



# Regulatory ReformBC

## ACHIEVING A MODERN REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

### B.C.'s REGULATORY REFORM INITIATIVE

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT  
2013/14





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***“This report is about the citizens and businesses of B.C. and also how the expectations and needs of entrepreneurs are changing government. It’s about continuing to evolve our regulatory reform approaches so citizens and businesses can access the services they expect and need more efficiently. These strategies will not only save the public time and money, but build a vibrant and self-sustaining economy that benefits all British Columbians.”***

Honourable Naomi Yamamoto,  
Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business



**42.7 %**

**total reduction in requirements since 2001**



# Foreword



British Columbia is leading the fight against unnecessary red tape. In 2011, we were the first Canadian jurisdiction to legislate annual reporting on regulatory reform. This Annual Regulatory Reform Report is delivering part of that commitment.

As a government we are working to reduce barriers to economic development. We promised to control spending and ensure the best possible use of government resources, and we are delivering on that promise. Government's Core Review helps us continue to find efficiencies on behalf of taxpayers.

Government must provide effective services, protect and enhance the lives of our individual and corporate citizens and meet the needs of the public. To meet these goals and deliver services efficiently we need a flexible, yet accountable, system of regulatory requirements that uses current technology and can adapt to changing needs and expectations.



Our province has been recognized nationally and internationally as leading the way in streamlining government processes and reducing unnecessary regulatory requirements. B.C. has maintained its triple-A credit rating and our commitment to regulatory reform is a key part of that. Having cut our requirements by nearly half, we continue to focus on the quality and effectiveness of our remaining regulations to ensure they meet their intended outcomes.

In this report, you will sample the work we've done on your behalf over the past year, and the successes we've achieved. There is also a snapshot of our future efforts. Moving forward, we will continue to be recognized as a world leader in regulatory reform.

Over the coming year, we will continue our evolution through new policy development, strategic planning, maintaining the count and implementing any recommendations out of the Core Review process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Naomi Yamamoto'.

Honourable Naomi Yamamoto  
Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Shirley Bond'.

Honourable Shirley Bond  
Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training  
and Minister Responsible for Labour

# Our Goal

Our goal is to ensure that every single regulatory requirement in B.C. is necessary, meaningful and serves a purpose. We believe this is a key ingredient in facilitating job creation and innovation.

The Regulatory Reform Branch of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Ministry Responsible for Labour leads the Province's Regulatory Reform initiative. We are tasked with working across government to improve and streamline B.C.'s regulatory environment to support economic growth and job creation in the Province.

B.C.'s Regulatory Reform initiative promotes clear, simple, regulations and policies that make it easier for you - our citizens and businesses to deal with government. We are committed to enhancing the lives of all British Columbians by eliminating red tape. We are also working to minimize the time and cost required for citizens and small businesses to access government services and to comply with regulatory requirements.

This year we made improvements to benefit individuals such as implementing a new single-window access point for quick and efficient address changes for programs such as the Medical Services Plan, and shortening the application and approval process for securing licensed child care spaces. We've also improved services for non-profits by reducing the paperwork burden associated with applying for funding through the B.C. Arts Council. We reduced the backlog of mining Notice of Work permits and cut the wait time for approval by over 50 per cent. We've also reduced the burden on small businesses by implementing a new two-page Request for Proposal form to help vendors spend less time filling out paperwork and more time growing their business.

A streamlined regulatory environment will attract new investment in the Province. It will encourage growth and innovation in the business community, and result in new jobs that will benefit all British Columbians.

Since 2001, we have developed comprehensive strategies to improve regulatory systems in the following key areas:

## 1. Measuring Progress

How do we know if we are making a difference? In order to monitor our efforts we measure our impact and identify areas that still need work. We have put in place a running count of the total number of regulatory requirements in operation in our province to help us identify these priorities and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our regulatory environment.

## 2. Reducing Red Tape

We will ensure that all regulatory requirements are both necessary and easy to understand. We will work to make the time and cost of compliance reasonable and reduce duplication between the various levels of government. For the individual, this means fast and easy access to services. For businesses, this means simplified processes which save you time and money that can be reinvested in the growth of your business.

## 3. Improving Access to Government

The best relationship with your government is an interactive relationship with your government. We want information to flow freely and all requirements to be transparent and practical across all levels of government. We invite all members of the public and stakeholders groups to participate and provide feedback on our initiatives to help us improve the delivery of government services.

# Our Commitments

British Columbia's regulatory reform initiative began in 2001 with a commitment to reduce requirements and red tape through a number of key strategies. Along with the initiative, we committed to reporting the results of our actions as part of our promise to provide greater transparency and accountability. We are very pleased to report continuing and significant progress in our reform efforts for the fiscal year 2013/2014.

## Measuring Progress

We continually monitor the progress of our reform initiative. By keeping a running count of the number of regulatory requirements that affect British Columbians we can ensure that our efforts are paying dividends to you - our citizens and businesses.

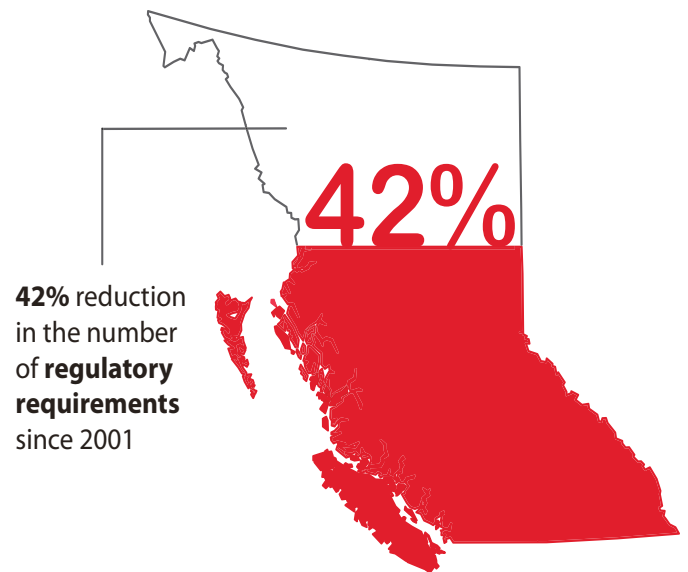
In 2001, we created an inventory of all of the regulatory requirements (including legislation, regulations, policy and forms) in effect in our province and committed to reduce that number by one third by the end of 2004. The [methodology for the count](#) requires that each ministry manually count each provision that states a business, citizen or the government must or will take some action or provide some information.

Our starting count was 360,295. By the end of 2004 we had successfully eliminated more than 130,000 requirements and had surpassed our initial goal with an overall reduction of 36 per cent!

However, our work was not finished. In 2004, we established a new baseline count of 228,941 and renewed our commitment to the public to work hard to continue to reduce that number.

By the end of fiscal year 2013/14, we have continued to hold the line on our requirements with our current count sitting at 9.8 per cent below the 2004 baseline; with a total number of 206,566 requirements.

This represents a total reduction of regulatory requirements of over 42 per cent since 2001. Having cut the number by almost half, we are now starting to focus efforts on options to assess the



nature and quality of those requirements to ensure they are meeting their intended outcomes. In this way we can ensure that the public needs are met or exceeded.

We also augmented our public reporting profile by publishing the [B.C. Regulatory Requirements Count](#) data on [DataBC](#). This allows the public to access and identify the number of requirements that exist under a particular ministry, statute or regulation, at any given time. We invite you to view our [Count Overview Report \(PDF\)](#) for a snapshot of how each ministry is progressing.

To ensure we don't increase the burden on citizens and businesses, we've imposed a cap known as the *Net Zero Increase Commitment*. This places a limit on the number of regulatory requirements that can be implemented. Under this policy, there can be no overall increase to the 2004 baseline count until 2015. Where a new requirement is necessary, an existing one must be eliminated.

In order to explore whether specific requirements, or sets thereof, are achieving the purpose for which they were introduced, we are looking at options for continued improvement. This includes the review and development of outcome-based performance specifications for provincial regulatory processes through consultation with other Canadian and international jurisdictions as well as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to determine best practices.

We've held online discussions with the business community in conjunction with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) to identify key red tape irritants and burdensome government processes to help inform our strategy moving forward. Our research has pointed to the opportunity for us to develop new performance specifications for provincial regulatory processes.

This new phase of regulatory reform will build on the successes of the past. We will renew our focus on reducing the administrative requirements asked of citizens and business in order to encourage economic growth.

## Reducing Red Tape

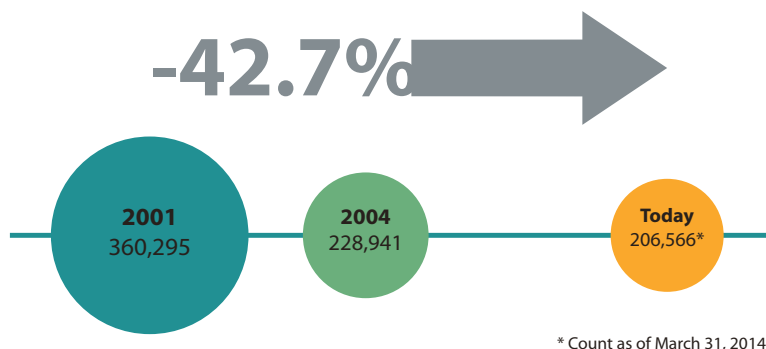
We recognize the burden that unnecessary red tape places on members of the public and on businesses. We understand that red tape can create confusion and increase the time required to access critical government services or increase the cost of doing business. We are committed to eliminating all such unnecessary burden.

The reduction of red tape streamlines and simplifies requirements and makes it easier and faster for you to deal with government. This benefits all British Columbians. That means fast and easy access to services and a precious savings of time and expenses.



CELEBRATING AN 'A' IN RED TAPE REDUCTION FOR THE 3RD YEAR IN A ROW

### OUR PROGRESS



\* Count as of March 31, 2014

The current [Regulatory Reform Policy](#) is based on the principles of smart regulation. This policy is our guide to the development of all new and amended legislation, regulations, policies and forms. The Regulatory Reform Policy ensures that all requirements put in place or left in place are necessary and that any potentially adverse effects on citizens or businesses are identified and addressed. This ensures that health, safety, and the environment, are protected well into the future.

We have implemented several initiatives that have proven to be successful with respect to improving access to government services and streamlining business processes. In many cases these initiatives have produced significant savings to government and positive service delivery improvements for our clients.



## How we're Simplifying Government Processes

Streamlining government processes is at the core of our red tape reduction initiatives. This compels us to review all government requirements and business processes from your point of view to ensure that we clearly understand what it looks like to interact with government from your perspective. We believe that we must understand your experience in order to improve your experience.

Each year, ministries identify specific business processes for review based on public feedback and internal evaluation. The ministries use contemporary technology, user interface tools and continuous improvement methodologies such as Lean and Business Process Redesign to examine the process from your perspective.

Lean and Business Process Redesign are a collection of principles, methods and tools that improve the speed and efficiency of processes by maximizing the delivery of services from the client's perspective and eliminating duplication waste.

### The processes chosen for review are those identified as:

- containing impediments for straightforward communication with government;
- having lengthy approval, permit, or licence turnaround times;
- requiring the completion of complex forms or applications;
- containing gaps in service delivery; and,
- duplicating efforts among federal, local and provincial governments.

### The proven results of those reviews are improvements such as:

- reduction in the time required for approvals or the completion of other processes;
- elimination of redundancies;
- creation of better online solutions and services;

- modernization of supporting technologies; and,
- reduction in the time spent and cost incurred by the public, business and government.

Since 2006, B.C. has completed over 200 streamlining projects, saving you time and money. In 2013, we commenced many more projects across the breadth of our government, all aimed at improving service delivery and creating greater internal efficiencies.

### Examples of streamlining projects initiated this past year across government include:

#### Child Care Licensing Regulation Review

As committed in the *BC Early Years Strategy*, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Children and Family Development are collaboratively conducting a line-by-line review of the *B.C. Child Care Licensing Regulation* which sets a minimum standard of broad base regulations to address the health, safety and well-being of children in a variety of child care settings and communities. The focus of this review is on identifying options for increasing access to licensed child care while maintaining health and safety standards.

#### Simplified Submissions for Assistance for Youth with Developmental Disabilities

The Ministry of Children and Family Development in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation improved the application process for families and guardianship workers looking to access assistance for children with developmental disabilities. The new process has removed the requirement to fill in a 23-page application form and cut down processing time by more than half.

#### Streamlined Adjudication Process for B.C. Arts Council Funding Programs

Fair and equitable treatment – that's the promise the B.C. Arts Council makes to every artist or organization applying for government support. To ensure the decision-making process maintains the

## 97% paper reduction in adjudication packages

highest standards, the Council uses a peer adjudication system to review funding applications. However, the administrative burden associated with this process created confusion and frustration for staff and their clients. A review of the process and its 39 funding programs was undertaken to increase customer satisfaction and reduce the time and effort for staff. The outcome was a 97 per cent reduction in the paper used for adjudication packages and a 40 to 60 per cent reduction in the time required to assemble the packages. This has sped up response times so applicants receive decisions sooner.

#### Consolidated Regulatory Database for the Insurance Industry

In partnership with the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators and Canadian Insurance Services Regulatory Organizations, the Financial Institutions Commission in the Ministry of Finance recently completed a streamlining project to reduce the time and steps required to find information about regulatory decisions for the insurance industry. The new online database will assist insurance companies, regulatory staff, and members of the public to find documents related to regulatory decisions more quickly – they no longer have to search out or contact multiple jurisdictions for the information. The documents are now available on a single online database, reducing search and retrieval times by up to 80 per cent.

*“Small business owners consistently rank cutting red tape as a top priority for government. CFIB salutes Premier Christy Clark for making red tape reduction an integral part of her government’s economic growth strategy.”*

**Laura Jones, Executive Vice-President,  
Canadian Federation of Independent Business**

## Modernized StudentAid BC

Modernizing StudentAid BC is a multi-year, multi-phase project focused on streamlining and transforming services for students and post-secondary institutions. Phase One will introduce new ways to engage with students and insti-

### ***New innovative online Student Dashboard***

tutions. It will improve the user experience by expanding online services to help students manage their student loans and reduce wait times. The process for accessing student aid in B.C. is now simpler. With the launch of the new Student Dashboard, students can now get an at-a-glance view of the activity on their account, including information on their student loan applications. In addition, students can get quick access to their message centre to review unread messages, update their student profiles, and track the amount of money they have borrowed in StudentAid BC loans, in just a few clicks. Future planned improvements will include a new Post-Secondary Partner Portal that will provide enhanced e-services to post-secondary institutions to speed up their access, decrease their workload, and ultimately reduce costs.

## Improved Civil Dispute Resolution Process

Work on the Civil Resolution Tribunal in the Ministry of Justice has been ongoing for several years and will be fully realized in Spring 2015. The new tribunal will redirect small claims and strata disputes from our overburdened court system and provide innovative online resolution services to resolve financial conflicts. Online intake and assessment, early resolution self-help tools, active case management, mediation and adjudication services will streamline processes, cut costs dramatically, and reduce wait times in the resolution of civil disputes. When it is fully implemented, this reform initiative will free up the judiciary to deal more effectively with a smaller caseload.

## Improved Extraordinary Load Permitting Process

Efficiencies were identified in the extraordinary load permitting process to help reduce wait times and improve communication with the trucking industry about how long their permit authorization may take. Interim outcomes include industry having access to approved weight/axle calculations to help inform their permit applications, thereby reducing the overall process evaluation and approval time. To date, the approval turnaround time for these permits has been reduced by over 60 per cent (from 7-9 days down to 2-4 days).

## Centralized Website for Address Changes

The Ministry of Technology, Innovation, and Citizens’ Services instituted a new centralized online [address change website](#). Residents of B.C. are now able to update their address with the Medical Services Plan and/or the Driver’s Licence Services division with the Insurance Corporation of B.C. in a single transaction. In addition, businesses and societies can notify participating federal, provincial and local government

### ***New centralized address change website***

programs of an address change in one convenient online service. By collaborating with partners, the B.C. government has simplified this process and effectively eliminated needless paperwork for multiple programs and services.

## Simplified Subdivision Approval Process

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has realized efficiencies for the application, review and approval of rural subdivisions. This will enhance economic growth by more effectively and efficiently allowing industry and developers to apply for and obtain a decision on whether to subdivide land. This past year, these initiatives have reduced wait times for applications by 17 per cent. The Ministry anticipates that further streamlining over the next year will reduce wait times by an additional 10 per cent and reduce the number of steps in the application process by 35 per cent.

## Enhanced Economic and Trade Agreement

In October 2013, Canada and the European Union (EU) announced an agreement-in-principle on a comprehensive trade agreement to significantly boost trade, labour mobility, and investment ties between Canada and the EU. When it comes into force, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will eliminate tariffs on almost all of B.C.'s key exports and provide our B.C. businesses with access to new opportunities in the EU market. With CETA, Canada will be the only G-8 country in the world to have access to the world's two largest markets, the EU and the United States - giving you access to the world's most affluent consumers.

## Modernized Wills, Estates and Succession Act

The new *Wills, Estates and Succession Legislation* combined seven acts into one, modernized the law to provide greater certainty for individuals who put their last wishes into writing and simplified the process for those responsible for distributing an estate. The change resulted directly from public and professional input in the private sector.

### Among its benefits, the Act:

- clarifies the process of inheritance when a person dies without leaving a will;
- makes the process easier for a person to transfer the title of their spousal home when their spouse dies;
- clearly outlines the sequence in which to look for heirs to a person's estate;
- provides the courts with more latitude to ensure a deceased person's last wishes will be respected;
- clarifies obligations relating to property inheritance in the context of Nisga'a and Treaty First Nation lands; and,
- lowers the minimum age at which a person can make a will from 19 to 16 years old.

Over time, the combined effect of many of these streamlining projects will significantly reduce the overall regulatory burden in British Columbia. Our government is working to identify areas in which bold innovations to provide new and upgraded services will be put into effect in the immediate future. These innovations will be based on the current and future needs of British Columbians.

harmonized  
integrated

modern

# Improving Access to Government

To respond to both demographic challenges and demand for improved and more efficient service delivery, government must leverage technological solutions to transform the way it does business in our province.

We want British Columbia to have the most citizen-centred government possible. This means easy access to programs and services and an efficient and effective system of consultation and feedback across the board.

In order to ensure that the individuals and families of our province and the businesses operating here will continue to thrive and prosper, we are building and redesigning programs that focus on public consultation and feedback. This will further facilitate the streamlining of government processes and the tailoring of those processes to the needs of our communities. A modern regulatory environment is one in which all stakeholders participate in finding reasonable solutions to everyday issues.

## ***We want British Columbia to have the most citizen-centred government possible.***

The Province of British Columbia was the first in Canada to implement an open data strategy that allows every member of the public free access to online government data on such topics as carbon emissions, high school graduation rates, major natural resource sector projects and other statistical information.

In order to secure citizen engagement and foster a collaborative relationship with the public, we invite you to participate in consultation processes on [GovTogetherBC](#), a public website that brings public engagement opportunities from across government to your home. Our province won accolades from both the Stratford Institute and the Institute of Public Administration as well as a Government Technology Exhibition and Conference award for leadership in open government and online government services.

We have posted literally thousands of provincial government data sets to the [DataBC](#) online catalogue in order to keep you in the loop. We also post data from our [Regulatory Requirements Count](#) on DataBC for your consideration.

## **Other achievements in open government for 2013 include:**

- The BCBizchat Twitter Town Halls allowed more than 35,000 members of the public to participate in community meetings and surveys to create the [B.C. Small Business Accord](#). The B.C. Small Business Accord forum, made up of 15 business owners/operators from various regions and sectors around B.C. used the feedback from the consultation process to finalize the Accord principles and establish action items for the provincial government. The Accord has met with tremendous success and commendation from small businesses in our province.
- Completing the revitalization and modernization of the *Limitation Act*. The act governs the time people or businesses have to take legal action for civil damages or personal injuries. The Ministry met with more than three hundred consumer groups, businesses, legal and health care professionals for input before putting in force legislation that resolved the confusion and eliminated the complexity of the uncertain combination of previous outdated laws.

We're also continuing to remove barriers and burden imposed by multiple levels of government by continuing to promote Mobile Business Licences (MBL) and BizPaL in an effort to streamline services for businesses across all levels of government.

MBL is a partnership between provincial and municipal governments. It is designed to cut through red tape by allowing businesses that operate across multiple municipalities to purchase one business licence.

This year, we implemented four new MBL agreements, expanding the program into 23 communities in the Lower Mainland region and on Vancouver Island. There are now 10 MBL agreements involving a total of 69 communities in place in the province.

BizPaL is a web-based tool that makes it easier and faster for business to identify federal, provincial and local government permit and licence requirements to start a business in a specific location.

The BizPaL tool is now available in 113 local governments across B.C., representing 87 per cent of the population coverage in our province. This year, we will continue to work with Industry Canada and local governments to continue to improve and expand the service. The target is to have 90 per cent of our population covered by BizPaL by 2017.

# Modernizing Our Approach

What worked in the past does not always work today. Effective government must be alert to changes in technology and social values in order for us to evolve and stay in tune with progress and keep pace with businesses. In B.C. we are committed to continually reviewing our programs and services to modernize the way we do business.

## Core Review

In January 2013, the Province of B.C. committed to undertaking a government-wide core review to evaluate all provincial programs and services. Ministers are being tasked with finding ways to be smarter with less money by reducing duplication and identifying programs that can be restructured to reduce costs and improve outcomes for the public.

**A key element of the core review is to ensure that government is operating as efficiently and effectively as possible by:**

- eliminating overlap and duplication between ministries and within the broader public sector;
- reducing red-tape and unnecessary regulations that hinder economic development; and,
- restructuring government program delivery and governance models where costs can be reduced and outcomes improved for the public.

The Cabinet Working Group for Core Review expects to complete targeted industry and stakeholder consultations and provide recommendations and a final report on the process by December 31, 2014.

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*"We intend to leave no stone unturned. We know government has already done a good job of managing costs, but we also know more can always be done. This review is about putting the taxpayer and families at the forefront of our decision-making process."*

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Bill Bennett  
Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister  
Responsible for Core Review





# Cutting Red Tape for Small Business

During Red Tape Awareness Week in January, 2013, the Province committed to a joint review with the CFIB to identify five specific things government could do to reduce red tape.

The Province, in partnership with the Canadian Federation for Independent Business (CFIB) hosted a Twitter Town Hall, which provided an opportunity to engage members of the B.C. business community. Participants discussed barriers to small business, challenges with government services and processes and possible means for improvement. In addition, government and CFIB reached out to individual small business owners and other stakeholders through online surveys to generate further ideas.

Contributors included members from the small business community in B.C., the CFIB, B.C. Chambers of Commerce, and members of the Small Business Roundtable, Business in Vancouver, Small Business B.C., Women's Enterprise Network and representatives from various municipalities across the Province.

During the conversation, businesses identified several key issues for government's attention. These included: simplifying government language and forms; making more services available online; and, working with municipalities to integrate and streamline cross-government processes.



MINISTER YAMAMOTO PARTICIPATING IN THE #BCBizCHAT

After working with the CFIB and consulting the small business community, the following five projects were identified to further reduce red tape this year:

1. **Regulatory Reform Refresh**
2. **New Two-Page RFP**
3. **How to Start a Restaurant in B.C. Initiative**
4. **WorksafeBC Strategy**
5. **Citizen Centred Web Services**

## 1. Regulatory Reform Refresh

For many years, jurisdictions within Canada and beyond have looked to our example of how to conduct regulatory reform, and in many cases, emulated our approach. B.C. has provided nationally and internationally recognized leadership in the process of regulatory reform. This year, we received our third consecutive 'A' grade from the CFIB for our work on regulatory reform - the only province in Canada to ever receive this grade. This represents objective confirmation that we are moving in the right direction.

As noted earlier, we have enjoyed a 42 per cent reduction in regulatory requirements since 2001 and will maintain our goal of a net zero increase through to 2015. While the B.C. track record is excellent, we are not prepared to rest on our laurels. Reducing red tape and unnecessary regulations is critical to ensuring continued economic development and job creation in B.C. The business community relies on a modern and efficient regulatory environment that continues to evolve and keep pace with business.

Therefore, in concert with the recommendations of Core Review, the regulatory reform refresh will develop a plan to upgrade the way government is tackling regulatory reform and to ensure B.C. remains a national and global leader in that field. This is an opportune time to reconsider the question of what more can be done to support business and citizens, beyond the quantitative reduction in regulatory requirements achieved to date.

balanced  
streamlined  
easy  
electronic  
data  
remove  
results  
open  
save time  
simplify

## 2. New Two-Page RFP

Many small businesses in British Columbia do business with government by answering a Request for Proposal (RFP). An RFP is a document published on [BCBid](#) seeking independent contractors to deliver goods or services to the Province. Our government posts approximately 300 RFPs to BCBid each year.

The previous rules required that a proposal (an answer to an RFP) was typically around 18-pages long but could be upwards of 80 to hundreds of pages in length.

To reduce this burdensome and difficult process we have launched a two-page, short-form request for proposals (SRFP) making it easier for small businesses to sell to government.

The short form will be used for government opportunities valued at less than \$250,000. The change streamlines the request for proposals process, making it easier for small businesses to apply and compete for work. The SRFP is one of several measures announced in 2013 to increase small businesses' participation in government procurement opportunities.

The two-page form was developed through extensive consultations - 14 sessions with 273 vendors and public sector staff during Fall 2013. Several ministries ran pilot programs for the short form RFP in January and February of 2014 with positive results.

The simplified two-page form delivers on a B.C. Small Business Accord commitment to reduce barriers to government's procurement process. The form also aligns with a recommendation to streamline procurement processes and templates, as outlined in the report [Doing Business with Government Project](#), released by the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training in March 2014.

### Benefits of the new two-page form include:

- reduction in the amount of time required to manage the request for proposals process overall; and,
- the use of a smart form - a fillable online PDF document - that provides consistency for vendors and ministries. This includes better alignment between what is being asked for, and what is being evaluated.

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*"When it comes to landing contracts, B.C.'s small businesses simply don't have the time for lengthy, complex processes. That's why this easy-to-use short-form RFP process is such a win for our business community. We encourage government to maintain momentum in delivering on the Small Business Accord, as we collectively strive to make B.C. the most small business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada."*

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John Winter, President and CEO,  
B.C. Chamber of Commerce

*"We have embarked on a unique pilot program between the Provincial Government and several municipalities to develop a much more streamlined and simplified regulatory process for new and existing restaurants. This model pilot program will serve as a blueprint for other industries. This will result in business reducing time and cost associated with operating their business. Great leadership by the Provincial Government."*

**Ian Tostenson, President and CEO  
B.C. Restaurant and Foodservices Association**

### 3. How to Start a Restaurant in B.C. Initiative

The restaurant and food services sector is heavily regulated in B.C., primarily to protect health and safety, but also because of the need for restaurant owners to work with multiple government authorities. For restaurants, the task of complying with the applicable laws and regulations can be complex and time consuming.



The B.C. Restaurant and Foodservices Association (BCRFA) and the Regulatory Reform Branch (RRB) in partnership with key agencies are looking at the start-up process to address the challenges of opening and maintaining a restaurant in British Columbia. Over the past decade, efforts have been made at all levels of government to streamline business services. However, there is still a lack of consistent and easy-to-access information about the requirements for entrepreneurs looking to open a restaurant.

The goal is to work closely with industry and identify opportunities to reduce the delay in opening a restaurant that can be caused by government processes and requirements. The solution includes the design and implementation of an online roadmap that clearly explains the process and what to expect when starting or maintaining a restaurant in B.C. This will save new restaurant businesses time and money. A set of recommendations to improve overall service delivery for the sector will also be generated and explored in order to create a more customized experience for restaurateurs.

This year the BCRFA and the RRB began research and consultations with key government and industry partners to identify all administrative challenges for the restaurant and foodservices sector, including the specific requirements for three pilots in Kelowna, Victoria and the City of North Vancouver. Findings from the research will be used to inform the development of the online roadmap.



## 4. WorkSafeBC Strategy

WorkSafeBC supports more than 220,000 employers. About 90 per cent of the employers are small or very small (20 employees or fewer), and 63 per cent of employers are micro businesses (0 to 3 employees). The challenge for small employers is that they must comply with WorkSafeBC regulations and submit their WorkSafeBC premiums but do not have the time or resources to navigate the extensive information available on the WorkSafeBC website and other materials.

In alignment with their corporate customer service strategy, WorkSafeBC has committed to developing a small business strategy with the goal of improving services, product offerings, and simplifying resources available for small employers. In order to understand and meet the needs of small businesses, WorkSafeBC has undertaken considerable research into the needs, wants and current perceptions of small business employers.

The results indicated a need to update the current correspondence materials including the WorkSafeBC welcome letter and website to provide clear, plain language information and resources, improve formatting consistency and change the tone of the language to communicate in a more understandable manner with employers.

In response, WorkSafeBC has revamped some of their forms and letters and is in the process of redesigning their website to improve public and business service delivery.



### Updates to the website will include services that:

- help visitors to the website accomplish their goals with minimal time and resources;
- increase the use of the web and mobile apps as communication and business channels;
- streamline services available to small businesses;
- provide an user-friendly online experience; and,
- promote the importance of workplace health and safety.

The new, more contemporary, and easy to use website, is being informed by extensive user research. The goal is to be more customer oriented and more focused on specific user needs.

less paperwork

reduce  
affordable  
fast  
efficient  
modern  
user friendly  
accessible  
save money  
re-design  
results  
online

## 5. Citizen Centred Web Services

Whether shopping, banking, learning or communicating, the digital world has changed how you - our citizens - expect to find, access and use information.

Our province has been part of this change for several years and was recognized as the leading e-government jurisdiction in Canada. In July 2011, our government launched the Internet Strategy, a new approach to improving government's online presence to improve your experience accessing digital services and information.

But there is more to be done. Government is moving toward a consolidated, coherent and cost-effective online presence over the next three years. In Fall 2013, Ministries were directed to accelerate their efforts on the Internet Strategy towards collapsing their websites and bringing web content under a single brand and domain. Already ministries have identified several hundred unnecessary domains that have since been retired. Now ministries are taking action to evaluate their information, ensure it is of a high quality and moving it to the main [Province of British Columbia website](#).

Over the coming year, we will continue to work towards a web presence that will:

- Be accessible and available to all citizens;
- Be recognized as a trusted and reliable source of information;
- Provide a consistent, citizen-centred user experience; and,
- Eliminate redundancies, out of date information and increase efficiencies for government.

As a result, government will offer a high-quality experience for citizens and businesses - providing access to timely and relevant information.



# open simple

*"The Small Business Accord shines a light that for businesses to exist, government policy developers and decision-makers are tasked to create an environment that sustains business growth. Generating business opportunities is not the problem; however, maintaining the strength of a company as the business grows must be addressed by all levels of government for communities to enjoy the full benefits of the entrepreneurial spirit. It's our duty to build on the foundation of the Accord, make it significant, so that existing and future generations of British Columbia's entrepreneurs can establish themselves, creating new jobs in a new age of prosperity."*

**John Cameron, Rock Solid Business Coaching, SBRT Member**



## Small Business Accord

The [B.C. Small Business Accord](#) was launched in October 2012. The intent was to develop a set of principles to guide government interactions with small business owners and identify specific actions to reduce the complexity of interaction between small business and government.

Since the Accord was released, we have made significant progress in initiating or completing six specific deliverables which include:

- developing a Small Business Awareness Strategy to promote B.C. small businesses, including the creation of a [video](#) and [new website](#) highlighting small business success stories and resources;
- creating the "Open for Business" award in 2013 and providing \$10,000 awards to seven communities who best demonstrated they are operating within the spirit of the B.C. Small Business Accord principles;
- reducing barriers to government's procurement process by updating resources to help clarify the procurement process, consulting with small businesses to inform the recommendations outlined in the [Doing Business with Government Report](#), as well as reducing the paper work burden by creating a new two-page Request for Proposal form;
- raising awareness of small business mentorship programs with the development of the new [MentorshipBC](#) tool to help business owners find mentor programs so they can grow and expand their business; and,
- launching a pilot mobile trainers program focused on succession planning in remote communities to respond to recommendations from the [Small Business Roundtable](#).

# B.C. Liquor Policy Review

B.C.'s liquor industry produces approximately a billion dollars in revenue each year. Including indirect revenue, the value to the economy and government is estimated to be two billion dollars. More than 126,000 people work in industries related to liquor distribution in our province and more than 800,000 visitors spend money on liquor or liquor related services in B.C. on an annual basis.



The *Liquor Control and Licensing Act* governs activities related to the manufacture, sale and consumption of liquor in British Columbia. In recent years, the public has

indicated a desire to change some of the regulatory requirements associated with the liquor industry.

Government is listening. We have responded to that interest by commissioning a review of our liquor-related policies. In November 2013, the Parliamentary Secretary for Liquor Policy Reform presented the results to government.

The Liquor Policy Review was supported by an extraordinary response to requests for public input. The committee held 65 stakeholder meetings and received 4,364 online comments from the public. There were also 3,587 emails and 41,195 ratings submitted by citizens and public interest groups. Over a period of 87 days, there were more than 76,000 visits to the [Liquor Policy Review website](#).

In all, the Review made 73 recommendations for change. Our government adopted all 73 recommendations as relevant and appropriate and went to work to implement the changes.

A complete re-write of the *Liquor Control and Licensing Act* is planned for the Spring of 2015. In the meantime, we are adopting a phased-in approach to modernizing the legislation. The first step is to introduce amendments, modernize

outdated provisions and reform the current Act, which will allow for faster implementation of key recommendations.

There are 15 recommendations on which changes will begin immediately. These changes permit liquor manufacturers to sell their products at farmers' markets, provide the opportunity for consumers to purchase and take home liquor they have sampled at liquor tasting festivals, and will allow bars and restaurants to offer happy hour pricing subject to a minimum price. A timeline for implementation of the remaining recommendations will be announced in the near future.

The changes in the regulations will also allow hosts to serve homemade beer or wine at private events (e.g. weddings, family reunions), and after careful consideration of public safety concerns, allow the Ministry to implement a retail model that meets consumer demands for more convenience by permitting the sale of liquor in grocery stores.

More details on the recommendations can be obtained in the [B.C. Liquor Policy Review Final Report](#).

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*"The government listened and acted on the many recommendations our industry had with respect to modernizing liquor. As an owner of a new business in Cranbrook B.C., the common sense planned changes will make it easier and less costly to operate."*

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Heidi Romish  
Owner, Heid Out Restaurant and Brewhouse  
Chair, British Columbia Restaurant and Foodservices Association



# Modernizing B.C.'s Building Code

Our building regulatory system oversees a construction sector that accounts for over four per cent of provincial GDP and four per cent of provincial employment. The Building Code, which establishes minimum standards for building construction, is currently administered by 140 local building departments.

The building regulatory system has been the subject of several major reviews over the past 25 years. While these reviews have led to more accountability for complex building design and construction on the part of architects and engineers and better protection for homeowners, some major issues have not been resolved.

*"A uniform building code is needed for a number of reasons including ease of administering, less confusion for contractors resulting in better built homes."*

Local Government  
Administrator

**In 2011, government began consultation with various stakeholders and the public to re-examine issues in the system. The following areas of concern were identified:**

- inconsistent code interpretations among jurisdictions;
- local building standards that go beyond the code;
- lack of centralized decision-making;
- poor compliance with code provisions; and,
- lack of knowledge about the code among stakeholders.

Based on what we heard, the Building and Safety Standards Branch of the Office of Housing and Construction Standards is leading a multi-year initiative to modernize the building regulatory system and improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

**It aims to put in place:**

- a uniform Building Code, to give the Province sole authority to adopt building standards and ensure that standards are substantially the same throughout B.C.;
- technical bulletins and binding interpretations (directives), on topics of concern to code users, to help reduce inconsistent interpretations among jurisdictions;
- assessments of complex buildings under construction, to provide data on levels of code compliance as a basis for making changes to improve safety and increase efficiency;
- minimum qualification requirements for residential builders of four units or less and for building officials, to improve competency and code knowledge among these groups; and,
- the appointment of a stakeholder advisory body including construction sector and local government representatives, to advise on matters related to the building regulatory system.

The Office of Housing and Construction Standards' commitment to uniformity includes reviewing the new accessibility standards in the model National Building Code upon which the BC Building Code is based. With the next NBC release in 2015, Office of Housing and Construction Standards will review and manage the process to update the BC Building Code.



# Integrated Decision Making in the Natural Resource Sector

The Natural Resource Sector (NRS) represents one of the largest and most complex sectors in government. Relevant ministries include: Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Agriculture, Energy and Mines, Environment, Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Natural Gas Development. Each ministry has its own specific mission and goals, and collectively the NRS works together to oversee activities in the mining, oil, gas, electricity, forestry, agriculture, tourism and recreation sectors that span roughly 94 per cent of the Province's land base.

Coordination between these ministries and their various regulatory functions presents many unique challenges. That is why the Province of B.C. is looking at ways to improve its capabilities in the NRS to ensure that British Columbia's land base is managed in a coordinated, integrated and seamless way. This requires all of its natural resource ministries to work together to plan and deliver services and to streamline decisions to support economic development, while at the same time ensuring that essential environmental standards are maintained and cultural values are protected.

***We've reduced the mining Notice of Work authorization backlog by 90%.***

Work is currently underway to further enhance the public and industry's interactions with government in the NRS. One example of positive progress within the Sector to realize efficiencies through business process streamlining, regulatory change, and increased attention is the Notice of Work authorization backlog that has been reduced by 90 per cent over the past two years and the wait time for approval has been cut from an average of 110 days to 58 days.

**Additional upcoming improvements in the near future will include:**

- new online applications where proponents can view and track their applications for select priority authorizations;
- online advertising for projects so the public can learn more about and provide comments on proposed projects;
- higher quality, more integrated information to help decision makers make better, more durable decisions; and,
- an interactive online map that proponents and the public can use to get more integrated information on the land base.

**Given the size and complexity of the sector, there is still more work to be done to achieve the broader NRS integrated vision and ultimately enable a future where:**

- authorizations process will be predictable, coordinated, and timely with clear expectations and requirements;
- clients and proponents will be better able to estimate the length of time to decision, which will increase investment in B.C.;
- service from the NRS will be more timely and responsive, with greater online self-service opportunities;
- clients will be able to track natural resource projects online over the entire project lifecycle;
- NRS data and information will be accessible and transparent; and,
- regional, national and international investment in natural resource projects and job creation in B.C. will be stimulated.

Transforming the NRS by further integrating natural resource activities and approvals will benefit all British Columbians, resulting in greater process efficiencies, more effective management of our natural resources and increased investment and job creation in the province.

# Going Forward

As the Government of British Columbia forges ahead with our regulatory reform efforts, we will continue to streamline and simplify necessary government process, provide open and accountable government and public engagement, and further reduce the red tape that you experience on your way to accessing public services or initiating business activities.

Taking regulatory reform to the next level, we will ensure that regulatory requirements and processes are user-friendly and streamlined for business applications. B.C. will continue to monitor the regulatory regimes of competing jurisdictions to ensure that we maintain a competitive edge. We will look at more advanced ways of tracking the progress of our regulatory reform initiatives with tools that measure more accurately the time and money invested/saved in completing forms and application processes.

The regulatory reform refresh will develop a plan, in concert with Core Review recommendations, to further support these goals and to ensure B.C. remains a national and global leader in regulatory reform. Our regulatory environment will anticipate the changing needs of the public. This is an opportune time to reconsider the question of what more can be done to support our individual and corporate citizens.

## Our list of commitments for this coming year include:

- Maintaining the **Count and Net Zero Commitment**. This requires managing the corporate database, meeting *Regulatory Reporting Act* requirements and regular cross-government monitoring and liaison.
- Reducing burden with **Continuous Improvement, Best Practices Monitoring and Jurisdictional Research**. This requires continual streamlining and simplifying of government processes, analysis, research, and engagement with international bodies to identify best practices and tools to assist in streamlining.
- Continuing our evolution through **New Policy Development, Strategic Planning and Implementing any Core Review Recommendations**. We will undertake a regulatory reform refresh, analysis and outreach work to build a modernized regulatory reform agenda and supporting policy on Regulatory Reform.
- Partnering on the annual **Red Tape Awareness Week**. We will continue to partner with CFIB on the development and implementation of next year's annual Red Tape Awareness Week. This will produce greater knowledge of small business needs in our effort to identify and address regulatory challenges that impact the business community.

The Government of British Columbia highly values regulatory reform as a priority of leadership for our province. And these priorities extend beyond our borders, as many provinces and countries aim for regulatory reform in support of greater economic development. We will act on our promises and aggressively strive toward our goals.

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*A streamlined  
regulatory environment  
attracts new investments  
to the province and  
encourages growth and  
innovation, creating  
new jobs for the benefit  
of all British Columbians.*

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harmonized  
integrated

modern



less paperwork

reduce  
affordable  
online  
efficient  
modern  
user friendly  
results  
re-design

accessible

fast  
save  
money



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