of these locations won't have to apply for a separate and additional Special Occasion Licence.
- Manufacturers were given the green light to sell liquor at annual markets in addition to the regularly-occurring ones, including markets with artisanal goods expanding the agricultural focus required under the farmer's market authorization.
- Restaurants are no longer required to apply for permission to host entertainment, such as a guitar player or comedian, as long as patrons are not participating in the show. Nor do restaurants have to provide a separate lounge area for customers who want to enjoy a cocktail.

"Moving the Special Occasion Licence program online has made it so much easier for us as a not-for-profit to get the licences we need."

IAIN HOOEY, co-founder of the Victoria Whisky Festival

CLARIFYING THE *LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT*

The Province provides the legislative framework, policies and programs that enable local governments to govern effectively and be accountable to citizens. The *Local Government Act*, a cornerstone of this framework, has been revised to make it more user-friendly and support effective local government administration. The changes improve readability and usability without altering the legal effect.

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS

Overseeing a land base of 94.8 million hectares, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is the Province's land manager, responsible for stewardship of Provincial Crown land, cultural and natural resources. A number of recent regulatory, procedural and technological changes demonstrate the ministry's commitment to reducing red tape. Some examples are as follows:

- All of fish and wildlife applications are now available online along with limited entry hunting applications. Moving these applications online makes it easier for clients to access, complete, and submit their applications. Clients are also able to pay the application fees online eliminating the need to mail or deliver applications and payments.
- An employing guide outfitter can now authorize an assistant guide, instead of having to obtain a licence from government.
- Redundant requirements in the *Land Act*, such as having to include an applicant's signature and occupation in a public notice, have been repealed. Other changes will allow a clear and transparent opportunity for public review and comment on applications to dispose of Crown land before a decision is made.
- Changes to the *Land Title Act* have simplified the description of fees for land title and survey products and improved customer service by reorganizing the categories into common themes and eliminating obsolete categories.
- Citizenship and residency requirements for land surveyors have been modernized to enable land surveyors who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents to be commissioned as a Land Surveyor by the Association of British Columbia Land Surveyors so they may practice in B.C. Removal of these labour mobility barriers in the *Land Surveyors Act* addresses an anticipated shortage of surveyors, and supports the [BC Jobs Plan](#).

Infographic:

- Time WMA regulations have been replaced with one consolidated regulation.
- 17 outdated WMA boundary descriptions or maps were replaced with more accurate and consistent maps.
- Putting fish and wildlife applications online has reduced the average processing time from 124 to 33 days.
- Annual reporting requirements for approximately 860 woodlots licences have been streamlined and simplified.

STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Simplifying processes, removing unnecessary steps and using modernized approaches are essential elements of our regulatory reform initiative. We are constantly looking for ways to streamline provincial processes in order to save citizens and businesses time and money. Here are some examples of successful streamlining projects completed over the past year:

HELMETS TO HARD HATS CIVILIAN EQUIVALENCIES FOR MILITARY 404 DRIVER LICENSING

Military personnel and veterans can now transfer their military driving credentials to an equivalent B.C. commercial or passenger licence without additional testing. By removing this hurdle for military personnel and veterans, B.C. joins other provinces by endorsing an important initiative spearheaded by Helmets to Hardhats Canada, a national non-profit group.

SIMPLIFIED REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNERAL DIRECTOR AND EMBALMER APPRENTICES

For many families, a funeral service is the last act of love and kindness they can give their departed loved one. This is meaningful work and the province's funeral services sector wants to attract, train and retain the most qualified people. Until recently, funeral director and embalmer apprentices had to be directly supervised at all times during their 3,600 hour practical training period. Regulations did not allow for flexibility of supervision requirements as an apprentice progressed through their training making it more difficult for smaller companies, in particular, to oversee an apprenticeship. Full-time supervision is no longer mandatory once an apprentice has completed half of their practical training and participated in 25 funeral contracts or embalmings.

STREAMLINING FAMILY SUPPORT PAYMENTS

While cutting red tape is important for business, it is also critical for families, especially families relying on support payments. Child and spousal support decisions from other provinces, territories and countries can now be more efficiently processed in B.C. Recent administrative changes allow out-of-province support order decisions that are not court certified, like tribunal decisions, to be registered with the B.C. court.

Payments can also be split between two or more families receiving support from the same payor, for a more equitable support distribution thanks to recent changes to the *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act*. Further streamlining gives judges the ability to deal with someone already before the court who has refused to provide proper financial information, rather than having to schedule separate court appearances. This change makes court processes more efficient, leading to earlier resolution and faster payments for families.

“By removing the red tape around driver credentials the Province has streamlined the process for people moving from military to civilian life and opened up employment options for our members.”

MIKE CROY, Vice president of Teamsters local union #213 and supporter of Helmets to Hardhats

HOME HEALTH MONITORING

Advancements in technology enable patients to monitor their conditions at home through remote monitoring technology, while staying connected to their care providers. More than 650 heart failure patients in the Interior and Island Health authorities have already been equipped with home health monitoring kits. Clinicians monitor the daily health data transmitted via these kits, intervening with advice when appropriate. Use of this tool reduces hospital admissions and saves patients the time and money it takes to travel to doctor's offices and medical facilities.

MAJOR MINES PERMITTING OFFICE

Proposed new major mines, major expansions or upgrades to existing mines, and some large-scale exploration or development projects require approval under the [Mines Act](#). The newly created Major Mines Permitting Office (MMPO) will bring clear accountability to both industry and the Province. The MMPO will ensure timely, high-quality decisions are made with respect to permitting major mine projects and improve the governance and co-ordination of major mine authorizations across government.

STREAMLINED PARK PERMITS

Educational institutions and commercial recreation businesses regularly use the land base managed by BC Parks as an outdoor classroom and eco-tourism facility. Approximately 350 Park Use Permits are issued each year for allowable uses with a low impact on a park. Permits for activities such as research, educational courses and guide outfitting are being simplified, instead of going through the same process as higher risk activities. This [Lean](#) project is expected to save up to \$500,000 in staff effort each year along with a \$20,000 reduction in storage and advertising costs. On average, the time it takes to get a permit for low risk activities will be reduced by 114 days.

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS HELP CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Children, youth and families now have convenient access to reliable, timely and consistent service options wherever they reside in the province thanks to changes made by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. A mobile team of clinical supervisors and social workers is available to provide immediate and acute support in high-priority communities. Walk-in public access hours for all ministry service delivery locations throughout B.C. have been standardized and a province-wide 24/7/365 centralized screening function for the child protection service line is now in operation.

STREAMLINED AND SIMPLIFIED APPLICATION PROCESS

[Community Employer Partnerships](#) has simplified the application process, streamlined its assessment process, and standardized the management of agreements. A letter of intent is no longer required and applications are made online. An initiative of the Employment Program of B.C., the Community Employer Partnership uses partnerships, shared information, technology and innovative practices to increase employment opportunities for unemployed British Columbians.

APPLICATION IMPROVEMENTS REDUCE WAIT TIMES

The *Provincial Nominee Program* (PNP) is an economic immigration program and B.C.'s only direct selection tool to recruit and retain international skilled workers and experienced entrepreneurs to British Columbia. For many employers their need for talent is urgent, especially in highly specialized areas and in regional communities where retirements and economic growth present significant labour market challenges. The Province has launched a new an online application and registration system for the PNP so program demand can be aligned with nomination capacity and improve program outcomes to meet British Columbia's labour market

and economic development priorities. The new registration system allows employers to access skilled labour quickly to bring highly skilled newcomers into the province to support continued growth in the industry. In 2015, B.C.PNP nominated 5,800 applicants – 40% more than in 2014.

PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL AGREEMENTS FACILITATE APPRENTICESHIP MOBILITY

In July 2015, Canada's Premiers signed the [Provincial-Territorial Apprentice Mobility Protocol](#), establishing a framework to that enables apprentices to pursue jobs anywhere in Canada without interruption to their training. Ministers responsible for apprenticeship also signed a [Provincial-Territorial Mobility Agreement](#) which details jurisdictional commitments to facilitate apprentices being able to work temporarily or move permanently between provinces and territories and receive recognition for hours worked and other training completed.

Infographic:

- Since the introduction of the online registration/application process and streamlined administration, BC PNP processing times for new applications have improved from more than 12-24 months to 2-3 months.
- Inventory of BC PNP paper applications (*for both skills and entrepreneur streams*) has been reduced from 7,200 in March 2015 to 2,300 in March 2016.

EASIER ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON B.C. COMMUNITIES

The newest addition to [BritishColumbia.ca](#), B.C.'s international website portal for attracting global investors to opportunities, is the integration of information about more than 7,000 B.C. business opportunities with dynamic economic data about communities. This makes it easier for investors and site selectors to find all the data they need to make investment decisions, while at the same time discovering new communities and regions across the province. The site features profiles of more than 390 municipalities, First Nations, regional districts and economic regions throughout B.C. and centralizes up to 1,300 data points for each community – all in one place. These data points include information on demographics, geography, labour force, quality of life and key sectors in the region.

Infographic:

The <http://www.britishcolumbia.ca> site is now ranking on international search engines for nearly 80% of targeted keyword phrases relating to investing in B.C. Communities.

PAPER CUTS PROJECT COMPLETED

Fifty-five percent of all paper forms and reporting requirements used by the Ministry of Education, B.C. schools and school districts have now been eliminated, reduced, or automated. Reducing the amount of paper by 83% since 2008, has increased the efficiency of our educational system, reduced the cost and time of administration while increasing information security.

Infographic:

- Amount of paper reduced from 4.29 million to 734,000 packages of paper.
- Total height of 1430 ft. to 245 ft.
- 83% decrease in paper use since 2008.

MORE PRE-APPROVED ROUTES FOR TRUCKERS

Pre-approved routes give shippers the flexibility to plan their routes and know which permit conditions to address. Shippers also know they'll receive a permit quickly when they are within the policy guidelines. Two new routes for shipments of 85 gross vehicle weight (GVW) were established last year – one on Highway 16, extending the route to Terrace, and the second on Highway 17 in from Tsawwassen to Highway 1. [BC on the Move](#), the Province's new 10-year transportation plan, supports the creation of more pre-approved routes around B.C. for delivering heavy project cargo from its origin to a work site.

MOBILE BUSINESS LICENCE AGREEMENT UPDATE

A new [Mobile Business Licence](#) (MBL) agreement involving the Town of Gibsons, District of Sechelt and shíshálh Nation, means it will be easier for mobile businesses – such as plumbers or electricians – to operate on the Sunshine Coast. These three communities have worked together to adopt a common bylaw reducing costs and red tape by allowing mobile businesses to purchase one licence, rather than obtaining a business licence for each jurisdiction in which they operate. With the addition of the Sunshine Coast, there are now 11 MBL agreements throughout the province involving a total of 73 communities.

BIZPAL UPDATE

Eleven new participants signed on with [BizPaL](#), including the Tsawwassen First Nation, the first Aboriginal community in Canada to join, bringing the total number of local government partners to 129. BizPaL is a unique partnership between federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and now First Nations governments which allows small business owners to quickly and easily identify the permits and licences they need, helping them focus on business growth and job creation. This free online service saves entrepreneurs time spent searching and helps them start their businesses faster.

Small Business Focus

Companies with less than 50 employees are an important driver of job creation, productivity and economic growth in British Columbia. Representing 98% of all businesses in the province, small businesses employ over a million people and produce approximately 31% of the provincial gross domestic product. Furthermore, small businesses with less than five employees account for about 3/4 of all businesses in B.C.

Small businesses can be disproportionately affected by inefficient regulations and red tape. As compared to larger businesses, small businesses do not have the same level of resources to effectively manage and navigate regulatory and reporting requirements. Small business owners want provincial services and requirements to be easy, accessible and predictable. To strengthen the competitiveness of B.C. as a preferred place to do business, The B.C. government is committed to making cutting red tape a priority.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO DOING BUSINESS WITH THE PROVINCE

In response to the challenges identified by small business, the Province has been working towards increasing small business procurement from government. In 2012, the B.C. government committed to a minimum 20% increase in spending with small business. Provincial efforts targeted reducing barriers to doing business with the Province, including introduction of a short-form Request for Proposals, increasing awareness of opportunities to sell to government, improving the availability of procurement information and resources, and cutting red tape for small businesses that want to do business with the B.C. government. As of March 31, 2015, the Province significantly exceeded its target of a 20% increase. Procurement with small business by the provincial government increased by 76% over three years from the \$210 million baseline to an estimated value of \$370 million.

ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND GOODS

The [BC Bid Resources](#) website is an online public repository of information on how the Province procures its required goods, services, and construction. It includes over 250 pages, nearly half of which are a google-searchable goods and services catalogue of available supply arrangements. It also links to BC Bid, a centralized marketplace where public sector organizations advertise their opportunities.

To further support the success of small and medium businesses and economic development in the province, government consults with the business community to find ways to streamline government services and processes. Based on these consultations, a key focus is how to make it easier for businesses to understand and access provincial government procurement opportunities. BC Bid is designed to optimize use of existing resources and demystify the procurement process for business, thus increasing their ability and willingness to participate in the competitive process.

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES HANDOUT

When sole proprietor and general partnership businesses register for the first time at the [OneStop Business Registry](#), they now receive a Resources Handout and a Ministers' letter along with the Statement of Registration. This streamlining initiative helps increase the awareness of new business owners of the supports available to help them succeed in their business endeavour from the moment they register. In the first six months since the launch in October 2015, more than 13,000 new businesses received this information.

Infographic:

An estimated 10, 842 businesses did direct business with the B.C. government and accounted for an average of just under \$2.4 billion in spending. Of these businesses:

- An estimated 8,451(78%) of businesses servicing government were small businesses (1 to 49 employees).
- An estimated \$370 million (16%) of provincial spending was with small business.
- Year-over-year, the number of small business transactions with the B.C. government was up an estimated 2% (+196).

ENHANCING SERVICE AND ACCESS

Citizens and businesses want convenient and cost effective ways to interact with the B.C. government. Offering choices in this regard is an important way in which the Province can help reduce the regulatory burden for you. By applying the latest technology, we continue to take significant strides in offering a wide range of service options for you to choose from. Here are some of the improvements to provincial services and access made in the past year:

IMPROVING CONVENIENCE FOR CITIZENS AND BUSINESS

[Service BC](#) provides information and services to citizens and business in person, online and over the phone. Across the province, British Columbians can visit one of the 62 Service BC Centres for a wide range of provincial government services, including driver's licences, fishing and hunting licences and other services. In response to feedback from British Columbians, Service BC has improved convenience for both citizens and business over the past year.

In partnership with Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI), Service BC integrated income assistance services with the full range of government's front-line services to citizens in five locations. In these communities, in addition to employment assistance programs, citizens can now access services such as residential tenancy, MSP, vital statistics and numerous other programs in one location. Additionally, in these locations, access to SDSI front-counter services is increased by up to four hours per day.

In response to requests from citizens, Service BC is offering Saturday openings on a 6 month trial basis in its Prince George location and extended hours at the Maple Ridge and Vernon offices to 5:30 p.m.

Service BC continues to modernize service delivery through increased access and integration. Moving forward, Service BC is actively exploring new partnership opportunities with other ministries to achieve an integrated one-stop-shop approach to provincial services in communities throughout B.C.

IMPROVING THE SERVICE EXPERIENCE OF WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS

As a part of WorkSafeBC's ongoing service experience strategy, WorkSafeBC continues to conduct comprehensive service experience research with employers and workers in BC. Utilizing focus groups, surveys, interviews and user experience testing, WorkSafeBC has been identifying service improvement opportunities and making changes and developing new products and services to better meet the needs of workers and employers throughout the province. Last year, WorkSafeBC worked with its customers, including Small Business BC, to make service improvements within the insurance and claims business units to improve communication channels, reduce non-value adding processes and provide more user friendly product and service offerings. These changes have resulted in a significant increase in customer satisfaction and have made it easier for over 224,000 employers to provide healthy and safe working environment for their teams.

UPTAKE OF BC SERVICES CARD

The [BC Services Card](#) makes it easier for British Columbia residents to access multiple services with just one card. This ground-breaking Services Card can be used to provide more service enhancements and streamlining, allowing citizens to safely and securely access multiple government services, both in person and on-line. As of March 31, 2016, there were **3,130,481** BC Services cards issued.

REGULATORY REFORM FOR SENIORS

ENHANCING ACCESS

As British Columbians enjoy better health and longer life spans than ever before, the Province has created [Aging Well](#) to help older adults plan and prepare for a healthy, active future. The website includes videos, articles, and quizzes to inspire and make it easy for British Columbians to prepare for the years ahead, covering health and wellness, finance, transportation, housing, and social connections. Seniors were consulted to make sure the content of the website reflected their needs and priorities.

The [BC Seniors' Guide](#) was updated and enhanced to ensure that seniors, their families and caregivers have access to information about the programs, services and resources that are essential to seniors' health and wellness. [Chinese](#), [Punjabi](#) and [French](#) versions of the updated BC Seniors' Guide are also available and a [new e-book version](#) (available on Kobo, Kindle, and as a downloadable e-pub document) of the BC Seniors' Guide has been developed to tap into the growing proportion of older adults using e-readers.

STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Recent amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act* provide for a streamlined and efficient process between the landlord and tenant. Tenants who have been accepted into a long-term care facility or who are fleeing violence will be able to end a lease early without a financial penalty by giving their landlords one month's written notice accompanied by third-party verification. This supports the Province's commitment to a Violence Free BC and supports vulnerable seniors.

A MODERN REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Along with the changes to the *Pension Standards Act* mentioned earlier in this report, the disclosure requirements have also been strengthened. Pensioners will receive annual statements, and all plan members will have increased access to pension plan information. The new legislation has been largely harmonized with Alberta legislation to streamline the operation of pension plans with members in both provinces.

IMPROVED ONLINE SERVICES FOR TENANTS AND LANDLORDS

Whether you are a tenant or a landlord, dispute resolution applications are now more convenient and faster. Previously, landlords and tenants needed to use a credit card or Visa Debit to apply online for dispute resolution. Now, anyone can apply online and pay at a Service BC Centre or the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) office within three days.

The ability to apply online means that tenants and landlords can have dispute resolution documents emailed to them or can pick them up at the RTB office or Service BC Centre. This is much faster than having to wait to receive the documents by mail. In addition, landlords can now apply online for an order of possession through the direct request process when a tenant has unpaid rent or utilities. Before, these requests could only be made at the RTB office or a Service BC Centre. All of these improvements make services faster, easier to access and simpler for busy British Columbians to use.

GROWING B.C.'S AGRIFOOD INDUSTRY

AgriServiceBC is the Ministry of Agriculture's one-stop point of contact to access to agrifood information, programs and services. Through either a [website](#), a phone number (1-888-221-7141) or a central [email address](#), you can easily access the ministry and be directed to the appropriate staff member or information source. There were over 5,800 interactions last year.

ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION ONLINE

Increased knowledge helps British Columbians to make positive behavioural changes in their lives to minimize environmental impacts. The Province helps British Columbians to make smart choices for the environment by providing timely, easily accessible online information and scientific data on the environment through a variety of online resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OFFICE SERVICE MODERNIZATION

Using a different way to manage and deliver technology projects, EAO rapidly developed a system to streamline the process used by businesses submitting applications to the Environmental Assessment Office and citizens submitting comments on projects. Building only what adds value and what is necessary, the new system will increase transparency, provide timely and meaningful information to the public, and reduce administrative costs. The project was completed sooner and costs were reduced by taking a new approach.

SUPPORTING AFFORDABILITY FOR B.C. FAMILIES

An easy-to-use [online portal](#) brings together information about a number of federal, provincial and community-based supports and services. This one-stop site helps connect people to many of the services they may need, whether it's housing, transportation, health care, education or skills training.

AGEDOUT.COM

[AgedOut.com](#) helps current and former youth in government care navigate the many challenges that can arise as they transition to adulthood. *AgedOut.com* showcases services and supports for young people preparing to leave government care and those who have already made the transition.

ONLINE CHILD CARE SOLUTIONS

To reduce the time and effort spent in locating licensed child care, an improved [interactive map](#) helps parents find child care in their community. Child care providers can now include a profile of their facilities and programs on the map. As part of the [Early Years Strategy](#), web-based information continues to be redesigned to better support families with young children.

ENVIRONMENT ONLINE:

<http://www.LiveSmartBC.ca20> helps you make green choices to save money at home, at work and on the road.

Share environmental data and information on Twitter [@EnvReportBC](#)

[Environmental Reporting BC](#) provides access to scientific data and information about our environment and how it relates to British Columbians.

Regular air quality advisories are posted on [BCAirQuality.ca](#)

The [B.C. Species and Ecosystems Explorer](#), the [Species and Ecosystems Information Portal](#), [BC Geographic Data Warehouse](#), and the [DataBC Open Data Catalogue](#) are publicly available online tools that makes data and information on species and ecosystems acquired and managed by the government available to you.

Public information on companies and individuals subject to enforcement action, and those with outstanding environmental court fines can be found in the [Quarterly Environmental Enforcement Summaries](#), [Overdue Environmental Court Penalty Report](#) and the [Environmental Violations Database](#).

iMAPBC 4 MOBILE

[iMapBC 4 Mobile](#) helps British Columbians create customized information maps on tablets, phones and laptops. The application offers the ability to mix and match more than 1,800 layers of public geographic information on any desktop browser or mobile device that supports internet connectivity. You can use this tool to visualize data on schools, health services, the environment and more. This mobile friendly technology has increased the overall use of iMapBC by over 27%.

OPEN511 DRIVEBC

[Open511 DriveBC](#) contributes to the definition of North America 511 Open Data standards for road traveller information, such as road events, traffic cameras and traffic volume and flow data. These standards allow [DriveBC](#) to evolve into a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional traveller information system that also enables third party developers to create other innovative products. By making traffic event and traffic webcam data available with the [Open Government License](#) under the public standards of Open511, B.C. data can be integrated with data from other jurisdictions to enable borderless traveller information through apps and services available to the public. Traffic event and traffic webcam data is now available to the public, entrepreneurs and software developers.

Going Forward

Moving forward, B.C.'s red tape reduction efforts will continue to be directed by input from citizens and businesses.

Based on a complete assessment of ideas submitted under the Red Tape Reduction for British Columbians public engagement, the Province will pursue additional regulatory and service improvements over the coming year. Reports detailing the provincial government's assessments of the ideas as well as actions taken to address red tape irritants that were communicated through the process will be made available periodically.

The Province has added a button to the engagement website that gives British Columbians the ability to submit additional ideas on how to cut red tape. Citizens, businesses and other stakeholder groups are encouraged to use this button to share their ideas at any time. A continued focus will be placed on maintaining the Net Zero Increase Commitment, by diligently tracking the number of regulatory requirements and reporting on this figure on an annual basis.

The B.C. government will partner with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business on the development and implementation of Red Tape Awareness Week 2017, and looks forward to celebrating the second Red Tape Reduction Day on March 1st, 2017. This honorary day demonstrates the Province's commitment to accountability and transparency of regulatory reform.

Already recognized as an international leader in reducing red tape, the Government of British Columbia is confident that these activities will yield tangible results for citizens and businesses, and contribute to the development of a strong, diverse economy and communities.

APPENDIX: *List of Websites Referenced*

REFERENCED WEBSITE ADDRESSES

NAME	LINK
REGULATORY REFORM POLICY AND COMPANION GUIDE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/regulatory-reform/additional-information
RED TAPE REDUCTION DAY NEWS RELEASE	https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016SBRT0011%E2%80%900000315
TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/central-government-agencies/crown-agencies-resource-office
RED TAPE REDUCTION ENGAGEMENT REPORT	https://engage.gov.bc.ca/helpcutredtape/files/2016/03/Red-Tape-Reduction-Engagement-Report.pdf
LIQUOR POLICY REVIEW	http://engage.gov.bc.ca/liquorpolicyreview/
COMMUNITY EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS	https://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx
LEAN	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/lean-bc
PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM	https://www.welcomebc.ca/Immigrate-to-B-C/B-C-Provincial-Nominee-Program
PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL APPRENTICE MOBILITY PROTOCOL	http://www.itabc.ca/apply-apprenticeship/apprentice-mobility
PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL MOBILITY AGREEMENT	http://www.itabc.ca/apply-apprenticeship/apprentice-mobility
BRITISHCOLUMBIA.CA	https://www.britishcolumbia.ca/
BC ON THE MOVE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/about-the-bc-government/transportation/bconthemove.pdf
MOBILE BUSINESS LICENCE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/small-business/mobile-business-licence-program
BIZPAL	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/services/detail?desc=BizPal%20(Find%20Permits%20and%20Licences%20for%20Your%20Business)
BC BID RESOURCES	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/bc-bid-resources
ONESTOP BUSINESS REGISTRY	http://www.bcbusinessregistry.ca/
SERVICE BC	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/technology-innovation-and-citizens-services/servicebc
BC SERVICES CARD	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/government-id/bc-services-card
AGING WELL	https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/aging-well
BC SENIORS' GUIDE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/about-seniorsbc/guide/bc-seniors-guide-11th-edition.pdf
BC SENIORS' GUIDE – CHINESE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/about-seniorsbc/guide/bc_seniors_guide_11thed_chinese.pdf
BC SENIORS' GUIDE – PUNJABI	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/about-seniorsbc/guide/bc_seniors_guide_11thed_punjabi.pdf
BC SENIORS' GUIDE – FRENCH	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/about-seniorsbc/guide/bc_seniors_guide_11thed_french.pdf
BC SENIORS' GUIDE – NEW E-BOOK VERSION	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/about-seniorsbc/seniors-related-initiatives/bc-seniors-guide

AGRISERVICEBC WEBSITE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/agriservice-bc
AGRISERVICEBC EMAIL ADDRESS	AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca
SUPPORTING AFFORDABILITY FOR BC FAMILIES ONLINE PORTAL	http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/supporting_affordability/
AGEDOUT.COM	https://agedout.com/
@LIVESMARTBCCA	http://www.livesmartbc.ca/
@ENVREPORTBC	https://twitter.com/EnvReportBC
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING BC	http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/
BCAIRQUALITY.CA	http://www.bcairquality.ca/
B.C. SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEMS EXPLORER	http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/toolintro.html
QUARTERLY ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT SUMMARIES	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/research-h-monitoring-reporting/reporting/environmental-enforcement-reporting/quarterly-environmental-enforcement-summary
SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEMS INFORMATION PORTAL	http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/ecobranch_info_portal/
BC GEOGRAPHIC DATA WAREHOUSE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/databc/geographic-data-and-services
DATABC OPEN DATA CATALOGUE	http://www.data.gov.bc.ca/
OVERDUE ENVIRONMENTAL COURT PENALTY	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/research-h-monitoring-reporting/reporting/environmental-enforcement-reporting/overdue-court-penalty-payment
ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLATIONS DATABASE	https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/ocers/searchApproved.do?s-submitType=menu
ONLINE CHILD CARE SOLUTIONS INTERACTIVE MAP	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care/search-for-child-care
EARLY YEARS STRATEGY	http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/early_childhood/pdf/FamiliesAgenda_EarlyYearsStrategy_web.pdf
IMAPBC 4 MOBILE	https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/imapbc-4-mobile/resource/dcebdecd-2b85-4645-aad0-d6c058c6f084
OPEN511 DRIVEBC	https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/open511-drivebc-api
DRIVEBC	http://www.drivebc.ca/
OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENSE	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/databc/open-data/open-government-license-bc
SHARE YOUR RED TAPE REDUCTION IDEA	http://www2.gov.bc.ca/