October 19, Premier Harcourt announced the acceleration of the Vancouver Island Highway Project and unveiled a six-year, $1.066 billion construction schedule to a cheering crowd of Campbell River residents, politicians and Island media. He was joined by our Minister Jackie Pemint, Island MLAs, and Employment and Investment Minister Glen Clark, who is responsible for BC 21 and the Transportation Financing Authority.

"Successive governments have promised to pursue such a project," said Harcourt. "Some even went so far as to announce it ... but without the financial commitment to see it through. We make that commitment today.

Funding for the project will be managed by BC 21’s Transportation Financing Authority. Current revenue sources from a one-cent-a-litre fuel tax and a fee on rental vehicles will support financing for the first three years. A long-term transportation plan for the province is now being developed by the Authority to identify funding for the rest of the project as well as other transportation projects around the province – including highways.

Acceleration of the project means, in three years, major sections of the route will be completed: the Campbell River Bypass, a new inland route Parksville to Mud Bay, the Nanaimo Parkway and widening to four lanes between Goldstream Park and Nanaimo. By 1999 the entire project will be completed. (See page 5 for project scope).

An hour and a quarter will be shaved off driving time between Victoria and Campbell River, and an estimated 500 lives could be saved and 4,000 injuries prevented over 25 years.

Over 15,000 person-years of employment will be created by the project. The big plus: more local suppliers will be used and local jobs and training opportunities created. It’s all part of the BC 21 multi-year action plan to expand the economy in every region of the province.
Introducing the Motor Vehicle Branch

The Motor Vehicle Branch (MVB) promotes the safe and efficient movement of people and resources within the provincial transportation system. MVB, along with other responsibilities:

- sets driver standards and licenses drivers by class
- regulates and licenses motor carriers
- administers enforcement and compliance programs and
- levies and collects fees and fines

Steve Rumsey is the Assistant Deputy Minister of the MVB and a member of the branch's Management Committee, which also includes the directors of the following departments.

Operations Division, Craig Morris, Executive Director

Operations is the largest division and has the overall responsibility for delivery of all MVB services. This division oversees all regional operations and specialized head office functions. It operates licensing and driving examination offices in 34 locations and services smaller communities through the traveling examiner program. It also operates 36 permanent weigh scales and 22 portable patrol units throughout the province. Overall, Operations Division provides over 160 service points in B.C.

This division is also responsible for the Commercial Transport Inspection Department, Motor Carrier Department and the Motor Vehicle Emissions and Inspections Maintenance Program (AirCare).

MVB Regional Structure

MVB has four regions; a provincial network of Driver Services Centers (formerly called Motor License Offices), Appointed Agents and Government Agents; the Motor Carrier Department in Burnaby; and the Motor Vehicle Emissions Inspection and Maintenance Department (AirCare) in the Lower Mainland. The branch also administers the Drinking Counter-Attack Program and all provincial violation tickets.
Management Services Division, Brian Sibley, Director

This division provides a broad range of administrative support services to the branch and its four regions—specifically: financial services, including budgeting, accounts payable, revenue administration, financial analyses, administration of fines as well as facilities administration, telecommunications services, traffic accident reports, data entry and ticket reviews.

Policy and Program Development Division, Mark Medgyesi, Executive Director

The Policy and Program Development Division is responsible for overall policy and program research, analysis, development and evaluation. The program focuses on legislation, legislative policy, driver/vehicle licensing and examination standards, safety control programs, commercial transport policy, technical training and public awareness and education. This division is also responsible for the Drinking Driving CounterAttack Program.

Planning and Corporate Development Division, Drew Ritchie, Director

This division is responsible for the overall strategic planning and corporate development for the branch. Specific responsibilities include developing short and long-term strategic plans, human resource planning and development (including staff training), personnel, management information systems, freedom of information, communications, ministerial and branch correspondence and special projects.

Information Technology Division, Karen Dellert, Director

Information Technology Division provides business solutions which support MVB goals through the delivery of information technology products and services. This division provides development, maintenance and enhancements to various applications including Driver Licensing, Automated Vehicle Inspection and Motor Carrier Licensing. In addition, the Division supports projects including Vehicle Emissions Inspection (AirCare), Revenue Management, and the Driver Examination Appointment System.

MVB Strategic Planning Status

Strategic Planning is the process by which guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop plans and actions needed to achieve that future.

In the last two years, MVB has changed its corporate philosophy from a bureaucratic organization to a more mission-driven model that emphasizes planning, customer service and the need to involve staff at all levels of decision making.

In late 1992, senior management initiated strategic planning by communicating their intent to staff and committing the necessary resources. A four-phased approach was undertaken to develop short and long-term strategic plans for MVB. The proposed planning cycle schedule was tied to the ministry budget cycle.

Current Status: The MVB Management Committee has come up with drafts of the MVB mission, vision, values and strategic priorities and is developing strategic goals and specific operational actions within each of the strategic priorities. The drafts of the mission, vision, values and strategic priorities will be communicated to branch employees for feedback and suggestions. This feedback will be reviewed by the MVB Management Committee and any necessary changes will be made to these drafts. The final products will be distributed to all MVB employees.

Impact of Merger with MoTH

When the move back to MoTH was announced, many head office staff were heard saying, “Here we go again!” Others were joking that they had purposely saved old MoTH letterhead for this occasion. The general consensus is that most people are happy to be “back in the fold” and look forward to renewing old acquaintances and contacts and creating new ones.

The Branch's 769 FTEs now give the ministry an FTE count of over 3,500. MoTH is still the fifth largest ministry in terms of FTEs; however, the Ministry of Attorney General has fallen from first into second place now, behind the Ministry of Health.

MoTH has added over $300 million to its revenue base as a result of the merger, making it one of the larger B.C.-sourced revenue generating ministries. Branch revenues come from vehicle licenses and permits via ICBC, as well as commercial transport activities, tickets for moving violations, various driver licensing activities and AirCare.

MVB, under the Ministries of Attorney and Solicitor General, is the equivalent of a “department” in MoTH. We are waiting to see if the switch to a departmental status is made.

One of the fundamental differences in MVB compared to the rest of MoTH, is that most of MoTH appears to be project driven, while the MVB has developed a very customer-focused business approach. While this poses no problem conceptually, there are a few growing pains expected in the pickup of MVB’s financial systems into the ministry proper.
The Highways Side of MoTH

The ministry's road system consists of approximately 42,000 kilometres of roads, 2,700 bridges, 20 tunnels and snowsheds and 17 inland ferry routes.

To ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and resources on this system, the ministry has four distinct programs:

- day-to-day maintenance such as snow clearing, brush and culvert clearing, pothole repairs and litter pick-up;
- rehabilitation, to extend the life of roads and bridges;
- capital construction, to add on to or enhance the existing system by widening or realigning highway corridors; and
- planning, to identify needed improvements for the future.

In 1988, road and bridge maintenance was privatized in British Columbia. Twenty-eight private-sector contractors are responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of provincial highways. However, about 140 area managers work from highways district offices to monitor the work of private contractors and ensure compliance with strict, written ministry standards.

Highways Operations Department, ADM, Dan Doyle

This is the largest department in terms of programs, personnel and budget allocation. It comprises the Professional Services Division at headquarters in Victoria and six regional and 26 district offices as well as the Aboriginal Issues Project. This special project was created in November 1992 with a mandate to focus on establishing ministry direction and support services for Aboriginal issues.

Professional Services includes:

- Construction Engineering, which sets standards and manages construction contracts;
- Highway Engineering, which develops standards for design, construction and management of highway and electrical systems projects;
- Bridge Engineering, which does as above for bridge projects;
- Geotechnical and Materials Engineering, which includes analysis and design for roadway structural components (such as pavement, bridge foundations, etc.), all-terrain data and soil profiles; rock-slope stabilization program;
- Highways Maintenance, which develops maintenance work and management standards, the centreline marking program, and the avalanche control program;
- Marine Branch, which is responsible for operation of the 17 freshwater ferries;
- Highway Safety, which identifies and works to address accident-prone locations;
- Highway Environment, which develops standards for roadside development and measures to lessen impact of road construction on the environment; and
- Properties Branch, land negotiations and acquisition, plus the gravel management program.
**Planning and Major Projects Department**

This department, as its name suggests, is responsible for all highways planning systems and policies, as well as the management and development of major projects such as the Vancouver Island Highway Project (see below for a list of major projects in the province.) Planning services include:

- Highway Planning, to identify highway improvements needed to ensure a multi-modal, safe and efficient provincial transportation system. Municipal Programs – which cost shares projects on bridges and secondary highways within municipalities – falls under this branch;
- Planning Services, which provides analysis and research services, and graphic support materials; and
- Policy Section, which works with other agencies to review and develop policies to improve the operation and co-ordination of transportation systems (i.e., Resource Roads Policy, National Highway Policy, etc.).

**Major Projects**

**Vancouver Island Highway** – (See front page.) This project is to be completed by 1999. It involves a new 120-kilometre inland route from Campbell River to Parksville; a new 20 kilometre parkway through Nanaimo; upgrading the existing highway between Nanaimo and Goldstream Park, and upgrading between Goldstream Park, and Victoria to a four-lane freeway/expressway standard.

**Okanagan Highway 97** – This involves ongoing reconstruction from the U.S. border to the Trans-Canada Highway, including Highways 97A and 97B. This project was announced in 1988 and is to relieve growing traffic congestion through populated areas and alleviate user safety concerns.

So far, 100 kilometres of highway, between Kaleden Junction in the south and Swan Lake Junction in the north have been expanded to four lanes. In addition, the intersection of Highways 97 and 3 at Osoyoos is scheduled for reconstruction.

**Sea-to-Sky Project** – This is an ongoing reconstruction of Highway 99 from Horseshoe Bay to Whistler. This project began in 1989 to address slide and flooding concerns along the route and to enhance it to better serve rapidly growing tourist travel. Project scope and schedule has not yet been determined. Meanwhile, safety concerns are being addressed.

**Trans-Canada Highway-Vancouver to Langley** – The ministry has been studying ways to improve traffic flow on Highway 1 from the Cassiar Connector in Vancouver to 200th Street in Langley and is now reviewing efficient usage of an additional lane from Vancouver to Cape Horn. Accommodation of transit on upgraded facilities is being considered.

**Barnet/Hastings Project** – This project is the ministry’s first “Go Green” road project in the Lower Mainland, designed to promote the use of new articulated buses and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. The objective is to move more people, not just more cars, along a major commuter route.

**Fraser River Crossing and Connections** – This involves the Highway 91/91A (Richmond Freeway) system which interconnects the Delta/Surrey areas with Richmond and New Westminster and includes the world-class Alex Fraser Bridge. The third phase of the project – to replace three signalized intersections on Highway 91A with interchanges and replace the interchange on the north end of the Queensborough Bridge – is in the study/design stage.

**Administrative Services Department, ADM, Gordon Hogg**

This department oversees all financial matters, personnel operations, public relations activities, information systems and administrative support services. It includes the Freedom of Information Branch and Internal Audit Department.

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**ICBC and MoTH, Partners in Safety**

ICBC expects to save more than $1.2 million in claims costs over the next two years by investing $485,000 to fund intersection improvements throughout the province – with the help of municipalities and MoTH. Provincial highway trouble spots MoTH identified as good ICBC “investments” are:

- Traffic signals at Fraser Highway and 156th Street in Surrey.
- Traffic signals at Route 5A and Summit Drive in Kamloops.
- Improved lane markings and signs on Route 5A at Route 6 near South Slocan in the Kootenays.
- Improved lane markings and signs on Route 97 at Route 20 near Williams Lake.
- Preparatory work to the left-turn bays on Route 4 at Church Road near Parksville.
200% Club

This program has been introduced to MVB staff. We look forward to seeing their names included in our 200% Club roster.

Jeff Barber, Freedom of Information, Highways HQ: prompt, patient, outstanding service!

Hall Davenport, North Peace District: remarkable performance in getting equipment to numerous slides in area.

James Lee, Highways Maintenance Branch, HQ: South Cariboo Highways District honored James in appreciation for his understanding, friendliness and willingness to assist those in the field.

Bruce Lintott, Nicola District: found purse on roadside which was reunited with its owner.

Gloria McCausland, Lower Mainland District: service beyond.

Shelley Marthinsen, North Cariboo District: extra effort helped produce Quality Assurance Program "HELP" manual.

Pat Quinlan, North Peace District: receptionist extraordinaire.

Cindy Tarr, Properties Branch, HQ: displays excellence and professionalism at all times and supports co-workers.

Tammi Tissierand, Electrical Maintenance District, Coquitlam: aided an elderly woman who'd taken a bad fall.

Suggestion Awards

Deborah Blaus, MVB Driver Examiner in Smithers, received an interim award of $500 for her suggestion to charge a fee for repeating a pre-trip inspection test on higher class road tests.

George Brown, a MVB Carrier Safety Inspector in Prince George, was awarded $75 for his suggestion of a standardized form for National Safety Code follow-up inspection by Carrier Safety Inspectors.

Grant Lachmuth (North Cariboo District Highways Manager) came up with a $100 winner. His suggestion was to place a visible marker (strips of flagging tape) under aggregate and/or winter sand stockpile sites before establishing the stockpile. This allows better control over stockpiled material. The ministry now plans to make all maintenance contractors aware of this suggestion.

Jay Northcott, MVB Motor Vehicle Inspector in North Vancouver, was awarded $250 for his development of a prototype enforcement reference guide and his suggestion that it be issued to all related enforcement personnel in the MVB and Police Services.

Mary Roseboom, electrician, Highways North West Region also won $100 for his suggestion - to use a pedestal guiding tool as an aid to safety when installing lamp bases into excavations. The Suggestion Awards Committee determined that this device would be most beneficial in cases where the excavation walls are unstable and personnel working close to the excavation could cause the wall to collapse.

Arnold Van Klaveren and John Paalvast, both stockworkers with MVB in Victoria, were each awarded $87 for their joint suggestion to send surplus specialty forms (carbon, cello-wrapped packages, cardboard backed pad and cardboard wrapped) to the John Howard Society for processing to enable recycling of paper material rather than shredding and landfill.

Robert Wanless, MVB Returned Cheque Clerk in Victoria, was awarded a $25 gift selection for his safety-related suggestion to install a half stair ramp to allow safer movement of loaded dollies.
Your Fan Mail

To MVB staff: please, send us your Fan Mail too. A job well done deserves a little fanfare ... that's what this column is all about.

Kind Co-operation

Just a short note to express sincere appreciation for the kind co-operation my staff and I received from all levels of the (Highways North Island District) with respect to road expansion in front of my properties on Ryan Road. It must be very difficult to reconstruct a road when you have to consider existing traffic flows. Not only was (Regional Project Director Bruce McGorman's) staff very co-operative but the contractor, Upland Excavating Ltd., was always cognizant of our concerns with respect to accesses for our business.

Anthony D. Saunders, The Washington, Courtenay

Thank You!

The Windrem Parent Advisory Council sincerely thanks (Darwin Hornland, South Peace Highways District), district manager, Stan Gladzy, and the ministry for crosswalk improvements by the recreation center (in Chetwynd). We really appreciate your support.

Jan Chmelyk, Secretary, Windrem Parent Advisory Council

Impressive Work

I formally want to thank (Central Island District Highways Manager Peter Wightman) and (Darcy Byers, Mike Bishop, Mike Johnston, Simon Stubbs and crew and ARC Asphalt Recycling Corporation) for the work done this season in resurfacing the Vancouver Island Highways – Qualicum Beach to Fanny Bay. The difference in surface finish and vehicle ride is amazing. The flag persons were cheerful and the area was marked out well in advance. I was very impressed with the entire operation.

Richard Hicks, Environmental Health Officer, Ministry of Health

Sincere Thanks

Central Island Highways District Manager, Peter Wightman: I would like to thank you and your staff for their assistance in ensuring the road to Horne Lake Caves was graded and signed for the Horne Lake Caves Provincial Park official opening. Over six hundred people traveled the road to the opening. Would you please pass our sincere thanks on to Richard Crosley and his staff for ensuring our many guests could find their way on a graded road.

Ron Lampard, District Manager, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Parksville

Congratulations, Bel Maintenance

I wish to thank Bel Maintenance for the excellent job you did over the winter in snow removal and sanding our highways, thus contributing to our safe driving. I speak not only for myself, but for a number of others with whom I have spoken, some new to the area. You have also done a great job at keeping up repairs to damaged roads. Congratulations and many thanks to you (John Matthews) and your Bel Maintenance crew.

Margaret Dellyn, Kaslo

Outstanding Community Service

(The following letter was sent by MLA Jackie Pement to the Hon. Art Charbonneau, just before she became our minister.)

This office would like to bring to your attention the efforts of Grant Lachmuth, who served as district manager of the Lakes Highways District until his recent transfer to the North Cariboo District.

During his relatively short time here (approximately two years), Mr. Lachmuth proved, in our opinion, to be an excellent manager. From the time he became highways manager in the Lakes District, he made a point of contacting our office regularly to discuss issues and developments within the district. He was always available to answer questions, and responded to our correspondence quickly and effectively – taking the time, when necessary, to explain ministry policies and issues in a manner easy for us to understand.

Furthermore, when it came to dealing with the public, we found Mr. Lachmuth did everything possible to help resolve local issues relating to highways maintenance and operations.

We are sorry to see Grant Lachmuth leave the Lakes District, where he has been such an asset. For this reason we feel it appropriate that you be made aware of his outstanding service to the community.

MLA Jackie Pement, Bulkley Valley-Stikine (now our minister)
All Around Health

I Quit!

The Smoking Cessation Reimbursement Program began July 9. Anyone who registered in the program after that date and completes the requirements, is eligible for a one-time reimbursement of up to $100.

As a pilot for government, we'll evaluate the program to determine its success in reducing the number of smokers in the ministry. One way we'll do this is to compare two years before and after quitting to see if there's any change in an individual's sick time. We won't use individual identities in the data base.

We want to include two other groups: a control group of non-smokers and another of people who've quit before the program, whether they used a cessation program or quit on their own.

If you've quit since January 1993, we'd like you to be part of our study. Contact David Robertson, Personnel Services at 387-7801. You've kicked the habit and you should be proud of your accomplishment. Stand up and be counted.

Motor Vehicle Branch Well-Being

The Employee Well-Being Committee at the MVB began in July 1992. With representatives from each division and department, as well as the Victoria Issuing Office, the committee has had a successful first year.

They've organized presentations and workshops covering a wide range of health/wellness issues. There've been seminars on cancer prevention, diabetes awareness and weight control.

Promotion of active living has included involvement in the BIG Run and Canada Fitness Week, as well as an information session on gardening. The talks on personal finance discussed tax tips, RRSPs, child tax benefits, and investments were very popular just before tax time.

"The Well-Being Committee is encouraged by the reception of this year's programs and presentations," says Ken Cruickshank, committee chair.

Congratulations on your past successes and on your commitment to the future.

MVB Traffic Safety Programs

MVB's Traffic Safety Programs Department (in Policy and Program Development Division) is responsible for the Drinking Driving CounterAttack Program, as well as other initiatives, such as:

- Novice Driver Licensing Program,
- Administrative Driving Prohibition, & Vehicle Impoundment Program,
- Enhanced CounterAttack Program,
- Bicycle Safety & Helmet Promotion.

Plus, a community-based traffic safety education program is being developed for delivery by MVB region staff.

Traffic accidents cost B.C. taxpayers about $1.5 billion a year in health care and justice system costs. ICBC estimates 93/94 claim payouts to exceed $1.6 billion. The human costs -- loss of life or personal injury -- cannot be measured in dollars.

In 1981, 859 fatalities were due to traffic accidents in B.C. In 1992, that figure fell to 473, even though traffic increased. Our safety initiatives, coupled with public awareness, are working.

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Mentorship Program Gives a Hand Up

By Karen Abrers, Communications Clerk, Maintenance Branch, HQ

Wow! Has my life changed since June when the “Mentorship Pilot Program” began.

As a participant in “Opportunities 90s,” I was invited to apply to this year-long program. After I completed the Protege application, the mentorship co-ordinator analyzed my short- and long-term career goals and an individual with a similar, yet established, career path was chosen as my mentor.

I am now in a mentorship with Eliah Farrell, Public Information Officer, Kootenays Region highways office. We communicate regularly and discuss strategies which I can implement to achieve my career goals.

When I signed up for this program, my immediate thought was, “Yay! Someone’s going to give me ALL the solutions to my career woes.” Eliah quickly recognized I was depending on her too heavily for ALL the answers and for EVERY step to be explained. I realize now that I have to take the initiative and act on my own.

Before I began this partnership I was “stuck in a box” - unaware of opportunities to grow, oblivious to ways I could improve my state of mind. It didn’t take long for that to change. Eliah’s upbeat and enthusiastic attitude is contagious. I find I am much more open-minded and willing to take risks and challenge the limitations I place on myself.

For more information on the ministry’s mentorship program, call Nella Todd, Mentorship Co-ordinator, 565-6180.

Telecommuting Pilot

By Virginia Clark, Staff Development Officer, Personnel Services Branch

Telecommuting is a viable means to meet current organizational workforce needs. It involves staff working at a distance from the main office, assessing information and other staff via phone, computer and FAX.

Human resource personal and professional needs are diverse and changing all the time. The demand for more creative, productive ways of doing business is evident and the time to look at telecommuting as an option is now.

Our ministry is planning a Telecommuting Pilot Project that will involve highways South Coast and Headquarters and representatives from the BCGEU and PEA. The chair is Don MacNab, Highways Engineering Branch.

Primary policy issues include Workers Compensation Board coverage, security, equipment/furniture, collective agreements, costs, etc. Currently, the ‘satellite’ and ‘home-based’ telecommuting options are being discussed. The pilot program is voluntary and supported, in principle, by management, the B.C. Government Employees’ Union and the Professional Employees’ Association.

The “pilot” is expected to go into action sometime in early 1994. B.C. Systems and B.C. Buildings have had a telecommuting pilot project under way since November 1992. It operates from a satellite office in Langford, at the far end of Victoria’s “Colwood Crawl.”

Stress and Food

Some of us tend to snack when we’re under stress. But, high-fat sweets are hard to digest and will sap your energy when you need it most. Here are some healthier suggestions:

- Devil’s food cookies instead of brownies or angel food cake instead of other kinds.
- Select low fat yogurt or sherbert instead of ice cream.
- Reach for a fizzy juice-seltzer mix instead of a regular soda.
- Eat pretzels or graham crackers instead of chips.
- Choose a low fat bran muffin instead of a donut.
- Try one of the new varieties of low fat tortilla chips with salsa instead of nachos.
- Avoid alcohol. It usually depresses and clouds judgment.
Go Ahead & Ask

Why does management let morale fall? Is it not important to production to keep morale up?

VINCE COLLINS: This is a really tough question to answer. In fact, there probably is no one good answer because it depends so much on individual circumstances. Let me say though, that I accept that problems of morale are management's problem. It is our job to ensure that we have a well-trained and motivated workforce. If morale is low, then certainly production will be affected, along with other negative outcomes.

One approach to address this problem is being developed through our Upward Feedback initiative (see update on page 11 of this issue.) In order to ensure our managers are better informed about the views and attitudes of their staff, we have been working on a systematic way of building into each work unit a feedback system from employees. We are also working on a policy that will ensure the rights of every employee to have a voice in regard to those workplace issues that affect their ability to do a good job.

In the short run, let me suggest to those of you who experience problems of morale in your workplace to bring the matter to your manager's attention. I would be very troubled to hear about any manager who was not willing to sincerely discuss concerns of this nature from their staff.

Why does money allocated not seem adequate for projects?

VINCE COLLINS: Over the last two years, our capital program has seen a dramatic decrease in the funding allocated to it and our rehabilitation funding, while staying at about the same level, has been subject to increasing demands. In dealing with these realities, managers throughout the ministry have been allocating funds to cover as many needs as possible. This means that funding for each project is tight and there is need for all of us to produce a quality product in as economic a way as possible.

Why is the Road and Bridge Maintenance Contract in area 16 not being enforced?

VINCE COLLINS: It would appear that the road and bridge contract is being enforced in the Service Area 16 though the Quality and Management Assurance Programs ratings are both very low for this area. The low rating indicates that the contract administration staff recognize this responsibility to report the actual road and management conditions. The only other enforcement available would be to default the contract and conditions are not poor enough to warrant that action at this time.

Family Day

Highways Headquarters Office held its second Family Day, December 21, 1993. It was a great success with a lot of work and pride going into some fun and informative displays. Pictured: Ministry employees in Santa hats greet family and friends of employees with a smile and a special tour guide booklet. Congratulations and thanks to all who pitched in to make the day work.
New Employment Equity Advisor

Nella Todd, from Highways Central North East Region, working from Fort George District, has taken on a new challenge. She's the ministry's new Employment Equity Advisor.

Nella's position reports to ADM Dan Doyle, Highways Operations. She will continue to work in Fort George but for the next two years she will provide staff, managers and executive with advice, guidance and program development in the areas of employment equity, women's programs and multiculturalism.

"Progress is being made in the areas of employment equity," said Nella. "By now, everyone should have an awareness of employment equity. Employment equity will exist when no individual is denied employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to their ability to do the job.

"You will be hearing and reading more about equity, multiculturalism, harassment and more, over the next several months. In the meantime, if you require more information, please contact me at 565-6180, or an employment equity committee member in your area."

There still remains a large opportunity for our ministry to advance in the areas of women's programs.

Succession Planning

Succession planning involves identifying positions that may need replacement in the near future, due to turnover, and developing employees to fill these positions—in accordance with their career aspirations and our ministry's organizational needs.

At the request of Highways Operations Department, Personnel Services is coordinating development of a succession planning procedure. A draft policy, procedures and guidelines have been produced.

Beginning in November 1993, succession planning has been piloted in two highways regions and two headquarters work units.

Training sessions to kick off the pilot were held for highways' staff in Central/North East's management team November 1, 1993, HQ Bridge Engineering as well as Geotechnical and Materials Engineering branches management teams, November 4, 1993 and North West's Properties/Planning and Professional Services Branch on December 5, 1993.

With input from several consultants experienced in the upward feedback process, the Committee is now actively writing its report and recommendations to the ministry's Executive Committee.

The pilot is expected to continue until at least March 31, 1994. At that time, the procedure will be assessed and revisions made as needed before it is introduced across the ministry.

Upward Feedback Update: Assessing Your Supervisor

Upward feedback is a system in which employees can have some say in how they are supervised. It is gaining broad acceptance across North America as an effective way to improve supervisors' people-management skills.

Support for this system comes from employees through 'Speak Out '92' and from the Deputy Minister, who sees it as a positive team-building initiative to improve communication and enhance performance planning and appraisal.

Personnel Services has been asked to develop an upward feedback procedure and has formed a steering committee to oversee its introduction. From an initial meeting in September, the Committee developed draft policies, procedures, principles and a form for review by the Committee in November.

The committee feels that it is essential for the upward feedback process to operate in such a way as to protect supervisors and the anonymity of our employees. Employees will have the right to decline involvement in the process of assessing their supervisor.

Proper resources for training and coaching during the introduction and the ongoing upward feedback process are also supported by the Deputy Minister and the Committee.

A pilot upward feedback system is to be ready for introduction in the ministry by April 1994.

The Committee is comprised of: Ron Webber (chairperson), Personnel Advisor, HQ; Geoff Freer, DHM, South Okanagan District; Barb Thomas, Regional Traffic Engineer, Vancouver Island Region; Kirby Rimer, Geotechnical Engineering Technician, HQ; Marilyn Mattson, Regional Manager, Finance and Admin, North West Region; Al Brown, Manager, Geotechnical Operations, Burnaby; and Candice Little, Finance and Admin Officer, Lakes District.
The Challenge of Change

By Dr. Kerry Crofton, Crofton Training Inc.

When managers refuse to see the writing on the wall, the system breaks down.

When she breezes into the office, people perk up. “Good morning. How are you doing today?” This exceptional manager also takes a moment to wait for you to respond. Sometimes she asks about the project you’re working on; sometimes she cracks a joke; but usually it’s just her cheerful manner which makes you feel it was worth dragging yourself out of bed this morning.

Times have been tough in this organization. And the pace continues to quicken. There have been a lot of changes. Increased automation and advancing technology bring a host of new things to learn. Wider market potential, more competition and new roles for men and women in the workplace bring more pressure.

There’s been all this talk about developing a corporate culture (whatever that is). There’s been restructuring, reorganizing and the introduction of new management styles.

Once, all of this was enough to send this manager into a dark corner of her office where she might hope for the fads to pass by. But she faced the challenges directly. She knew people around her weren’t happy. And when she slowed down long enough to think, she knew she wasn’t happy either. So, she decided to learn more.

“Communicate with your staff,” she read from a pocket book she picked up at an airport. “Make them feel part of the team. Be consistent. Delegate tasks to others and develop their talents. Manage the stress more effectively.”

It sounded a bit pie-in-the-sky, but she established a plan and adopted some of the techniques. For example, she recognized that what she used to refer to as “steaming with frustration,” and “churning inside... being so geared up, I can’t gear down,” were, in fact, manifestations of mismanaged stress. Unchecked quantities of adrenalin surged through her system during the day were wearing her down. It was no wonder that her blood pressure had been high.

When she learned to slow down and relax, she felt better. And she became more aware of the effect of pressure on her staff.

One of her most effective techniques to help reduce the stress of people around her is staging regular meetings. She ensures people at every level meet once a week. Every division meets once a month. And she meets quarterly with representatives from each group.

Her plate is full, but she makes an effort to be more approachable. Now each person, no matter if it’s support or management staff, feels he or she can share an amusing story with her, offer a creative suggestion or seek counsel on a difficult problem. They feel they are being heard; that they are involved.

In another office, we encounter a different scene. The harried manager seldom finds time to show much interest in the affairs of staff. He might call out a curt greeting to someone as he whisks by. But he doesn’t pause to chat.

This hard-driving achiever is a skilled deal maker, but sadly lacks people skills. He has hosted a couple of meetings with key members of his staff, but they complained so much he ended the practice. His workers grind away at their jobs and tension hangs in the air like a storm cloud.

The inevitability of change threatens, rather than invigorates, the people who work at this office. “What’s next?” they mumble to each other in the coffee room. “How much longer can I take this?” they ask themselves in the middle of sleepless nights.

Not knowing what’s next is, of course, the greatest pressure. And the deluge of meaningless memos intimating more positive things to come doesn’t help. At this office, managers feel isolated and burdened. Many occupy their positions by virtue of seniority rather than management skills. They are a long way from being able to inform, motivate and inspire their staff through changing times.

It shouldn’t take long to place your bet for success on the first office. To excel – perhaps even to survive – in the 1990s, individuals and companies must be able to meet the challenge of change. And all of us must be more realistic about accepting changes. Adaptation, consistency, communications, control and inspiration will be watchwords of success in the next decade.

Have you ever stopped to think about why geese fly in formation? When flying in a “V”, the flap of each goose’s wings creates an “uplift” for the bird flying behind. The flock thus achieves about 70 per cent more flying range than if each goose were to fly alone. Perhaps this is a lesson from nature that can be applied to all of us. When workers share a common sense of purpose and direction, they can get where they are going faster and easier by moving ahead on the “thrust” of one another.
This section is presented by the public information officers, their support staff and MoTHonians province-wide. To learn more about what's happening in the regions, each has their own unique newsletter. These are available through the ministry library or by calling your region public information officer. (Headquarters has one, too.)

REGION 1

Gone Fishing... and Golfing, Too
By Dave Prince, Operations Assistant

Electrical District held its first annual fishing derby on September 26. Twenty staff came out and were preparing to cast their lines as the sun rose over a Fraser River bar near Chilliwack. And the winner was Conan Brooks, electrician, who hooked a 22-pound Chinook Salmon. It's our first year. We expect to be bigger and better next year.

Thanks to Conan Brooks for helping organize the derby and to employees of Barry's Bait and Tackle Shop in Richmond — Rick Smith and Len Marshall — who reserved us space and made several trips across the Fraser River to ferry participants to and from the bar.

The district also held its annual golf tournament in September. Electrical staff, management and suppliers came out for the event. All participants had a fantastic day and went home with a prize or a trophy. Trophies went to Patti Dixon, Ladies' Longest Drive; Greg Keryluke, Men's Low Gross (a record of 57); Giesila Decker, Ladies' Low Gross; Judy MacPherson, Closest Shot to the Pin; and Rosalyn Brindley, Most Honest Golfer.

Thanks to John Ingbritson, Mark Walters, Tom Edwards and Phil Lalley for organizing this year's tournament.

Halloween Celebrations

South Coast Region office and Howe Sound District celebrated Halloween in style on Friday, October 29. As the pictures included in this issue of the Road Runner show, both offices came alive with goblins, ghouls and ghosts galore. A highlight of the region's Halloween festivities was a special luncheon in honor of Marge Brown, who has retired as Acting Manager, Financial Services. Marge joined the ministry in 1954 and, except for a brief period in 1988-89, worked with the ministry for almost 39 years. We'll really miss Marge and wish her all the best for every happiness in her retirement.
**IN THE FIELD**

**MoTH Stumbles On Artifacts**  
(from the *Frasco Valley Record*)

While doing a site impact study for new ramps of the Fraser River Bridge near Hope, artifacts from what is believed to be the main campsite of the Chawathil band were found. The artifacts included a spear point, hearth cobbles and stone-making debris.

Dr. David Pokotylo, an associate professor of archaeology at UBC, is coordinating the recent find with artifacts collected in the late 1950s near Yale. Growing evidence supports life in the Fraser Canyon as far back as 9,000 years or even to 11,000 years ago, which is the time of the last ice age. The massive ice sheets which covered most of BC during the ice age limit research efforts, so they are comparing their findings with native legends with the help of a researcher from the Sto:lo Tribal Council.

**REGION 2**

**The Big Chill**  
*By Cindy Pover, South Cariboo District*

Life in the Cariboo is great. It is really different after living at the coast to look forward, in a strange kind of way, to winter. But there is a sense of peace in getting ready for the big chill and it's kind of a cozy time.

South Cariboo District keeps busy with pool nights and lots of warm winter activities. A “Movie Marathon” was held in November - all-night movies and food created a good time for all.

**REGION 3**

**Russian Community and the Castlegar Bridge**

Both the Castlegar Robson Bridge project and the Brilliant Intersection (Highway 3A at the Robson intersection) have been the subject of an extensive public involvement including consultation with the Russian community through the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC).

The involvement of the USCC in planning for improvements to the intersection has been vital since the road passes just below the Verigin’s Tomb heritage site - a very important spiritual and cultural focus for the community. The tomb site has been the subject of intensive study by the engineering and geotechnical staff to ensure that the road works, including removal of rock, can be accomplished without affecting either the heritage values or environment in the area.

The Brilliant Intersection project has been tendered with work to begin early this year. Improvements to the intersection are scheduled for completion in June 1994 to coincide with the opening of the bridge.
Yahk Warning Signs

No, there aren’t any Yaks in B.C. but there is a Yahk in the Kootenays. It’s located on Highway 3 south of Cranbrook and just north of the U.S. border. The overhead warning signs with flashing lights advise drivers to slow down to 30 kilometres on the S-curves and two bridges on the Highway in the Yahk area. This route is difficult for trucks to drive, causing many to spill their loads onto the highway and into the Moyie River.

REGION 5

Francois Lake Office Moves

The Francois Ferry administration office has been relocated from the district office in Burns Lake to the Francois Lake ferry terminal. “It was felt that the office could better serve the needs of ferry users if it was more accessible to those users,” said Lakes District Marine Manager Ken Millar.

People on the Move

We have a new property management and land surveyor co-ordinator, Kenny Rogers. Don’t get excited, he’s not THE Kenny Rogers (of country music fame). But he is a welcome addition to the region and our very busy properties department.

Bulkley Nass Cleans Up

Bulkley Nass cleaned up again this year at the Bulkley Valley Fair, winning first for best entry from an organization. Following the event theme – Chinese Year of the Rooster – a highways truck carried the biggest nest and eggs you’ve ever seen and some strange looking birds. Sherrie Applegate built the nest and the “birds” made their own costumes – except DHM Loren Kelly, who bribed the women to make his. Congratulations to all involved.

The booth at the fairgrounds was the other opportunity for the ministry to meet its public. Marlene Keefn did an excellent job. She even made a little road for future drivers to get practice. Congrats, Marlene, and a big thanks to her husband, Bruce, who helped out with construction.

REGION 4

First Nations Awareness

Central/North East Region staff and maintenance contractor staff (along with a few guest observers from the Ministry of Forests) came away from a First Nations Cultural Awareness workshop with new knowledge about aboriginal people and their values.

Perhaps the most moving presentation was provided by Sophie Thomas, an elder from the Stoney Creek (Sai’kuz) Nation. Speaking from the heart, Sophie provided some insight into the natives’ respect for the land. “The land is our Mother – she gives us life,” she said. “We must treat her with respect.”

Our cross-cultural awareness workshop proved that the key to enhancing relationships with all people, not just aboriginals, is better communications. It takes ongoing discussion for each of us to learn more about the other, our values, goals and interests.

Another new comer is Mac Godo. He’s here to fill Don Shaw’s shoes as the new manager, design and construction. Welcome, Mac.

In long to Des Southwell (design and survey) and Darcy Stainton (geotech). Both left us to return to school – Des to take a computer technical course, Darcy for his Master’s in Information and Library Sciences. Best of luck!

RGME Frank Maximchuk is still missing. He was last sighted at Francois Lake throwing lifesavers (the candies) off the Omineca Princess. Actually, Frank has been experiencing a whole new world as acting DHM in Lakes District. The reason Frank is acting like a DHM is that Grant Lachmuth jumped ship and returned to Region 4 as DHM for North Cariboo.

Don Shaw, manager, design and construction in Kamloops, came back for a visit and to be smug telling us about his many quick trips to special events in Vancouver. His three-hour trips to the big city are a 10-hour drive for most of us up here.

Skeena District has a new operations assistant. Marion Iliot comes to us from Penticton. Funny, that’s where our Area Manager, Jeff Wiseman, absconded to recently. Looks like we got the better end of the deal. Welcome, Marion.
IN THE FIELD

REGION 6

Amphibian Road Project
By Nicbole Hallberg, North Island District

This project begins a preliminary study into use of drift fences and pitfalls to prevent amphibian (mainly *Taricha granulosa* - rough-skinned newt) mortality on a Denman Island road.

Newts migrate in spring from forest to marsh habitats and then return in the fall. At least 60 Newts were killed in a short stretch of McFarlane Road near Morrison marsh in 1992. This project will assess the success of trapping and carrying newts across the road for two to four weeks (weather dependent) in the spring and fall.

A 24" high drift fence - approximately 30' long, made of plastic tarp material and held up by small wire stakes - will be placed on either side of McFarlane Road. The fence will be as far back from the road as possible. Small pitfall traps will be placed at the beginning, middle and end of the fence. The fence will be marked with orange flagging tape.

Volunteers will remove newts from the traps, record the number and transfer them to the other side of the road. A sign reading “SLOW - NEWT XING,” will be placed near the fence.

**Meet the Wicked Witch from the North and the Highways Manager from Hell. That's Nicole Hallberg, District Clerk and Mike Proudfoot, DVM, North Island District in Halloween 'drag.'**

**In Memorium: Ellis Bowes**

Ellis Bowes

Friend, father, husband and son: A. Ellis Bowes is sadly missed in Nanaimo. Region 6's gravel manager was struck by a pickup truck while crossing the Island Highway on his way to work the morning of December 2. He died soon after.

Ellis began work for MoTH as a terrain analyst at Prince George in 1979 - helping build the highway into Tumbler Ridge, redevelop Highway 97 over Pine Pass, and construct the Liard Highway 77. He and wife Cheryl moved to Vancouver Island in 1986.

Conscientious and dedicated in everything he did, Ellis's geotechnical career was marked by precision, professionalism and excellence in service. Many MoTH workers joined his family for the service at Nanaimo's New Life Assembly. Attendees stood in the church's anterooms and vestibule - testament of this modest man's effect on those who knew him.
Bonser Retires

Pat Bonser's (Construction Engineering Branch, HQ) friends and colleagues attended a luncheon in Victoria to honor his 27 years with the ministry. Pat started in 1966 as design and location engineer with the old Location Branch. He worked in Kamloops to 1972 and Nelson to 1985. All Pat's retirement time won't be spent on leisure. He recently started work with an engineering consulting firm.

Good Luck Shirley

About 50 family, friends and co-workers enjoyed a fun evening at a retirement celebration in honor of Shirley Duncan at the Cedar Hill Golf Club. Shirley started with Personnel Services in 1982. Her cheerful personality and sense of humor will be missed.

Travel Smart Day

They came by foot, bicycle, transit, carpool and even kayak. Wednesday, October 6 was “Travel Smart Day” in Victoria sponsored by “Go Green.” And the ministry with the “smartest travellers” was — you guessed it — the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. We had 71 percent of employees using alternative travel methods to the single occupancy vehicle. Congratulations!

Resource Center Gallery

Del Rosario, ministry librarian, has turned a wall in the ministry’s resource center into a gallery. The “wall” featured Graham Lloyd in September, Michael Trickey in October and Sue Schaub in November — all with Planning Services. Ruth Wittenberg, Sr. Manager, Financial Systems and Policy, was featured in December.

Halloween '93

From Highways Safety Branch

Thanks again to all those ghoulish spirits out there who took our challenge and dressed in costume on Friday, October 29. While we had a lot of visitors to Highway Safety, no one was brave enough to eat a meal at our “Road Kill Cafe.” It was extremely difficult to choose best costumes. Special thanks to our judges: Deb Lagadyn (Highway Engineering), Terry Webber (BCBC Maintenance), Janice Kerr (ISB), Ruthanne Sheafgreen (ISB) and Leah Glick-Stal (Highway Safety).

Marathon MoTHonians

By Bill Ransford, Manager Financial Policy and Procedures, HQ

September 5, five HQ employees represented the ministry in the Ekiden Marathon Road Relay. The Ekiden relay was a “dry run” for the 26.2 mile marathon course to be used for the Commonwealth Games next August in Victoria. We entered as the MOTHS and placed 27th overall out of a field of 49 teams and fifth in the “corporate” field finishing in a time of three hours, four minutes and 11 seconds.

Marathoners: Chris Garrett-Petts (Finance), Bill Ransford (Finance) with daughter, Dale Wood (Highway Engineering) and Ian Matthews (Major Projects) and son. Missing is Clyde Forrest (Info Systems).
Murray Brown Retires

Murray Brown’s retirement party was held at the Golden City Restaurant in Victoria on the evening of September 11, 1993. Guests included many friends, relatives and co-workers. Murray served with the Commercial Transport Department from July 2, 1979 to August 31, 1993 and was the Director for the past five years. He’ll be missed.

Happy retirement, Murray.

Best Chocolate Rum Cake Ever

Thanks to Mira Mason, Motor Vehicle Branch, Langley

We know Christmas has come and gone but in honor of the season, here’s Mira’s favorite Christmas recipe. “I hope you have as much fun making it as I did,” she says.

1 or 2 qts. rum 1 cup dried fruit 1 tsp. baking soda
1 cup butter 1 tsp. baking powder 1/2 cup cocoa
1 tbsp. sugar lemon juice nuts
2 large eggs brown sugar flour

Before you start, sample the rum to check for quality. Now, go ahead. Select a large mixing bowl, measuring cup, etc. Check the rum again. It must be just right. To be sure rum is of the highest quality, pour one level cup of rum into a glass and drink it as fast as you can. Repeat. With electric mixer, beat 1 cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar and beat again. Meanwhile, make sure that the rum is of the finest quality. Try another cup. Open second quart if necessary. Add two large eggs, two cups dried fruit and beat till high. If fruit gets stuck in the beaters, just pry it loose with screwdriver. Sample the rum again, check for toxicity. Next, sift three cups of pepper or salt (it doesn’t matter) – sample the rum again. Sift 1/2 pint of lemon juice. Fold in chopped butter and strained nuts. Add one tablespoon of brown sugar, or whatever color you find. Grease oven and turn cake pan to 350 degrees. Now pour the whole mess into the oven and bake. Check the rum again, and go to bed.

Feeling Faint? “Drop” by MV8!

Yes, it’s true! One-third of the staff at the Motor Vehicle Branch in Victoria have been trained in Survival First Aid and CPR over the past two years. A typical scene from one of the very active classes held in the training room at 2631 Douglas Street, shows Audrey Barnes and Vola Coates, the Branch’s Industrial First Aid Attendants, instructing and coaching the staff in CPR. More First Aid seminars are planned for early spring 1994, just in time for the Commonwealth Games!

Nervous in Nanaimo

By Tom Parkin, PIO, Highways Vancouver Island Region

In an accident which MV8 examiners will re-tell for some time, a nervous driver nearly put a borrowed car through the wall of Nanaimo’s regional office in November. The student, who had only just arrived for his road test, didn’t even meet his examiner. A classic set of nerves saw him press the accelerator, leap the curb and roar through a hedge before striking a concrete picnic table. The impact was enough to deflect his trajectory and stop the car just short of the building. While his uncle comforted the weeping young man, workers behind nearby plate glass wiped their brows.
MVB Fines Collection

Do you have any speeding tickets? Then read on; this article may quicken your pulse.

In July 1989, the Motor Vehicle Act was amended for the reinstatement of fines for moving violations in the province. This legislation provided MVB with the ability to refuse services to customers that have had debts incurred and outstanding since 1985. The Fines Collection Unit of the MVB process between 750 thousand and one million violations per year, generating over $75 million per year in revenues.

Since the inception of the fines program, the balance of the receivables has steadily grown to about $110 million as of November 9, 1993. In response to this, MVB developed several strategies to enhance enforcement and speed up collections of this "large bulge" of unpaid tickets. The enhancements currently in place are:

Dunning Letter Project - Mass mailings of collection letters were introduced May 1, 1993 to draw attention to outstanding accounts. A new Accounts Receivable Collection Area (ARCA) was formed to deal with queries resulting from these letters. Since the project's inception, the Dunning letters have collected $13 million, solely from accounts receivable clients.

Payment Options - The Branch offers clients a wide variety of options and locations for paying tickets. Payments can be made at any Provincial Court, Driver Service Center, Government or Appointed Agent. Payments can also be mailed to the Branch's head office in Victoria. About 40 per cent of all payments are made by mail. The forms of payment are cash, cheque, money order, as well as Visa, Mastercard or debit card in all Driver Service Centers. Mail in payments can also be made by credit card.

Other strategies in the works to increase collections are:

- Utilizing kiosk technology in conjunction with an automated Driver License Process (long term)
- Allowing payments at chartered banks
- Charging interest or court enforceable penalties on outstanding debts
- Assigning blocks of delinquent accounts to collection agencies
- Vehicle seizure and impoundment
- Registration of Crown debts as charge (liens against real property)
- Single agency fine collection

So, it looks like the grace period will soon be over for speeders. As the old saying goes, "You can pay me now or pay me later."

IN THE FIELD

MVB Logo Designer

Joanne Boomer has worked for government since 1978. She started her career as a keypunch operator. In 1985, she was transferred to the Ministry of Transportation and Highways where she has worked as a KPO, a clerk in Driver Services and Personnel Services and the receptionist in thesuperintendent's Office. Joanne is now the desktop publishing clerk for the Motor Vehicle Branch, where she helped develop the MVB logo. This colorful logo is displayed on the up-to-date Expressway sign at the Coquitlam Mall (see page 23).

Officer Training

MVB Technical Enforcement Officer (TEO) and TEO trainees from various regions, participated in the Commercial Transport Department nine-day, in-house training program. This was held in Vancouver at the Justice Institute from June 8-18, and delivered by MVB personnel in a classroom free of distractions from busy work areas. Topics covered included: permit issuance, licensing and enforcement, as they apply to weigh scale operations.

(Left to right) John Petty, Instructor, Port Mann Eastbound Scale; Leo Belanger, Inspector, Sparwood Weigh Scale; Pam McDermid, Inspector, Pacific Weigh Scale; Dimas Achadian, Inspector, Port Mann Westbound Scale; Martha Hayden, Inspector, Pacific Weigh Scale; Hansi Glover, Inspector, Port St. John Weigh Scale; Ron Oldridge, Instructor, Motor Vehicle Branch, Victoria; Gordon Bell, Instructor, Pattullo Bridge Weigh Scale.
Portable Weigh Scales

Of 58 weigh scales operated by MVB throughout the province, 36 are static and 22 are portable.

Portable weigh scales were introduced in the 1970s. They were, basically, Portable Wheel Weighers carried in patrol cars by Commercial Transport Inspectors. These inspectors weigh commercial vehicles and their loads for compliance, inspect them to ensure safety standards are met, and issue permits – including Oversize/Overweight, Commercial Vehicle Non-Resident Permits and Motive Fuel Emblems.

In keeping with changing times and growing volumes of commercial vehicles in the Lower Mainland-Fraser Valley Region MVB recognized that a new state of the art concept had to be developed. Using the expertise of Compliance staff – the Weigh Scale Trailer with high-volume output was conceived. All patrol vehicles can pull the trailer and, with proper site preparation, process approximately 200 to 300 commercial vehicles an hour.

The Weigh Scale Trailer is more efficient than the current Portable Wheel Weighers due to its design which includes four individual axle weighing platforms. When placed two wide and two long, it produces two weighing surfaces, 32 inches wide and 14 feet long, to accommodate the widest tridem axle spreads allowed by regulation.

When on location, an operator decides whether to use two or four platforms. The electronic weight meter is able to calculate the first two side-by-side platforms, the second two platforms and/or a total of all four. Portable pinned ramps are then inserted on either end of the platform, forming a gentle incline for the wheels to roll on to and off again.

For transportation purposes, the platforms are housed in a fully enclosed tandem axle van trailer on four internal inclined ramps. Gravity is used in off-loading the platforms while four electric cable winches, with a capacity of 2,500 pounds each, on-load the platforms with ease.

Driver Licensing Integrity Project

Undercover investigations concerning improper licensing activities by MVB staff, Driver Training Schools and language interpreters were in the news last spring. As a result of those investigations, MVB has launched a project – the Driver Licensing Integrity Project – to reduce the opportunity for fraud in B.C.'s Driver Licensing System.

In addition to the effort MVB has undertaken to review thousands of driver files to determine if applicants have been licensed improperly, this project will achieve the following.

- Develop methods of identifying and penalizing unlicensed Driver Training Schools and instructors.
- Provide employees with skills to undertake audits of Driver Training Schools and instructors.
- Establish new criteria for accrediting driver training facilities and other Driver Training certification authorities.
- Improve audit and fraud prevention methods in the revised Driver Training School Regulations.
- Establish new criteria for approving translators.
- Reduce the need for translators in the driver licensing process.
How Traffic Signals Work

By Tom Parker, Public Information Officer, Vancouver Island Region

There are everyday devices we all use, but the operation of which remains incomprehensible to most. In this category fall bank machines, the personal computer and traffic signals. Barbara Thomas wants to help us understand at least computers and signals better - she's a traffic engineer with MoTH in Nanaimo.

"If drivers understood that highway signals are programmed to respond to the demands of traffic, they would be less impatient," she says. "Embedded in the pavement behind each stop bar on the road is a wire loop, which can detect vehicles as small as bicycles. When you are waiting to enter a busy intersection, a nearby computer 'knows' and is already planning to interrupt the flow to let you in.

"The system is triggered by a change in an electro-magnetic field, not by pressure. I had to laugh when I once saw a cyclist jumping up and down on the road, thinking he could activate the sensor. As long as there is metal detectable within the loop, the signal will let you in at the earliest moment."

Barb cautions that some municipal signals still operate on timed rotation, but that all intersections maintained by the province are "actuated" by vehicles; this eliminates unnecessary green signals to vacant side roads. Contrary to popular belief, some strings of highway signals are also sequenced to reduce stop-and-go traffic.

"But drivers exceed the 50 km/h speed limit," Barb admits, "then wait fuming at the next intersection. If they tried to work with the system, it would respond for them."

Our automatic traffic signals also have safety high among their priorities. They check themselves for conflicting instructions, and automatically go to flashing red mode if they sense a problem.

"We keep up with technology," Barb says. "Changes in signal design have improved visibility and decreased maintenance. For example, there are larger lenses used for signals in higher speed zones.

"One signal which drivers still don't fully understand is the advance arrows," she says. "Amber arrows mean get out of the intersection NOW - opposing traffic is going to be released. They mustn't be treated as though oncoming drivers will have a couple seconds more 'wait time' after your side goes red - there aren't any."

Thus, motorists who rely on signals to carry them through discover they get where they're going more safely and efficiently than those who approach fellow drivers and intersections from an adversarial position.

"Think about it, it's in the ministry's interest to keep traffic moving as quickly as possible. We always check the performance of our signals, and intersections where there's potential for a new one. We're constantly adjusting for changing traffic and vehicle flows."
Videoconferencing

By Clyde Forrest, Co-ordinator, Video Network Services Business Case Project

Videoconferencing employs video monitors, small cameras, microphones and high speed communication links to enable people at different locations to communicate with each other face to face. The primary uses of the technology are for business meetings and distance education. The benefits are travel related cost savings and productivity improvements from enhanced inter-site, inter-personal communications.

Over the past six months, MoTH has been investigating the strategic implementation of video network services. BC Systems, in partnership with the Open Learning Agency, currently has videoconferencing facilities in Victoria, Vancouver, Burnaby, and Prince George.

Over the next 18 months, BC Systems plans to establish shared facilities at 16 locations around the province. The Ministry of Education has recently installed facilities in Victoria and Kamloops. BC Tel Advanced Communications and Coast Hotels now offer "occasional use" broadcast quality videoconferencing facilities for Coast Hotels in Victoria, Vancouver, Prince George, Kamloops, and Kelowna.

A ministry business case is expected to be completed by February 1994. The costs, benefits, and risks of potential meeting room, distance education and desktop video network services will be explored.

To prove the benefits of video network services, plans were developed for a BC/Ontario "Urban Transportation" video conference and a province-wide distance education "Video Workshop" in January.

An important goal of the business case project is to foster ministry-wide and government-wide discussion of the issues, to minimize duplication of effort, build strategic alliances, and maximize potential taxpayer dollar savings. Therefore, the project team is keen to hear from anyone in the ministry who has an interest or stake in these issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CURRENT & FUTURE SERVICES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Service Excellence Manager, 387-1483

DAVID THOMAS,
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Video Network Business
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This is Where It's Happening

A personnel perspective from Jeff Smith
Finance and Admin, Highways HQ

Where is it "happening" in the ministry? Where is the important stuff being done?

Well, in Victoria we're constantly being told that it is in the front line offices. We've been invited out to see ourselves where it is all "happening" - for it's they who pave the roads, manage the projects and serve the public.

Okay, I buy that. But then, come to Victoria and see where the decisions, policies and programs are being developed. Boy, this is where it's happening.

But no ... actually ... where it is really happening is in Executive Branch - where the big decisions are made, the mandate forged and the destiny of the ministry designed.

And then there's the Parliament Buildings - where our minister, the Premier and Cabinet are deciding on major projects and budgets.

But then, the politicians listen to the voters, constituents and other MLAs. Those same people that we, as the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, deliver our mandate and associated services to. Ah ha ... the closing of the loop.

So, where is it "really happening?" Well, if all employees are doing something to support our mandate, then it is happening everywhere.

With a little communication and mutual respect we can function as any successful decentralized billion dollar outfit, where headquarters staff respect field staff and vice versa. We can either learn from our diversity or divide into ethnocentric little tribes. Yes, we're different, but that's what makes a good team. And a good team is lots of fun. And the good fun teams throughout the ministry are actually, and truthfully, where it is "really happening!"

Cycling and Safety

I am one of the proud and the crazy that ride the commute from Colwood to Victoria. I ride straight in the highway from the Thetis Lake Overpass to town. I find this ride most invigorating and refreshing. But along the ride are many perils. I was fortunate this July to be interviewed by the Goldstream News Gazette. At the end of the article it mentioned there was a transportation strategy report on commuting to be done by the end of September. I have yet to see the report or to be able to get in touch with anyone who could tell me how to obtain a copy of this report.

Anyway, what I would like to see is some kind of article on the ministry's thoughts on the future of cycling and safety in the Greater Victoria area.

John Handysides, Exam & Special Licensing Review Unit, Motor Vehicle Branch.

The report you speak of is not being done by the ministry. However, cycling initiatives are currently under review as part of Vancouver Island Highway Project improvements on the Western Communities-to-Victoria section. Also, ministry staff sits on the CRD cycling Task Force and is working with the regional district to identify and develop possible cycling corridors in the area. Such a network will take time, as we are in the early stages of developing infrastructure to accommodate cyclists. The ministry is now in the process of finalizing the first provincial cycling policy. A copy of the interim policy is available by calling Nancy Bond at 387-5997.
“Expressway” – How Did it Happen?

Was it by accident or by design? By design of course, because we at MVB recognize that customer service is an ongoing and dynamic challenge. To meet that challenge, the Lower Mainland-Fraser Valley Region MVB came up with a new concept: to be where the customers want us, during the hours they expect and in a customer-friendly environment.

The region’s management team decision was to locate in a high-profile mall. We were surprised to learn the malls didn’t want us. Government was thought of as dull, unimaginative and not customer-driven.

Our first hurdle was to convince mall management these perceptions were the exact opposite of how we intended to operate.

Our persistence worked; Metrotown mall decided to gamble on us. Now we had a location and a concept. The next step was to form a working committee.

Private and public employees – planners, interior design consultants, BCBC, BCSC, BC Tel, BCGEU and regional branch staff – worked as a team to make the concept a reality. Everything had to be thought out carefully, from counter configurations, layout, color schemes, carpet and furniture, right down to pictures on the wall.

Next consideration: Would staff and union accept the new hours, especially Saturdays and evenings? A letter seeking volunteers was sent to all offices. Within three weeks we had a work force anxious to work these “odd” hours in a new and exciting environment.

But what name could we give the new concept? After much thought, the committee came up with a name, “Expressway.” Clients were to be served in less than fifteen minutes, phones answered in three rings and all customers would be in one line – the express line.

On June 12, 1991, Expressway became a reality. Public comments have all been positive and include: “It’s about time,” “Fast, courteous service,” and, “When will there be more?”

Not only were the public and staff enthused; so were our colleagues. Motor Vehicle Branches from Alberta, Manitoba, California, Virginia and Washington, D.C. all called to ask, “How did you do it?”

Based on the overwhelming response to the first Expressway, the Branch opened Expressway II on November 6, 1991 in the Coquitlam Centre Mall. In 1992, the two Expressways issued approximately 65,000 drivers’ licences, and these service volumes are expected to increase for 1993.

As we continue to evaluate the success, can Expressway III be far behind?
On the Road... From Zar to Zanzibar

By Peter Brett, Director, Bridge Engineering Branch

In October 1992, I accepted a secondment to X.D. Lea International Ltd. as Senior Bridge Engineer in their Dar es Salaam office consulting to the United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Works (MOW), on a bridge rehabilitation assignment.

Lea was in joint venture with the National Estates and Designing Corporation (Nedco) - a parastatal responsible for the design of government buildings - and the project was a component of a multi-year integrated road program funded by the World Bank.

(Parastatals are state controlled organizations, created during the social experiment when the former Tanganyika Territory gained independence from Britain in 1961. They control most sectors of the economy, including banking, insurance, hotels, textile mills, etc., but are currently in the process of being privatized as part of the government's plan to attract foreign investment by moving toward a free market economy.)

The terms of reference called for condition survey and load rating assessment of about 75 bridges on three sections of the gravel trunk road network, all located at least 1,000 kilometres (a two to three day drive) from Dar. Field inspection trips (safaris), therefore, provided a great opportunity to travel extensively throughout Tanzania.

In addition to determining the status of the infrastructure, an important part of my duties was to promote technology transfer by training Nedco engineers in the fundamentals of bridge inspection and rehabilitation.

I arrived in Tanzania in December and spent the first month meeting Nedco staff, preparing an Inception Report for MOW, and adjusting to the heat (30 degrees Celsius) and humidity (90 per cent) of summer in Dar.

In January, we made a two-week safari to the western highlands regions adjacent to the Zambian border and a month later drove to Mwanza on the south shore of Lake Victoria, during which we crossed the Masai Steppe and came close to the Kenya border and Mount Kilimanjaro. However, as on two subsequent visits to the area, the peak was obscured by cloud, and we were unable to see the snows
which had inspired Hemingway’s famous short story.

Since the route to Mwanza also passed through the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Serengeti National Park, which together support the greatest concentration and variety of plains game in Africa, this trip was a wonderful combination of business and pleasure.

The final safari was to the old slave-trading town of Tabora, in the northern interior, which the 19th century explorers Speke, Burton, Livingstone and Stanley had used as a base for their expeditions to Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria. It later became an important town on the Central Railway, constructed by the Germans from Dar to Lake Tanganyika just prior to the First World War, and during our visit we stayed at the Railway Hotel, which had originally been built as a hunting lodge for the Kaiser.

Most of the bridges were short-span reinforced concrete or steel girder spans, but assessment was made quite challenging by the complete lack of historical information (drawings, specifications, contract files, etc.), and load rating involved a good deal of engineering judgment and pragmatism in addition to structural analysis.

Swahili and English are the national and business languages respectively in much of East Africa. However, many Tanzanians – including the two who traveled with me in the field – had been educated in the former Soviet Union, East Germany and other eastern bloc countries and were, therefore, also fluent in a third language.

It was a source of some amusement that my command of Swahili was limited to the level of “hanna mamba?” (Any crocodiles under this bridge?) and, at the end of a long, hot day on the road, “moja bia baridi, asante.” (One cold beer please.)

My wife joined me in February and, for the next six months, we explored Dar, which has a population of about 2.5 million and is the fastest growing city in East Africa.

Most of the city is in urgent need of repair and a coat of paint, and it is not a beautiful city in the manner of Victoria or Vancouver.

However, we found the atmosphere quite exotic and spent many hours walking in the crowded streets, shopping in the local dukas (roadside stores) and relaxing at favorite expatriate “watering holes.”

We also did as much traveling around Tanzania as a busy schedule would allow.

When the time came to leave, it was difficult to believe that we had concentrated so many experiences into such a short time frame – the beaches of Zanzibar, the wildebeest migration in the Serengeti, the lions, rhinos and elephants in the Ngorongoro Crater, the hippos, crocodiles and giraffe in the Selous Reserve, and so much more.

However, the most lasting impression is of the Tanzanian people, whose friendliness and hospitality were major factors in making our stay a very positive experience.
BORN TO BUILD

You could say he was born to be a highway person. His father worked for the ministry responsible for highways, and the day he was born, it was ministry employee Frank Clapp (now retired) who drove his mother to the hospital in Dawson Creek.

Rodney Chapman (Director, Construction Engineering Branch) remembers his “baptism” into the ministry. “It was at McCleese Lake in 1954. I was in the back of my father’s ministry truck and managed to spill a gallon of ministry allocated paint all over me. My father corralled the crew, on ministry time, to rescue me and clean me up. That was my first bit of highway’s mischief.”

As a child, Rodney had quite a history of sneaking into the back of his father’s truck. He wanted to go to the construction site and ride the “big machines”… and he did. “I used to wonder, how did they know where to go and where did they take all that dirt.”

Rodney’s father, Lee started his career with the ministry as an instrument man and worked his way up to project supervisor. He worked, for the most part, on the Hart Highway but put in some time on Cariboo Highway 97 and the Vancouver Island Highway.

“In 1946/47 the ministry started the first go round of the Vancouver Island Highway Project,” said Rodney. “They began by improving five miles north of Bowser and purchased property south of Bowser, but that’s as far as they got.”

Lee left the ministry in 1955 but continued to work on contract for highways through Ben Ginter Construction for several years until forming his own company in 1959.

Rodney, like his father, was destined for the wonderful world of construction. His first job was working as a laborer to install a new sewer line in the Yukon Territories. It was 1969, the year he graduated from high school. It was also the year of the great fire in Faro – which was exactly where he was headed.

“I’d just got to the camp, when lightning struck and started a forest fire. We had to clear out, fast. We spent the night on the banks of the Pelley River. I’ll never forget it. Some of the guys hijacked a company loader and drove back into the camp canteen and scooped out seven cubic yards of beer and cigarettes. The fire swept through the camp and Faro but it didn’t cross the river. When we got back to the camp, it looked like World War III.”

That summer, Rodney made good laborer’s wages – it took him 10 years to make as much as an engineer. “But I looked out high above the ditch and saw a person standing there looking through instruments and telling everyone else what to do. He didn’t have to put up with the mud and the bugs.” Rodney went back to school.

After graduating from university in 1974, Rodney became an engineer-in-training with the ministry. His first “real job” was as a Maintenance Management Engineer in Kamloops. Next came four years as District Highways Manager in Lillooet. In 1982 Rodney came to Victoria and began working in the Construction Branch as an engineer under Norm Zapf.

Rodney has seen a lot of changes in the ministry over the years. When he started, the infrastructure was still being built and there were only four regions. It was before privatization, when the ministry did all highways work themselves… from maintenance to construction. Now we use contractors throughout where before, we only contracted the construction.

“It was the end of the pioneering stage – everybody wanted roads. The general public’s only complaint, by and large, was why weren’t we building faster and bigger. Few worried if the ministry held up traffic to improve a road.”

“In 1974 the phrase public consultation hadn’t been invented and we were just beginning to think about
protecting the environment. We didn’t know what or how but we knew something had to be done. We learned as we went along and, now, in 1994 ... we know what we’re doing and we do it well.”

Another area in which the ministry has evolved, Rodney says, is the introduction of more women into the construction and engineering industries.

“T’m looking forward to the day we have our first woman project supervisor ... she’ll set the pace for the rest of us.”

But, no matter how things change, Rodney says, some things stay the same. “I’ve always been impressed by the talent and dedication of staff, how well they work together and how quickly they adapt.

**MVB HISTORY**

**February 10, 1904**, the first legislation in British Columbia with respect to motor vehicles was enacted – *The Motor Vehicle Speed Regulation Act*. This was a simple act, created to provide a maximum speed law and for the identification of motor vehicles by having them carry and display a permit. The maximum speed was set at 10 mph in cities, towns and villages and 15 mph elsewhere.

Permit number “a” was issued in Victoria on February 29, 1904 and was signed by the Acting Superintendent of Provincial Police, William H. Bullock-Webster.

**March 1, 1911** *The Motor Vehicle Speed Regulation Act* was repealed and replaced with a new act – *Motor Traffic Regulation Act 1911*. This new act was quite detailed and covered all phases of motor vehicle control at that time.

The Superintendent of Provincial Police was charged with the enforcement of the law, which now provided for the issuance of annual licenses for motor vehicle dealers, owners and chauffeurs, as well as permits for tourists.

**July 1, 1920**, the *Motor Traffic Regulation Act 1911* was repealed and replaced with the *Motor Vehicle Act*. A provision of this act changed driving on the highway from the left-hand side to the right-hand side.

**In 1924**, the Motor Vehicle Act was amended to provide for the issuance of driver’s licenses, the first of which was issued in Victoria on February 16, 1925. Speed limits were abolished and the “common danger” clause was inserted in their place.

**April 13, 1932**, the Act was amended to provide for the expiry of driver’s licenses by December 21, 1932, as the original driver’s licenses issued in 1925 did not expire and were good for the life of the driver.

Subsequently, a new license, with a one-year term, had to be obtained by all persons operating motor vehicles.

**In 1939**, the Compulsory Driver’s Examination Program was implemented. This program was subsequently expanded to include the examination of all drivers operating motor vehicles of a specialized nature.

**In 1948**, the Safety Responsibility Sections of the *Motor Vehicle Act* came into effect and provided for the impoundment of a motor vehicle after an accident if the owner was unable to provide proof of financial responsibility.

With the advent of a compulsory insurance law in the following years, many changes took place, including the repeal of the impoundment law.

**March 29, 1950**, a driver’s license valid for five years was originated. In the following decades, the number of vehicles, owners and drivers increased rapidly in British Columbia. In response, computerized data processing systems were implemented to handle the volume of forms and records efficiently.

**July 1, 1972**, the first photo driver’s license was issued in B.C., and in 1991, the vehicle-licensing function was transferred to the Insurance Corporation of B.C. However, vehicle policy remained the responsibility of Superintendent of Motor Vehicles.
A Porci Predicament
A Christmas Gift to the Omineca Princess from a local user, Mila Bigler of Burns Lake

The Omineca Princess prepared to step into dock at dusk, with its usual precision. Ferry Captain Ian MacKenzie was at the helm. The deck crew that shift were Loren Funk and Norm McGinnis.

Absent were the usual road runners of the rush hour. In the ferry line-up, one lone vehicle.

What's this! About a hundred feet from shore, the crew spotted what appeared to be a small child, playing on the apron! A closer look revealed a small critter, a porcupine, soft-footing it along the apron. Surely this impatient venturer had nothing malicious in mind. Perhaps Porci's only plan was to be first on the ferry. What could Porci have been thinking. How about, I'm late, I'm late, for a very important date.

The apron eased down onto the ferry deck. All eyes were glued to this slow moving, quill covered rodent, drawing smiles to the faces of the crew, followed by grins and chuckles. To be sure, a measure of distance was kept between the crew and this adventurous porcupine.

Porci cruised up the port side of the deck, like an old hand, and crossed over to his/her very own little cubical behind the life jacket box. There, Porci waited out the journey in a cautious fashion.

Crew members McGinnis and Funk kept a watchful eye on this unusual foot passenger, as a safety measure. For certain, this event ranked high on the scale of amusing diversions, as well.

With the ferry crew in position, ready to execute the next load exchange, the apron was again an extension of the ferry. Off drove the lone vehicle. Porci didn't understand that the light was green. Now that it was time to leave, Porci was getting cold feet.

To the rescue, with a friendly smile and a scoop shovel in hand, came crew member Funk. Porci was scuttled on to the shovel and eased on to the apron.

A couple days later, a porcupine, appearing much like the one that had taken the Omineca Princess shortcut across Francois Lake, was seen in McCullough's yard, not far from the ferry landing. Porci was looking like his/her date had gone well, and maybe he/she had just dropped by to pass on a thankful message, for the ride of a lifetime.

Road Runner

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This is an employee newsletter. It needs staff input to work. This edition is full of good information and wonderful stories, all thanks to staff. Please keep the stories, and especially the pictures, coming.

If your work unit has done something new and exciting, we want to know. If you've taken a vacation, secondment or road trip and had an interesting experience, that's perfect for the "On the Road" column. For "The Reflector," historical pictures, articles and work related remember-whens are always a favorite of readers.

Letters from satisfied clients are needed for "Fan Mail," and we can always use material for our "Enviro News and Views" - that's for hints on how ministry employees can cut back paper, recycle and reuse. It's also an opportunity to showcase environment-friendly initiatives being done by branches, districts and divisions.

"In the Field" is for very short news stories on staff activities around the province. We like lots of pictures and no more than 100 words per story for this section.

Deadline for next Road Runner: