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March 12, 2015

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Ms. Lisa Lapointe, Chief Coroner
Ministry of Justice
Office of the Chief Coroner
Metrotower II Suite 800 - 4720 Kingsway
Burnaby BC V5H 4N2

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CORONER

RE: Child Death Review Panel and Recommendations

Dear Chief Coroner Lapointe:

The child death review on young driver deaths from 2004 to 2013 was important work on an issue that has had tragic consequences for too many youth in the province. I want to thank you and the panel participants for dedicating your time and expertise towards the goal of reducing young driver deaths in this province. I also appreciate the opportunity to have representatives from our Road Safety and Driver Licensing departments provide insight into the issue as members of the child death review panel.

The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) will work collaboratively with the Coroner's Service and our other partners to respond to recommendations related to the Graduated Licensing Program and distracted driving by young drivers to help keep them safe on our roads.

With respect to the recommendation to review the Graduated Licensing Program, we are committed to putting safe new drivers on the road. The program was introduced in 1998 to help ensure new drivers gain the driving skills and experience they need in a more controlled, lower risk environment. Enhancements made to the program in 2003 resulted in 28 per cent fewer crashes involving new drivers and at least 31 saved lives. We will look for opportunities to further improve the program's effectiveness, including consulting with young drivers and their parents and guardians.

Regarding the recommendation to contribute to the knowledge base of distracted driving of young drivers, we know that car crashes remain the number one preventable cause of death for youth in British Columbia. Distracted driving is a leading factor in youth crashes resulting in injuries or death. Contributing factors for fatal crashes in British Columbia come from police reports and are not determined by ICBC. There are more than 60 contributing factors - including distraction - that police can assign when completing crash reports. There are different ways for us to understand how widespread distracted driving is. We will work with our partners to improve the collection of distracted driving data, including the use of roadside observational studies, surveys and information gathered from non-fatal crashes.

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We are also committed to continue publicly reporting on distracted driving. Since the inception of distracted driving laws in British Columbia five years ago, there have been eight joint police-government-ICBC distracted driving campaigns to help prevent crashes due to distracted driving in British Columbia. We have also featured the issue prominently in tactics aimed at young drivers, including the road safety curriculum materials we provide free of charge to teachers.

ICBC will work with our partners to continue to look for new ways to educate drivers, including young drivers, about the dangers of distracted driving with the goal of preventing crashes and deaths on British Columbia roads.

Once again, thank you for helping advance the important work of reducing young driver deaths in British Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Blucher", is positioned above the typed name and title.

Mark Blucher
President and CEO

M245865