Lean Workshop Points to Fewer Steps for Subdivision Approvals

Submitted by Jason Pallan, Operational Business Manager and Josh Rossiter, Senior Project Management Analyst

As part of the Lean initiative, a team of ministry staff recently took part in a five-day workshop to address the ministry’s subdivision approvals process. The goal of the workshop (also called a “Kaizen”) is to review the current process, explore an improved process direction, identify actions needed to achieve a streamlined process and assign each action item to a Lean team member.

On the first day of the workshop, the team was given Lean training, including hands-on simulations and different Lean tools and methodologies. The training was followed by an in-depth review of the current state of the subdivision approvals process. The team collectively mapped the process, and identified differences between how districts conduct approvals and how they deal with issues.

Using Lean methods and principles, the team was able to remodel the process and discover a possible 35 per cent reduction in the number of steps required, while maintaining quality in decision-making and review responsibilities. Many of the improvements were introduced through sharing of best practices between team members.

Continued on Page 3…
Editor’s Note

This edition of Road Runner has turned out to be transformation-themed. There are stories about technological leaps, strategies to opening up air travel, and new ways to meet the needs of commercial drivers and smooth out the development approvals process.

The long-service awards recently honoured 105 employees, who together have provided 3,285 years of service. No doubt they have seen technology speed up since their start dates.

Whether you’re been developing or keeping up with new technologies, I hope it’s a joyful ride.

Nancy McLeod, Editor

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The RoadRunner is an employee newsletter, published four times a year, on the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Internet.

We welcome your story submissions. Email your article as a Word document (approx. 500 words maximum) and your high-resolution photographs as JPEGs to: RoadRunner@gov.bc.ca.

In the email for your story, please attach the Word document and graphics (photos, charts, etc.) separately. Please DO NOT embed graphics in the article — this compromises reproduction quality and the images may not be useable by our graphic artist. Photos supplied should be one megabyte.

Check out the Employee Advisory Forum website for regular updates: gww.th.gov.bc.ca/EAF/home_intra.asp.

For @Work — the Public Service Community Website, visit: gww.gov.bc.ca/

Graphic design for Road Runner is provided by Kathy Macovichuk.
The team has scoped out a series of action items that will be completed over the next several months. These range from changes to correspondence templates, to new training sessions for development approvals staff.

We were advised going into the workshop that it can be a challenging week. The team worked intensely to achieve the improved process direction and identify the action items, and there is a great deal of work to be completed over the next several months. That said, everyone who participated in the workshop was very positive about the experience. Being able to bring a diverse group together to discuss challenges and best practices, with the power to enact real change, will benefit the process, ministry employees and development approvals clients in the long term.

“This is a great opportunity to implement positive changes to support development technicians. The process has addressed a need to develop stronger relationships with our colleagues provincially,” said Senior Development Technician Tracy LeClair.

You can view the team’s action items and updates on the ministry’s Lean webpage on TRANnet. If you would like additional information on running a Lean workshop, or answers to any Lean questions, feel free to contact Jason Pallan at Jason.Pallan@gov.bc.ca.

Stay tuned for an update on the CVSE Extraordinary Load Permitting process in the next Roadrunner.

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Workshop revealed potential for 35 per cent smoother subdivision approval process.
Celebrate Road Runner’s Big 50th Birthday Year
Submitted by Nancy McLeod, Road Runner Editor

Not many newsletters get to their 50th year, but Road Runner is nearing that amazing milestone. First published in 1963, it’s shared the successes of employees at work and in the community, every year since.

To celebrate Road Runner’s golden anniversary, each issue in 2013 will have some stories or fun features that highlight our 50 years as an employee publication. We’ll see what the Road Runner (and some of the people and projects in it) looked like back in the day, and where we are now. We’ll reveal what’s behind the scenes of Road Runner, and how it all comes together. To start the party, you’ll find a quiz on Page 32, with clues to the titles of road and highways-themed songs, from the last five decades.

The celebration will peak in November, with the big anniversary edition, marking 50 years since the Road Runner was published in November 1963, with a foreword by then transportation minister, Philip Arthur Gaglardi.

Beyond its extraordinarily long life for a publication, Road Runner stands out as being an employee-driven newsletter. It’s your stories, written by you, for you. I’m hoping to see some first-time contributors and new employees take this opportunity to share their news and submit an article and photo to Road Runner. See the Road Runner web page for upcoming deadlines, plus writing tips and deadlines.

Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us! ★
Connecting with the World through Aviation
Submitted by Linda Harmon, Director Strategic Outreach and Business Engagement

Visiting giant pandas at the Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries was made easier this year when Sichuan Airlines started air service between Chengdu (the capital of Sichuan province in southwest China) and Vancouver International Airport (YVR). YVR has the distinction of being the only airport in North America to have direct flights, provided by a number of airlines, to five cities in Mainland China: Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenyang and Chengdu (after a brief touchdown in Shenyang).

Aviation is an important mode of transportation in British Columbia, not only connecting us to the world, but providing access to education, health services (including medevac), recreation and employment. There are more than 300 airports, heliports and water aerodromes in British Columbia. This means that B.C. seafood and fruit arrives fresh for Asian restaurants and markets. It also means that B.C. restaurants serve some of the best sushi in Canada.

The federal government has primary responsibility for aviation in Canada. In our ministry, Reg Faubert and Leeanne Jones in the Transportation Policy Branch, and Dave Bachynski and Patrick Elves in the Pacific Gateway Branch, work collaboratively with the federal government, airport operators, passenger and cargo airlines, and others in the aviation sector to support and build the aviation in the province. In 2012, the Province eliminated a two-cent-per-litre tax on aviation jet fuel for international flights to create a more competitive aviation sector and attract more international carriers. The strategy seems to be working as last year YVR added Sichuan Airlines and Virgin Atlantic services, and Kelowna now has daily direct flights to Los Angeles.

We recognize that keeping airports safe, reliable and operational is just as important as keeping roads clear. Often, in the more remote areas of the province, the same plows that clear the roads remove snow from airport runways.

To learn more about the ministry’s role in aviation and its strategy to increase B.C.’s competitiveness and open up new markets for passengers and cargo, read Connecting with the World, An Aviation Strategy for British Columbia at www.th.gov.bc.ca/airports/index.htm.

Getting to Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries has become easier, now that Sichuan Airlines flies between YVR and Chengdu, China.

Clearing the Way for Big Loads
Submitted by David Bayne, Acting Business Analysis Manager

When commercial carriers want to move large-size loads throughout our province, the Provincial Permit Centre relies on accurate and up-to-date information about restrictive highway clearances, for bridges, overhead signs and tunnels.

Vertical and horizontal clearances for all structures on or near our highways have been kept electronically for more than five years, retiring the restrictive clearance register that was published on paper almost 20 years ago. Restrictions data has been maintained online since the Provincial Permit Centre was established, however, it took the collaborative efforts of the CVSE, bridge engineering and the Information Management Branch to identify the right person to perform a full audit of the data. The audit required someone with not only geographic information system and spatial tools, but an eye for detail and the gumption to get to the right sources quickly.

Enter Greg Sedun who worked diligently for the past six months gathering and assessing the data from his desk, as supplied by bridge area managers and CVSE staff. The first task was mapping each structure using its GPS coordinate location instead of a linear reference. The next task was assessing clearance measurements from a variety of sources and liaising with ministry staff to confirm the highest level of confidence in the new data was achieved.

The new restrictive clearance database is more than a set of numbers and points on a map. Rather, it is a sign of things to come resulting from streamlined efficiency, transformational ideas and collaboration amongst stakeholder branches. Keeping this data up to date falls on many ministry staff and relies on continued communication between branches, HQ and districts.

Greg Sedun has recently wrapped up his fourth year of studies at UVic, and was leaving for Australia as of last month. The restrictive clearance data he worked with can be queried by using the online Restrictive Clearance Information (RCI) viewer at www.th.gov.bc.ca/RCR. While there, explore the embedded links to Bridge Information GIS, Google Maps and Google Street View.

Updates to the clearance data can be provided by sending an email to onRouteBC@gov.bc.ca (a clearance update request form will be available soon).

Look for the clearance data to be published via DriveBC in the spring.
Premier Officially Opens New Port Mann Bridge
Submitted by Thomas Chhun, District Operations Manager and Joseph Kwan, Operations, Maintenance and Rehab Technician

It was a slightly cloudy morning on Dec. 1, but the staff who gathered together in Coquitlam that Saturday were upbeat and excited. Employees from the South Coast Region, Lower Mainland District, and the Port Mann/Highway 1 Improvement Project had come to witness a historic day in British Columbia’s history. The new Port Mann Bridge, the world’s widest bridge in its final 10-lane capacity, was being officially opened to eight lanes of traffic.

That morning, Premier Christy Clark was there to officiate. The Premier also rode on the bus with staff from the South Coast Region and Lower Mainland District. Prior to boarding the bus, Premier Clark announced that this was the first regular transit service across the Port Mann Bridge in 25 years. Bus service is now available to cross the bridge, with ExpressBus connecting Langley’s new Carvolth Exchange to New Westminster’s Braid Station in about 20 minutes.

The official opening of the new Port Mann Bridge that day completed the first phase of the Port Mann/Highway 1 Project. This phase also includes highway widening from Coquitlam’s Cape Horn area to Surrey’s 176th Street.

The Port Mann Bridge is a major milestone, as it represents our ministry’s commitment to reducing congestion and travel times along one of B.C.’s busiest transportation corridors. Construction will continue on the Port Mann/Highway 1 Improvement Project until the new bridge reaches its full 10-lane capacity and highway improvements are finished in Coquitlam, Burnaby and Vancouver.

Port Bridge Facts

- The Port Mann/Highway 1 Improvement Project is B.C.’s largest transportation project to date. Stretching 37 kilometres, the project includes construction of the new Port Mann Bridge plus the widening of Highway 1 from McGill Street in Vancouver to 216th Street in Langley.
- Two additional two lanes will be completed, once portions of the old bridge have been removed, creating a total of 10 lanes. The bridge will also be the widest bridge in the world, with the largest and longest main span river crossing in Western Canada.
- In its final configuration, the new bridge will have five lanes in each direction. This cable-stayed main bridge across the Fraser River is 850 metres long, while the south approach from Surrey is 360 metres long and the north approach from Coquitlam is 820 metres long. Foundations for the new bridge required use of the largest capacity piles in Canada of up to 5,000 tonnes capacity.

Premier Christy Clark greets Thomas Chhun aboard the first transit bus to cross the new Port Mann Bridge.

Thomas Chhun, Banafsheh Rahmani, Graeme Schimpf, Joseph Kwan, Liisa Hein and Naasir Malik on the new bridge.

Ministry employees and Premier Christy Clark were among well-wishers who celebrated the first regular transit service across the Port Mann Bridge in 25 years.
TransAction -- Mapping Your Health was a huge success this year, thanks to the 281 participants throughout the ministry that signed up and got active during the month of October. From the last time that TransAction ran, during the 2010 Olympics, participation increased by more than 20 per cent. On average, each person that participated in TransAction logged approximately 26 hours of exercise. That is nearly an hour every day! Hopefully some good exercise habits were formed, which will continue through the rest of the year and beyond.

The team that logged the most time was Team Brazil, based out of Nelson, made up of Rajeeta Bains, Brock DiCesare, Kristen Spearman, Jill Carruthers and Katie Ward. They were in the lead right from the start and were able to stay ahead thanks to some long days of hiking and marathon training. They were presented with the first ever TransAction winner’s plaque. The second place team, led by avid cyclist Jesse Schultz out of headquarters, didn’t give them much breathing room which made for some serious competition.

The program wouldn’t have been possible without the hard work and dedication of Val Johnson and the team of IT folks in headquarters. Getting the dust off the program and updating it for 2012 required a lot of time, and the success of TransAction is due largely to their efforts. The EAF wants to say a big thank-you for all their work.

If anyone has any inspirational stories from TransAction, the EAF would love to hear them. Did you learn a new sport or join a fitness group? Achieve a weight loss goal? We’d also like to hear any feedback or suggestions for improving the program. You can send your stories and comments to david.retzer@gov.bc.ca.

For those wondering when the next TransAction will be, the EAF is committed to making the event a yearly challenge given the strong interest and participation. So stay active and let’s give Team Brazil a run for their money next year!

Winning Transaction Teams

1. TEAM BRAZIL
   - Rajeeta Bains
   - Brock DiCesare
   - Jill Carruthers
   - Katie Ward
   - Kristen Spearman
   352 hours of exercise (70 hours per person)

2. TEAM VIRGIN ISLANDS
   - Jesse Schultz
   - Mike Boissonneault
   - Patti Sandham
   - Steve Drew
   - James Hill
   338 hours of exercise (68 hours per person)

3. TEAM GERMANY
   - Graeme Schimpf
   - Kirsten Fagervik
   - Brett Wildeman
   - Don Legault
   - Ernst Boeder
   260 hours of exercise (52 hours per person)

Katie Ward, Jill Carruthers and Rajeeta Bains receive the TransAction plaque for Team Brazil, presented by Ryan Oakley. (Missing – Brock DiCesare)
Planning and implementing actions and projects to support a great work environment is what the Employee Advisory Forum (EAF) is all about. Connecting almost 50 members from across the province to share their ideas and develop action plans is a long-standing practice, as is the EAF alignment with the Work Environment Survey results. With no survey in 2012, and travel restrictions in place like many other areas of our ministry, it was not “business as usual” this November for the EAF. This was an opportunity to be flexible.

The Logistics

Traditionally, this meeting has been held in a central location where all members are invited to attend. This year, things were changed up a bit and the November meeting was held across the province in various locations at the same time! One might ask, “How is that possible?”

Well, to stay within budget constraints, the EAF All Forum Meeting was held via LiveMeeting and conference call. Members gathered in boardrooms, conference rooms and individual offices to re-focus for 2013. Our usual technologies of PowerPoint presentations and microphones were expanded. Using a combination of small groups (in single locations) and the Communicator chat function, we even did short team-building exercises. We tried “new” things (well at least new for us) like Prezi and webcam. Like many of us, Deputy Minister Grant Main said he was “outside his comfort zone” as this was his first LiveMeeting and presentation via webcam.

Also, instead of two full days of uninterrupted meetings, the fall forum was designed to accommodate our world where short pieces of concentrated time allowed everyone to schedule around other commitments. The forum happened over three shorter sessions. Emails remained manageable, operations continued more easily, and we could absorb information and ideas in small digestible chunks.

The Focus

The rate of change in the world feels like “mach one” speed some days. For example, we can do anything on a smart phone now – the only thing that seems to be missing is teleporting and who knows, that might come soon! The EAF wants to remain relevant by adding value – we want to continue to make this a great place to work. So the first session centred on EAF and the big picture. We heard from Deputy Minister Grant Main about key priorities including major projects as well as day-to-day work. He also noted that it will be the people in our ministry that will drive all the change happening (i.e. transformation and Lean) as these are not just top-down initiatives. The ideas for change will come from the grass roots level.

Finance and Management Services Assistant Deputy Minister Nancy Bain spoke about fiscal realities including information about the hiring freeze and the lens that is applied to each position when considering critical vacancies. She introduced what the Transformation Plan means to our ministry and how Lean fits into our lines of business. Echoing the deputy minister’s perspective, she advocated for employees thinking about their work and coming up with ways for doing things more efficiently – it’s about changing the way we think. The session wrapped up with a deeper look at the ministry’s Transformation Plan so that the EAF could consider how our projects might align. Our ministry’s workforce spans several generations and we all respond to change differently. We left that first meeting asking ourselves, “How can we provide employees with support as we change the way we do business?”

The second session dug even deeper into transformation. We heard from Change Management Specialist Sandra Daniel who is with the Lean Project Office of the B.C. Public Service Agency. We then split into two separate break-out sessions where each session had a LiveMeeting invitation and conference dial-in. The EAF members took part in a session on diversity and development, and a session on health and well-being.

The third session was action planning. What did this look like? Individual teams connected throughout the following week via teleconference and LiveMeeting to plan and discuss upcoming projects that we believe will make a difference. Stay tuned to see what the teams have come up with to support fellow employees over the next year!

Changing the Way We Do Business

This meeting is a testament to what a long way technology has come, and it demonstrated that business can be accomplished even though we live in all parts of the province and are not always able to fly or drive to one central location. This type of meeting does not happen without extensive planning and organization performed by a crew of dedicated organizers. A big thanks goes out to Seana van der Valk, Glenn Olleck, April Paxton and Tracy Houser and also to all the guest speakers and executive members that took time out of their busy schedules to speak.

While there is great joy and effectiveness in building teams through face-to-face meetings (easier to form, storm, norm and perform), the EAF All Forum Meeting went without a hitch and proved that work can take place without travel, so people can share ideas, set direction and plan for action.
Did You Know?

**FACTS ABOUT PAY AND BENEFITS – EMPLOYEE VISION AND EYE EXAM BENEFIT**

Submitted by Daniela Pricope, EAF Member

The B.C. public service benefits plan offers financial assistance to reduce the costs of keeping your eyes working well.

The plan reimburses employees for the purchase and/or repair of corrective eyewear and contributes to contact lens fittings and laser eye surgery, when prescribed or performed by an optometrist, ophthalmologist or physician. This benefit is not subject to an annual deductible and is reimbursed at 100 per cent, to the plan’s limits. Those limits are a combined maximum of $250 over 24 months for adults, and $250 over 12 months for dependent children. (Note: charges for non-prescription eyewear are not covered.) For more info see Page 20 of the Benefits Guide.

You can choose high-fashion designer eyewear or you can go with surgical correction like David Retzer did.

“While I was considering getting laser eye surgery to correct my vision, I did some research and found out that the $250 prescription eyewear credit can also be used toward this procedure. This offsets roughly 10 per cent of the total cost. A follow-up checkup by my optometrist could be claimed under the $75 eye examination benefit as well. Overall, I’m very happy I had this procedure done, and I recommend it to others. I’ve enjoyed freedom from glasses and contacts, and have noticed how improved my vision is, especially while playing sports,” says David.

Another vision benefit is for eye examinations which are reimbursed as follows:

Maximum: $75 per two calendar years, for an examination performed by a physician or optometrist, on a person between the ages of 19 and 64. (MSP covers routine eye examination for those 18 years and under and 65 years and over.) Your practitioner may charge more than what is payable by MSP for this service. For more info, see Page 18 of the Benefits Guide.

David Retzer accessed his employee benefits to help him see the world clearly without glasses.

Livin’ the Dream EAF Photo Contest

Submitted by Thomas Chhun, EAF Member

Have you ever said this to yourself? “Now, this is what the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is!”

Maybe during your daily commute you are blessed with some of the most scenic transportation systems in the province. Are you a photography buff, or maybe just have a great eye for that “Kodak moment”?*

Well we have a contest for you!

**Contest Details**

The contest is based on our ministry’s vision of “a fully integrated transportation system that advances economic and social growth, and moves goods and people within British Columbia and to markets beyond.”

The Employee Advisory Forum would like employees to get outdoors and start snapping pictures that showcase this vision. Your photo subject matter could be projects under construction, existing structures, road networks or anything else that you think fits into the vision.

Please send a maximum of two high resolution photos to Thomas.Chhun@gov.bc.ca with the subject heading “EAF Photo Contest” no later than March 25. The Walk the Talk Team will select the top images. The winners will be featured in an upcoming edition of Road Runner, and win a delightful prize.*

Employees form the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s initials at the South Fraser Perimeter Road.
The Beauty of Back-Country Skiing
Submitted by Richard de Vos, EAF Member

Richard de Vos is a member of the Employee Advisory Forum’s Team Balancing Act. Its purpose is to support and promote work/life balance and a healthy lifestyle.

Got powder? Do you enjoy getting out into nature?
Snow doesn’t have to be something you shovel – you can carve it up!

Until about five years ago, I would pay to go downhill skiing and had never back-country skied. It only took one trip to create my addiction for the activity.

Here is a common conversation when I try to explain “back-country skiing” …

Me: “I went back-country skiing this weekend.”
Other: “So you cross-country ski, eh?”
Me: “No, I back-country ski.”
Other: “That’s what I said.”

Back-country skiing, alpine touring and ski touring are all common terms for this type of skiing. There is no reliance on groomed trails and the equipment differs from that of cross-country gear.

Back-country skiing is for those who drive down the road looking at the landscape (mountains, valleys, bowls) thinking to themselves “I’d like to go there.” It’s also for people who like “cardio” because before you can ski down through the powder, you need to get yourself to the top somehow. Back-country skiing can be geared to any skill/physical level. You can take as long as you like to gain elevation and descend wherever you wish at whatever speed you desire. Even my wife, at nine months pregnant, went skiing! Of course, we chose very easy and flat terrain.

Another question I get asked is, “Where do you go for this kind of skiing?” My answer is “Anywhere that lands are open for public use.” Provincial parks, recreation sites and other areas that permit recreational activities are commonly used for back-country skiing. For example, Garibaldi Provincial Park, or The Knuckleheads winter recreation area near Mount Washington.

Continued on Page 11…
Gearing up for Back-Country Skiing

Submitted by Richard de Vos, EAF Member

Back-country gear does cost more than regular downhill gear but there are ways to acquire the equipment “on the cheap.” Websites like Mountain Equipment Co-op gear swap, Craigslist and Kijiji often have used gear at a fraction of what it costs new. Google can also help you to investigate different makes, sizes and styles.

There are two gear type styles that can be used for back-country skiing: alpine touring equipment and telemark equipment. This is what’s needed for alpine touring:

**Skis:** generally the skis used are as wide or wider than a downhill ski. This is to provide good floatation in deeper powder (found in the back-country).

**Skins:** are fabric strips which are sticky on one side to adhere to the bottoms of the skis, and have hooks and loops which secure them. The other side of the skin is a velour-like material which provides traction for ascending the hill or mountain. Skins can also be used to slow a descent when conditions are icy.

**Bindings:** pivot at the front/toe area (like a cross country ski) but can be locked down at the rear/heel (like a downhill binding). They also have different height settings at the heel so the angle of approach can be lessened when climbing steeper sections of terrain.

**Boots:** generally are lighter in weight than downhill boots and allow for more flex to accommodate a walking motion.

**Poles:** can be of the downhill style but many prefer telescopic poles for ease of packing.

**Helmet and Goggles:** to protect your head and eyes.

Avalanche Gear: like an avalanche beacon which is attached to the skier’s body under their jacket and emits a signal so that in the event of being buried in an avalanche, others can detect the signal and possibly recover the person. The beacon can also be used to search for buried people. A probe is a collapsible pole used to penetrate the snow, once a buried person is located. This ensures that people are digging in the right spot. A shovel, well, it’s used to dig with.

It’s advised that people who choose to be active in avalanche country take an avalanche awareness course so they can learn to assess conditions and use their avalanche gear properly.

Safety Equipment (besides the avalanche stuff): includes extra layers, high carb food, water and a lighter. It’s also a good idea to have a water bottle that is stainless steel, in case you need to place it in the fire to melt snow for water.

**Backpack:** to carry the avalanche, safety equipment and anything else in.
Recently, I enjoyed an opportunity to sit down with Finance and Management Services Assistant Deputy Minister Nancy Bain, to talk about Nancy’s work here at the ministry and how she arrived at this point in her career. Throughout our conversation, Nancy’s enthusiasm for her team and her work shone through.

The Finance and Management Services Department is responsible for the finances of the ministry and the Transportation Financing Authority (BCTFA), and works on financial issues related to the Transportation Investment Corporation, BC Rail, BC Transit, ICBC, TransLink and BC Ferries. The system of borrowing, balancing and spending that keeps the ministry rolling along is complex, which makes it extremely interesting to Nancy. Many people also don’t know that the Information Management Branch, Corporate Writing Services and now Strategic Human Resources are all part of the Finance and Management Services Department.

Nancy and her team see the ministry as their client. They help colleagues get to solutions within budgets and government guidelines, and that work from an operational perspective. People are at the core of everything the department does.

Education – Past and Present
With a keen interest in people, Nancy obtained a psychology degree when she first went to university. However, after several months travelling in Europe, she returned to university to obtain her chartered accountant (CA) designation.

We had a fascinating conversation about how a psychology degree and a CA designation have together played major roles in Nancy’s career. Her interest in people, combined with her CA knowledge, give her a valuable perspective for developing people-focused financial and business solutions.

As executive financial officer, Nancy suggests that an accounting designation is important for anyone in that position. The various designations provide invaluable training, which together with experience, are critical to understanding the complex matters that cross the desk of an executive financial officer.

Having a CA designation requires ongoing mandatory professional development. Nancy is extremely positive about this, and all other learning, for the growth opportunity it offers. During our conversation, it was easy to see her excitement about and commitment to continuous learning.

The Journey Here – Career Progression and Professional Development
Nancy articled at KPMG and progressed to a senior manager position there, before deciding to move to the provincial government. She spent five years as a treasury board analyst and then managed a variety of programs in the Ministries of Finance, Health and Healthy Living and Sport, before coming to our ministry in March 2009. She has now been with the public service for 20 years.

Her approach to career planning has been deliberate, and her career path reflects a series of considered decisions. She has intentionally chosen career moves to develop skills and knowledge in support of her long-term goals.

I asked her if she had any professional development advice for ministry employees. She recommended setting goals, and making well thought-out decisions to support them. There have been choices in Nancy’s career that have come down to making lists of pros and cons. She believes that a longer-term focus on your goals can guide you to where you want to go, while allowing you to enjoy every step of the way.

She also says that seeking advice from experienced colleagues has been helpful in her own professional development.

About the Work
Each member of the Executive is responsible for one or more lines of work in the ministry. The Finance and Management Services
Department’s organizational chart represents foundational support of the work done in the Highways, Infrastructure, Partnerships, and Policy and Programs Departments. I asked Nancy to talk about the current focuses for her and her team.

She said that managing the ministry and BCTFA finances is important now more than ever, as government works toward a balanced budget in 2013/14. Nancy and her team members in the Financial Management Branch have been working hard on recent financial directions and targets for the ministry while ensuring those make sense operationally. Their focus is on developing and maintaining a framework for the ministry to achieve its financial targets, while meeting the spirit and intent of the government’s directions and priorities. Performing this work for an organization as large and financially complex as ours, plus the BCTFA which funds the ministry’s impressive roster of capital projects, is especially rewarding for Nancy. If you’re curious about the projects, take a look at the “Transportation Investments” list in the ministry’s Service Plan.

As part of the Finance and Management Services Department, the Information Management Branch provides information management and technology for the ministry, including line of business applications, application hosting, information security, computer workstations, mobile devices and telephone service. A major focus is supporting the ministry’s Transformation Plan.

The Strategic Human Resources branch supports employee engagement, health and well-being, the Employee Advisory Forum and internal communications. A key priority is workforce planning – analyzing the current workforce; planning for future staffing needs, changes and challenges; and delivering the Engineer in Training and Technical Entry Level Programs.

Corporate Writing Services ensures the public receives professional and accurate information in a way that supports provincial government objectives and the ministry’s mandate. They respond to letters and e-mails to the minister or Executive and e-mails to the ministry web site, deliver service plans and annual reports and place ministry advertisements.

In addition to overseeing these areas, Nancy is the Executive sponsor for the Lean initiative. She is thrilled about the potential for Lean to engage employees and empower them to use their expert knowledge to make process improvements and eliminate redundant work. Exhausting? Actually, for Nancy it’s energizing. It’s impossible to hear her talk about the respect and admiration she has for her team, and the size and scope of the projects in her department, without getting caught up in Nancy’s enthusiasm.

**Keeping a Work-Life Balance**

Nancy feels that she has work-life balance. She has a strong and capable team at work, and a highly supportive husband. Nancy strives to incorporate exercise into her life, however she would describe that part of her life as a “work-in-progress.”

Her real relaxation comes from her passion for travel. New York City is high on her list of places to get energized. She and her spouse have done a lot of travelling, and by the time this article is in print, they will have completed their first South American trip, to Argentina and Chile.

Not surprisingly, people are Nancy’s favourite part of travel. She is fascinated by other cultures, and values the perspective those experiences lend to life in Canada.

For this member of Executive, who has a psychology degree and a CA designation, it all adds up.

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Flick Over to TranBC Flickr

Flickr. It’s a weird name for a wonderful thing. One of our ministry’s most popular social media platforms, Flickr is a website dedicated to the sharing of images. And everyone loves visuals, because they tell a story that words often can’t. Think of it as a virtual photo album.

Look up TranBC on Flickr and you will find photos of what the ministry does and descriptions explaining why we do it. Be it paving, avalanche control or safety upgrades, staff have shared with us and we share with the world. See something missing from the picture? Let us know and we will gladly add it to the story on your behalf – or launch a new photo story. Contact Neil Judson.
Louise Swan – Passenger Transportation Inspector
Submitted by Susan Cringle, EAF Member

Louise Swan’s career journey has been rich and fulfilling. Her public service orientation has led to and been shaped by many roles for employers that range from Yoho National Park, BC Ferries and the U.S. Consulate General, to the B.C. Public Service.

There have been some constants in those positions. Louise’s ability to multi-task, her attention to detail and exceptional people skills have served her well within the provincial government. All of those skill sets are invaluable in her current position as a passenger transportation inspector in Burnaby.

In 1984, Louise started her public service career as a secretary for the Ministry of Health, at the East Kootenay Health Unit in Golden. Soon after, she successfully applied for the district stenographer position with the Ministry of Highways there, and began a path that led to many proud moments in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. She moved to Burnaby in 1987, as a licensing clerk. In 1995, she began work as a motor carrier inspector, then took on an acting role as a carrier safety inspector in the National Safety Code program. In 2004, the Passenger Transportation Act came into effect, replacing the Motor Carrier Act, and Louise stayed with the new Passenger Transportation Branch as a passenger transportation inspector.

Louise is an enthusiastic and conscientious learner. Right out of high school, she took office administration courses at East Kootenay Community College. Later, Justice Institute courses and other training led to her current position. Working with CVSE and performing checks on commercial passenger vehicles such as limousines, taxis and buses is one of the reasons she likes coming to work every day. She is grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from the expertise and experience (100 years combined!) of her colleagues within the branch.

In addition to learning, Louise enjoys teaching staff when training is required. She puts others at ease and welcomes the opportunity to mentor other employees, just as she has received on-the-job training.

Louise says she sometimes feels a little surprised to find herself spending the latter part of her career in a compliance enforcement position, and that her time at the ministry has been extremely varied and rewarding.

Louise advocates that anyone looking to advance in their career should seize opportunities. She is grateful that her previous manager encouraged her to do that when she applied for her current position.

For anyone curious about work in the Passenger Transportation Branch, Louise recommends starting at the branch website www.th.gov.bc.ca/rpt/ and the Passenger Transportation Board website www.ptboard.bc.ca, and also researching the Passenger Transportation Act and Regulations.

When not putting the public’s safety first, Louise likes to spend her leisure time being active and with family. She is a proud grandmother of three boys and one girl, with another bundle on the way. Louise’s love of sport is as rich and varied as her work path; she enjoys watching golf, curling, baseball, hockey and horse riding. ★
Construction Progresses on New Ferry for Upper Arrow Lake
Submitted by Claire Ingram, Procurement Manager

Just outside the village of Nakusp, on the shores of Upper Arrow Lake, construction of the new inland ferry for the Shelter Bay-Galena Bay ferry route is well underway.

The ferry is located 49 kilometres south of Revelstoke, in the Central Kootenays, and connects Highway 23 on the west side of the lake to Highway 31 on the east side. The new 80 car/250 passenger vessel will replace two smaller vessels that are reaching the end of their life. It will be 320 feet long, 64 feet wide and weigh approximately 2.5 million pounds (1,100 metric tonnes) and is targeted for service in spring 2014.

The new ferry will provide:

• Significantly increased capacity
• Wider lanes and smoother ramp transitions to ensure rapid loading and unloading
• Improved reliability
• More environmentally friendly operation than the current vessels – 25 per cent less greenhouse gas emissions and 25 per cent greater fuel efficiency.
• A deck de-icing system
• Quiet smooth sailing

All of this will result in fewer waits and a more enjoyable crossing.

After a very challenging procurement process, the design and construction of the new vessel is being undertaken by WaterBridge Steel and Polar Design under a $26.5-million design-build agreement crafted by Claire Ingram of the Procurement Branch and Maryse Langevin of the Marine Branch. Guidance was provided by our ministry legal counsel, Maria D’Archangelo who is with the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, and Capilano Maritime Design, the ministry’s naval architect.

The construction has provided a much-needed boost to the economy of Nakusp and the surrounding areas, providing 48 new jobs so far and ramping up to a projected 68 jobs for the project as a whole. It will also result in hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of supplies and services being purchased in the area.

The design and construction is being monitored by Lloyd’s Register which has delegated authority from Transport Canada’s Marine Safety Branch. This combined with regular quality reviews by Capilano Maritime Design and their associates, will ensure that a quality vessel, fit for the purpose, will be ready for crew training in early 2014.

The vessel hull will be launched in July 2013 (during the lake’s high water time), with construction of the super-structure and internal systems taking place whilst it’s afloat.

Watch for further construction updates in the coming months. ★
My Highway Thru Hell Weekly Experience
Submitted by Susan Jones, CVSE Policy Analyst

In October and November, the Social Media team hosted screenings of Discovery Channel’s Highway Thru Hell at lunch times, in Victoria’s headquarters boardroom.

When I first heard about the show, it piqued my interest for two reasons. First, I work in the Commercial Vehicle Safety and Compliance Branch of the ministry. This branch oversees safety for commercial trucks, including the large ones rescued by the Jamie Davis Heavy Towing, the company featured in the show. Second, the show focussed on a highway located right here in my province – a route where weather sometimes provides motorists with challenging winter driving conditions – the Coquihalla.

Watching the show with other ministry staff was the best way to experience the drama of the rescues that were featured on each episode. It was almost the same group each week who gathered together, eating our lunch, as we got to know the individual members of Jamie Davis’ team, and waited with baited breath to see if each rescue would be successful. I enjoyed the additional descriptions in each episode, posing the “what ifs” that could happen if things went wrong. There was some dramatization of events to raise excitement, but in the end it was an eye-opener on the types of challenges faced by heavy truck operators and rescue teams after an accident.

I managed to watch six of seven episodes, including the last one where Jamie Davis and the show’s producer Mark Miller came by to answer questions and talk about their experiences. It was interesting to find out from them, the difficulties of making the show and how they felt the show provided some education to all drivers of the Coquihalla Highway. To top it off, they confirmed that they were prepared to film a second series of the show.

I am looking forward to gathering once more in Boardroom 3A of 940 Blanshard to find out if Bruce, the Old Dog, has retired and what has been happening to Jamie’s star driver, Adam, aka Mr. Top Dog. Did teenaged Brandon (Jamie’s stepson) decide to continue in the towing profession? Did the new, extremely expensive Rotator truck get any more scratches? Did Samy get called back for another season of service with the company? Will Kevin change careers and go into making films? And oh yes, what new and scary rescues did the team face during the winter of 2012/13? Were they ever pushed past their “breaking point”? I’ll be staying tuned for the next season!
You Never Know Where the Road Will Go
Submitted by Nancy McLeod, Road Runner Editor

I had no idea I’d become hooked!

When the Discovery Channel’s Highway Thru Hell series was announced, I was only mildly intrigued. I’d seen reality television shows a total of twice. My own reality is that I only watch television at other people’s homes, when staying in hotel rooms or (unwillingly) at restaurants or bars.

However, my supervisor, Web and Social Media Director Russel Lolacher, made it easy to catch the show that follows the colourful crew of Jamie Davis Heavy Towing, as they rescue big rigs on the Coquihalla and Fraser Canyon Highways. He set up regular weekly lunchtime screenings of past episodes from Discovery Channel’s website for everyone at HQ, as a fun professional development offering.

I settled into the third floor boardroom with my microwaved leftovers to take a look at my first episode. From there on, I was at every showing, gripped by the real-life drama. I felt like I was part of Jamie’s gang, while simultaneously being part of the regular viewing crowd. I was stoked when my opinion of the show was validated by the Globe and Mail’s John Doyle, who wrote, “...it’s not like those shows celebrating brawn and brute force. It celebrates the hardiness of helpers and caregivers, because it’s Canadian.”

Meanwhile, my social media colleagues and I were discovering common ground with the show’s cautionary tales to travel the Coquihalla prepared. We occasionally tweeted information about the show, to show our Twitter communities what the show showed about safe driving. Russel had connected a few times with Highway Thru Hell Producer Mark Miller to talk about social media.

My Highway Thru Hell appreciation reached its summit when Russel told me that Mark Miller and Jamie Davis would come to HQ, Nov. 15. We quickly set up video conferences with the Thompson-Nicola District and the Chilliwack Office, and invited Victoria employees to meet our special guests. Mark and Jamie showed up to applause from a boardroom full of people.

Jamie’s startled response was, “I didn’t expect this!” He and Mark then had a question and answer session with ministry employees in the three locations. Following that, my co-worker Neil Judson videotaped an interview with Jamie and Mark. Neil then turned the highlights into five videos where the pair discuss the winter driving issues they see on the Coquihalla and how the show is made.

Before Jamie and Mark left, we presented them with some DriveBC bumper stickers and key chains for the crew. I walked them to the float plane terminal and saw them off, giving them each a copy of Road Runner. I had moved from being slightly interested to seriously smitten in a surprisingly short time. ★
Any construction can be a challenge. When you add in a non-titled right of way (which doesn’t fit into any normal city development processes), no water or hydro service connections, no traffic access and being surrounded by Kiewit-Flatiron’s very active construction work, you know it’s never going to be boring!

The project was construction of the Surrey Service Centre, the customer service office for Port Mann Bridge tolling. The new centre also acts as the backup location for all the tolling data being collected at the ministry’s new Transportation Management Centre, in Coquitlam.

Construction of the service centre was poised to begin in April 2012, at the site north of Highway 1, at the eastbound 160th off-ramp, which only two months earlier closely resembled a dirt mogul track for BMX bikes. Thanks to Bob Brown of CMS Focus and his team who prepped the site over the winter, it was ready for development and construction.

It was amazing what was accomplished in seven months with a good team!

The team members included general contractor EllisDon Corporation, along with ministry Project Director Bruce McAllister, and myself (Maria Ciarniello) as project manager, with design by Merrick Architecture, Acumen Engineering, AME Consulting, Bush Bohlman and RF Binnie. Special assistance was provided by Port Mann/Highway 1 East Section Manager Sheila Hui who made a two-lane underpass appear, seemingly out of nowhere.

By October, we had constructed the Surrey Service Centre for TI Corp. ★

TranBC. You might have seen the logo or heard the term, but how much do you know about the ministry’s own blog site? TranBC is the flagship of our social media platforms, where the work we do is discussed in a conversational, plain-language way — great for sharing with anyone. www.tranbc.ca
Weigh2GoBC Wins a GTEC Award
Submitted by Sam Casler, Senior Manager, Business Services

Every year, public sector information technology (IT) professionals gather at the Government Technology Exhibition and Conference (GTEC) to learn from industry leaders, see the newest technologies and celebrate excellence in their field. This educational forum has a 20-year tradition of connecting government and industry professionals from across Canada and around the globe, at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

At the last conference, the ministry’s Weigh2GoBC team was honoured with a provincial Award for Excellence in Public Service Delivery, Nov. 5. Weigh2GoBC is a network of automatic vehicle identification and weigh-in-motion technologies which allow commercial vehicles to report to inspection stations electronically. Once a vehicle is checked at the first station, it can bypass all others for the next 12 hours.

The GTEC award particularly recognizes the Weigh2GoBC team’s collaboration with the State of Washington on the Commercial Vehicle Data Sharing program that simplifies the movement of commercial vehicles between the two jurisdictions. Allowing vehicles to register in reciprocal bypass programs decreases travel time, fuel and operating expenses for business. This greatly benefits B.C.’s 125 carriers and 900 vehicles that are enrolled in Washington’s Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks program.

The award is a prestigious one and the team is thrilled and honoured to be recognized. The third party judging process is managed by SCOAP, a Canadian association of IT leaders.

The judging panels include executives from the public and the private sectors and they choose the winners from among hundreds of federal, provincial and municipal government project nominations.

The team acknowledged by the GTEC award is:
- Pam McDermid, ITS initiatives manager, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement
- Tahna Neilson, business analyst, Information Management Branch
- Ken Clark, technical leader, Information Management Branch
- David Gaffney, manager, business analysis, Information Management Branch

These individuals have worked together for several years and are an excellent example of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

When asked how she felt about the team winning the GTEC award, Tahna Neilson responded with, “I think it’s great! This is a solid system and has obvious benefit to the trucking community in B.C. We want to expand this type of program to other provinces, so it is nice to be recognized nationally.”

The team was presented with their medal award by Deputy Minister Grant Main on Dec. 11. Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Director Brian Murray and Information Management Branch Executive Director Debbie Fritz also attended to formally congratulate the team on its achievement.

Visit www.Weigh2GoBC.ca for more information on this program.
Celebrating Long Service at TRAN
Submitted by Seana van der Valk, Strategic Human Resources Planner

The Long Service Awards are an opportunity to recognize individuals in the B.C. public service who have achieved 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service. For our ministry, the 2012 Long Service Award ceremony was held in Victoria on Oct. 25. We shared our celebrations with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation and the Royal BC Museum.

Our ministry’s remarkable group of 105 recipients has contributed an outstanding combined 3,285 years of service. Between our 35 and 40-year recipients there is 1,705 years of service, but even more noteworthy is that only 13 of those years have been outside our ministry. On behalf of the entire ministry, thank you for your dedication, your contributions, and your excellence.

Congratulations to our 2012 award recipients:

**Twenty-five year recipients**
- Tara Bate
- Robert Biagioni
- Robert Bitte
- Bart Chenuz
- Ron Danvers
- Tony DeGroot
- Monica Ferguson
- G. Brent McDonald
- Lesleigh Smuin
- Ross McLean
- Jeffrey Moore
- Thomas Murphy
- Andrew Newall
- Laura Nordquist
- Laura Silva
- Timothy Taylor
- Pat Thomas
- Vince Trozzo
- Simon Walker
- Patricia Zimmel

**Thirty year recipients**
- Kay Bamford
- Bruce Barnewall
- Willie Chang
- William Crichton
- F. Bruce Hayden
- Bradley Hogg
- Wayne Janusson
- Larry Park
- Sue Sun
- Sue Pauwels
- Ugo Porco
- Jim Prewett
- Dean Rodgers
- Greg Ross
- Al Scharien
- Karen Schmidt
- John Swanson
- Patricia Switzer
- Allen Wall

**Thirty-five year recipients**
- Rick Adams
- Brian Austin
- Brent Bailey
- Fraser Bell
- Gordon Blackey
- W. Bruce Calbick
- Sandra Campbell
- Ron Chadwick
- Rodney Chapman
- Tom Chernenkoff
- Robyn Clifford
- Lesley Haltner
- Neil O’Neill
- Dave Kyte
- Loreen Russell
- Jerry Leet (posthumous)
- Lynda Lochhead
- Chris McBride
- Betty McCaw
- David Peet
- Ken Read
- David Wagner
- Rob Richardson
- Nordich Roberts
- Gerald Wells
- Curtin Ryan
- Ron Sanderson
- Marion Sapergia
- William Wagner
- Robert McDermid
- Nancy Merston
- Cindy Smith
- James Turner
- Gordon Wagner
- Heather Weir
- Dianne Young

35-year recipient Wayne Fraser (right) and his guest, Joanne Gris. Wayne was selected as recipient speaker for the ministry celebration at Government House.

Long Service Award recipients from the Terrace Office: (back row) Robert Biagioni (25 years), Greg Ross (30 years) with guest Cheryl Pelletier, George Lomas (30 years); (front row) guests Laura Biagioni and Carol Lomas.

Current and former Cariboo District employees: (back row) Monica Ferguson (25 years), Maurice LeFrancois (30 years), Loreen Russell (35 years) and Russel Roberts (35 years); (front row) Kourtney Chingee (Guest) and Vicki Martin (25 years).
CVSE Attends Officer Appreciation Lunch
Submitted by Cindy Hogg, Commercial Transport Enforcement Supervisor

CVSE Inspectors were invited to attend the fourth Annual Peace Officer Appreciation Lunch sponsored by the All Saints Anglican Church in Agassiz, on Oct. 28.

CVSE, along with the local RCMP, Correctional Officers and CN Police, participated in the morning church service. Then they proceeded into the church hall lead by the bagpipe-playing members of the Harrison Highlanders, to enjoy a fabulous meal. Appreciation was expressed by the local mayor and a comment made that “O, Canada, we stand on guard for thee,” sung that morning was most appropriate.

Thank you to the inspectors for representing CVSE in this community.

Cindy Hogg and daughter Megan, Kirstin Gauley, Larry Ness and Leo Belanger at All-Saints Anglican Church.

My Good Health

My Good Health is a health management system that can help you and your family make informed decisions to positively impact your health now and in the future. It offers information about medications, natural health products, fitness, community resources and more.

Get in on the My Good Health Challenge by visiting the @Work site.
What the Heck is an eSymposium?
Submitted by Tracy Houser, Strategic Human Resources

Talk about making change! I was recently invited to an eSymposium offered by the Learning Centre on the topic of diversity. The cynic in me cried out “Not more new technology?!” And “diversity”…that’s old news. How do I learn in that type of environment and why do I care anyway?

But I put away my “judgment” hat and pulled on the “learner” cap and trotted my curious self over to the Learning Centre to see what this new concept was.

Remember classroom days where the teacher stood at the front of the room and spouted like a fountain of knowledge? All the desks were in rows. Everyone was supposed to be silent and simply write down whatever was said. Well that was definitely not the learning environment created on this day.

Imagine a brightly lit room with 30 people or so sitting at octagon-shaped tables, another 70 online watching their computer screens, a camera person capturing the speakers, people typing into a chat function and questions being asked virtually and face to face. One speaker stood at a podium, one sat at a table, two were online using webcams to show them sitting at their workstations. Some used PowerPoint slides, some just speaking notes. Speaker gender, culture, age and experience was varied. Brainstormed notes were captured on a blank white screen for virtual participants, while those in the room used good old-fashioned sticky notes. It was a place for dialogue.

Kudos to the Learning Centre for trying something new! Organizer and facilitator Stephen Kearsey noted that it was not perfect and thanked everyone for their patience as they worked things out. The agenda included a keynote speaker, a panel presentation, discussion and questions, and a sharing of best practices. The whole idea was to breathe some life into the words that we see in various documents (including Reflecting Our Communities: Building a Diverse BC Public Service).

There were so many great nuggets to be gleaned from this two-hour session that I could not possibly capture them all. Here are the top three things that resonated for me:

1. **Diversity** – A diverse organization recognizes and celebrates the richness that comes from our differences and the great benefit that comes from valuing openness and appreciation of those differences.

2. **Temptation** – There may be a temptation to honour one part of diversity at the expense of another but we must accept the whole person. Our core personality includes our age, gender, sexual orientation, abilities (physical and cognitive), ethnicity and race. A truly diverse workplace must value all of these aspects of who we are.

3. **Powerful** – As individuals, we have powerful unexamined ideas that influence our behaviours and experience in both positive and negative ways. These combined with systems (i.e. the normal way things work) impact others. This is an opportunity to examine those ideas.

**What’s Next?**

I plan to take the online course called Diversity in the Public Service and start a conversation with my work team. I also can’t help but wonder if it is time to give myself a kick in the proverbial technologically-challenged butt and figure out how to create such a welcoming learning space for people all over the province. After all, with current budget and travel restrictions, we have to change the way we work.

How cool would it be to resurrect the “Connections to the Future” event as an eSymposium? ★

UVic’s Moussa Magassa gave a thought-provoking talk which included this diagram of the multiple layers of diversity.
Thompson Nicola District is on Twitter
Submitted By Amanda Aldrich, Development Approval Technician (TELp)

As social media becomes an increasingly important part of our communication to the public, the Thompson Nicola District is thrilled to be among the many districts contributing to Twitter.

Development Approvals Technicians Megan Cullinane and myself (Amanda Aldrich) are providing a wide variety of information to share with the public. From large projects to local events, we plan on using social media to transfer more information faster to the public. As another communication outlet, much like DriveBC, we can provide instantaneous information that reaches not only the Thompson Nicola District’s geographic area, but province wide. In 140 characters (or less, so our tweets can be re-tweeted by others) we can easily highlight events and projects going on within our district as they happen, and supplement them with links to videos, photos and websites.

With many of our stakeholders, contractors and maintenance folks, plus communities and the other ministry districts online, Twitter can be used to not only transfer information but also monitor events that may otherwise go undetected. We’re connecting with the social media team in HQ through emails, the “Talking TranBC” Facebook page and conversations, to make the most of the opportunities this new tool offers. Providing another element of customer service to the people of British Columbia will strengthen our relationships with stakeholders and the public and showcase our work within the district.

The response from the Twitter community has been positive for us so far. We are excited for this journey and look forward to the road ahead.

★

Follow us on Twitter @TranBC_TN

Sealcoating to Come – An Ant’s View
Submitted by Ron Wiebe, Project Information Officer

When I’m in the field shooting a project, I’m always looking for ways to depict common things in an unusual way.

So, last fall when I was out capturing images of some of the great first-time hard-surfacing projects in the Prince George area, I thought, “What might that sealcoat job look like from an ant’s perspective?”

I put the camera on the ground at Taborglen Road, and after some trial and error, I got this shot. ★
Taking on Technical Tasks and Unravelling Acronyms as a TELP

Submitted by Edison Ting, Area Development and Operations Technician (TELP)

While on my graduation trip to Southeast Asia, I was thrilled to receive my acceptance e-mail for the Technical Entry Level Program (TELP). I had completed a degree in environmental geography at Simon Fraser University and a study abroad year at Seoul Nation University in South Korea. Now, I would become an area development and operations technician for the Lower Mainland District.

Looking back, I recall being quite nervous during my first few weeks at the office, since I had no idea what was in store for me or what responsibilities would come my way. Fortunately, everyone I have met at the ministry has been highly supportive in answering my questions — especially explaining all the different acronyms!

As a tech-savvy individual with experience in graphic design and geographic information systems (GIS), I was assigned to update and manage our district's road network information using the ministry's Corporate Highway and Resources Information System (commonly known as CHRIS). This required me to travel to Victoria for training on the system. I have also applied my computer knowledge to creating maps for various assignments, using ArcGIS and Illustrator. My skills will also be helpful in the ministry's transition from paper to electronic-based maps and documentation.

In June, I had the fantastic opportunity to attend the provincial development approvals conference, in Richmond. There, I networked with other TELPs and development approvals staff from throughout the province. The seminars gave me an excellent understanding of the skills and knowledge I will need to become a well-qualified development approvals team member.

Now that I have been in the ministry for about half a year, I have begun to take on more responsibility such as permit and rezoning applications. As each application is unique, it makes development approvals that much more exciting and challenging. The best part of the job is to see the projects that I have approved.

The experience and knowledge I have gained so far from working in the Lower Mainland District have been phenomenal. I enjoy the field work and site inspections as they allow me to witness changes that are happening in my community.

During my spare time, I am involved in a long list of hobbies and activities. With the benefit of my flexible work schedule, I am able to continue my volunteer service with St. John Ambulance, an organization that I have been a volunteer with since 2001. Furthermore, I enjoy rock climbing, volleyball, cycling and hitting the gym. As you can tell, I thrive on a busy schedule!

I look forward to new challenges and experiences for the year ahead. I hope one day to be able to say that I have met everyone in the ministry. ★

Edison Ting on Koh Phi Phi Island, Thailand, when he found out he was accepted into the ministry’s TELP program.
For the team in Strategic Human Resources (SHR), carrying out Lean and transformation strategies is more than a core responsibility – these principles are now a way of life.

Over the last six months we have been transforming our team and our services. We are a small but mighty team of five, with backgrounds ranging from internal communications, business planning, adult education and facilitation, organizational design, coaching, event planning, program development, project planning and more.

We know that the demographic shifts predicted for the future will require us to deliver our services with fewer people and fewer resources. This is why Lean is so important. In embracing Lean philosophies, we find freedom – freedom to explore the way we conduct our work and freedom to improve our processes. This allows us to continue to meet our business goals, even as demand for our services grows. For SHR, and several other work units in the ministry, the future is now. As a result, we are looking to Lean principles to manage our workload. We are evaluating every task, every request and challenging the “right way” of delivering our services. By discovering efficiencies, exploring our areas of strength, and relying on the strengths of our network we are streamlining our processes and improving our services, and in the process rejuvenating our engagement.

The ministry’s Transformation Plan talks about the benefits of a more collaborative work environment, which includes innovative thinking, faster decision making, increased flexibility and more effective knowledge transfer. It is one of our tasks to promote understanding and awareness of these benefits.

Our goal was to start with ourselves, and model the necessary behaviour to make this cultural shift. Guess what? Collaboration works and the benefits are real! In SHR, it’s okay to ask why. Curiosity is welcomed. Flexibility is fundamental. And collaboration is the rule, not the exception.

So what does our shop do, and what’s so “strategic” about Strategic Human Resources?

The SHR Branch is currently looking to expand its team. To view opportunities, please visit our website, then click on the “Staffing” tab and the “TRAN Mobility” link on the “Staffing” page.

Our team focuses on ensuring we have the people we need (you) so that our ministry can continue to provide great services to the citizens of British Columbia, now and moving into the future. You may be wondering, “What does this mean exactly and how does this differ from the services that MyHR provides as part of the BC Public Service Agency?”

Where MyHR focuses on hiring and staffing, we focus on organizational design and succession planning. Where MyHR oversees the Learning Centre and MyPerformance, we oversee supervisory excellence and employee recognition initiatives, such as Public Service Week and the Deputy Minister Awards. And where MyHR supports your well-being with My Good Health and benefits services, we support your well-being by collaborating with the Employee Advisory Forum and facilitating awareness and access to corporate resources. (Speaking of well-being, we’re currently seeking Health Champions. See Page 26 for more information.)

The branch also partners with you when you need support with transactional human resources like job postings and descriptions and labour relations; we connect you with the people who will meet your needs; we direct you to the available resources and programs; and we keep you informed on corporate and ministry news and engagement initiatives.

So who are we? We are the lean, keen SHR machine that is focusing our efforts on the services that best serve our ministry clients – you! Here are the members of our team and their areas of expertise:

Melissa Thickens: corporate initiatives and liaison, Executive support, branch management
Tracy Houser: employee engagement and transformation (health and well-being, supervisory excellence)
Kate FitzPatrick: succession planning and development (i.e. TELP, EIT), special projects
Seana van der Valk: internal communications, Employee Advisory Forum, recognition
Tania Betiku: staffing, HR analytics, diversity, MyPerformance,

Though we’ve been transforming and streamlining our services, we’re not done: transformation is ongoing. It’s about agility and innovation. It’s about self-awareness and understanding how our actions impact events and other people. It’s about working efficiently and connecting with others to achieve results. Transformation may at times be uncomfortable, but in the end is liberating; and SHR is an example of what a team can accomplish when they collaborate and embrace transformation. We are here for you – our clients – but just as importantly, we continue to support each other. That, perhaps, has been the best part of transformation – being open to change to create a better future. ★
Calling all Superheroes – We Need You
Submitted by Tracy Houser, Manager of Engagement Initiatives

Congratulations and thank you to Bonnie Cameron and David Retzer of the Southern Interior Region and Ryan Todd of the Northern Region for stepping up to take on the role of health champions!

Dave, Bonnie and Ryan are all highly active and love to participate in a variety of sports and events. They try to create buzz and excitement about getting out and participating in new activities for fun, fitness and good health. For example, Dave and Bonnie encourage their fellow co-workers to join them for a hike or swim or snow shoe or skate ski on weekends. And they are always looking to recruit new folks for other sports or events like their local triathlon and running races.

Dave is the lead on the Ski2Sea Race in Kelowna which is always fun and includes SIR staff. They have a walking group at work where they walk during coffee breaks and part of lunch time – which adds up to an hour each day of exercise in the fresh air! While Ryan is involved in many healthy activities, one benefit of being a health champion for him is the opportunity to build momentum through team events such as the Run for the Cure. When asked “Why get involved?” Bonnie was quick to reply, “I’d say we are dedicated health champions and that’s why we wanted to be a part of this program. It was just a natural fit for us.”

We are looking for additional health champions – one from the Northern Region and two each from the South Coast Region and headquarters – who would like to support healthy activities and choices in our ministry. Health champions from each ministry will volunteer to help promote and implement workplace health and safety promotions, activities, events and campaigns within their region/HQ. The concept behind health champions is to create an enthusiastic and active public service-wide team of health ambassadors.

Why Health Champions?
Improving employee health is a public-service-wide goal. Workplace Health and Safety (a B.C. Public Service Agency-led initiative) is here to help each ministry succeed at improving the health of employees. Our health champions will work directly with the Public Service Agency. The Public Service Agency will:

- assist our ministry health champions and provide resources (e.g. swag, information, funding for events, etc.) to help make workplace health a success in our ministry.
- keep ministry health champions informed of events and programs available to employees, and update them on the latest news in workplace health and wellness.
- help coordinate and fund employee health events like biometric testing, providing guest speakers or lunch and learn seminars, at our worksites.

What’s the commitment?
Being a health champion is not an onerous role. In recognition of everyone’s work demands and busy schedules, the time requirements are minimal, as outlined below.

At a minimum, Health Champions will agree to:

- share and promote program and initiative information (like cold and flu prevention or My Good Health) and market and distribute communications materials and resources (e.g. posters, e-mails and ministry intranet resources).

Time: up to one hour per month (possibly higher during October –

Healthy Workplace Month –depending on ministry wellness activities)

Optional activities: health champions may choose to attend/engage in the following:

- Monthly Live Meeting updates, aimed at keeping health champions on the leading edge of workplace health news and information.
  Time: one hour per month

- Coordinate employee health events at ministry worksites, eg. biometric testing, lunch and learns and guest speaker presentations. Health champions would need to coordinate the time, date and location at their workplace and promote the event.
  Time: would vary per event, depending on number and size of events

Are you interested in becoming a Ministry Health Champion?
Contact Tracy Houser in Strategic Human Resources for more information.

★

Ryan Todd

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Southern Interior Region Joins ShakeOut Simulation
Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary

The Great British Columbia ShakeOut shook things up across the ministry on Oct. 18, at 10:18 a.m. The building wardens at the Southern Interior Region Office in Kamloops were keen to conduct the earthquake drill and highlight earthquake preparedness for employees. In this photo they demonstrate the drop and cover aspects of the “drop, cover and hold on” technique. More than 590,000 British Columbians participated in the drill. 

Floor Wardens (from front of the table to the back) Elaine Shibata, Paul Riegert, Crystal Chenier, Jeanne Reeves, Wendy Cumming, Dave Retzer, Pam Grosjean and Sue Pare.

CVSE Inspector in CN Trucking Video
Submitted by Cindy Hogg, Commercial Transport Enforcement Supervisor

Commercial Transport Inspector Pete Handler now appears in a training video for CNTL, the trucking division of CN Rail. The segment featuring Pete was filmed at the Hunter Creek Inspection Station, on Oct. 10. In the video, he talks about what inspectors look for when examining commercial vehicles.

The CN website says that CNTL delivers more than 1,300 loads a day and employs more than 700 drivers. The trucking service links with CN rail transportation at intermodal terminals in Canada and the U.S.

Peter Handler (in high-visibility coveralls) tells truckers what vehicle inspectors look for.
Farewell to Ian Donaldson
Submitted by Sam Casler, Information Management Branch Senior Manager

One word describes Ian Donaldson’s approach to information management and information technology: innovation.

In September 1992, Ian joined our ministry’s Information Management Branch as a business analyst. Ian was soon actively involved in several projects, including:

- Traffic Information Management Systems (TIMS)
- Highway Location Referencing Project (HLRP)
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Transportation Centreline Network (TCN)

Ian flourished in the branch and within several years began to take on new positions with increasing responsibility:

- database analyst (1996)
- senior database analyst (1998)
- application development coordinator (2001)
- A/senior manager, application services (2002)
- senior manager, application services (2003)
- A/chief information officer and director (2010)

Ian participated in and contributed to many important projects and initiatives during 20 years with the ministry. His accomplishments are too numerous to mention, but some of the highlights include:

- Acknowledgement from Workplace Technology Services Assistant Deputy Minister Jill Kott, for collaboration between the ministry and her organization (2007)
- Premiers Award, Service Excellence, for DriveBC (2008)
- Deputy Minister Award and Premiers Award Nomination, for process improvement work with the Provincial Permit Centre (2008)
- Appointed by the deputy minister as an innovation champion for the ministry (2008)

In October 2012, after years of tenaciously representing the ministry and working collaboratively with Shared Services BC, Ian transitioned to their alliance management office, as a service management director.

The ministry and IMB sincerely thank Ian Donaldson for two decades of exemplary service on behalf of the ministry and the citizens of British Columbia.

Best of luck in the future, Ian! We hope that our paths cross often.

Family Day in the Transit Branch
Submitted by Kevin Volk, Transit Projects Senior Manager

In celebration of B.C.’s inaugural Family Day on Monday, Feb. 11, we took an informal poll of the Transit Branch to see how everyone planned on spending the holiday. The answers ranged from exotic to heartwarming to downright strange...

- Sherry Barnes — “Take my family for a bike ride on the Lochside Trail”
- Daisy Brooke — “Making my kids Eggs Benny!”
- John Coombs — “Getting ready for family trip to Florida.”
- Tabitha Garcia — “Enjoying our last day volunteering at the Elephant Rescue Centre in Thailand.”
- Jim Hester — “Hoping to be able to walk along the Victoria waterfront…”
- Greg Humphrey — “Taking down my Festivus tree.”
- Ross Long — “Hanging out with my Victoria family.”
- Stacey McGaghey Jones — “Baking and visiting a park or beach with our daughter.”
- Peter Murray — “Birthday long weekend!”
- Sheila Smith — “Planning extravagant Valentine’s celebrations.”
- Ed Storm — “Every day is family day.”
- Levi Timmermans — “Playing Hnefatafl with Ryan Spillett*.” (See Page 32)
- Kevin Volk — “Watching the old Magnum, P.I. television series.”

Kevin Volk’s depiction of activities planned by Transit Branch employees for B.C.’s first Family Day.
Highways Department Food Hamper Challenge
Submitted by Kyla Kelch, Administrative Assistant

On Nov. 15, the Business Management Services Branch challenged the rest of the Highways Department to gather edible goods for holiday food hampers. The rules of the challenge were plain and simple – fill up as many paper boxes as you can and don’t include food your kids wouldn’t eat. As always, the Highways Department was up to the challenge.

The magical elves from the Construction and Maintenance Branch in HQ were quick to strategize, hoping to place ahead of their floor neighbour, the Business Management Services Branch. They put up signs and arrows to lead stray donors to their boxes. Nothing wrong with a little friendly competition during the holiday season!

The art of giving comes in many shapes and forms, and this year each district came up with creative ways to help those in need. The Cariboo District held a silent auction of delectable holiday treats. There were butter tarts, shortbread cookies, hot chocolate and pakoras galore. The West Kootenay District provided hampers to local families in need and the Peace District held a Big Brothers Big Sisters “Adopt a Family” holiday hamper fundraiser.

Once all varieties of donations were collected and tallied, Mr. Rocky Mountain Claus (Jack Bennetto) and Mrs. Business Management Services Claus (Sandra Toth Nacey) reviewed the donation list and checked it twice. The competition ended with a tie – a big shout out to the Lower Mainland District and the Port Mann/Highway 1 Project for winning the donation challenge!

Overall, we collectively donated about 100 boxes of food and nearly $2,000! Everyone felt great for participating in the seasonal event and helping those in need. We look forward to more opportunities to help others as the year unfolds.

The West Kootenay District contributed to holiday hampers for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Peace District employees Heidi Postnikoff, Chrystal Jones, Florian Kund, Patty Nixon, Stephani Lorentz, Nadia Lebel and Nicola Hogg.

The Mustard Seed collected boxes of food donated by Highways Department employees at HQ.
Chili Bowl Auction and Cook-Off
Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary

Auctioning off bowls destined to be filled with chili was the Southern Interior Region and Thompson Nicola District’s tempting way to launch the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund in Kamloops, Oct. 10.

Employees donated the colourful bowls and anybody who bought a bowl ate for free. The highest price paid for a bowl was $100, which was cost-shared by Deborah Newby and Brad Hogg. (Brad was not at the event, so Deborah ate half of the chili in the bowl on his behalf.) Their jointly owned bowl was donated by Dave Shibata.

Sue Stankevich’s plate from Cuba sold for $75.

The prize for best-tasting chili was awarded to Terry Rowan, hottest yet flavourful was given to Dave Retzer, best presentation was earned by Deborah Newby and “most desirable wings” went to Paula Cousins. Deborah Newby and Crystal Chenier conducted the bowl auction and arranged the chili cook off.

The group raised $916.50 for community organizations.

Northern Runners Receive Fundraising Award
Submitted by Ryan Todd, Systems Services Manager

The Northern Regional and Fort George District Offices in Prince George put together a team of four brave soldiers, known as the “NR MOT Road Runners,” to raise money in support of Breast Cancer Research in last year’s CIBC Run for the cure.

Ryan Todd, Jeanette Grant, Shaun Holahan and Melanie Robbestad raised more than $2,400 for the run which took place on Sept. 30. They were awarded the title of “Top Corporate Fundraising Team” in the Prince George area for 2012.

The NR MOT Road Runners and CIBC’s Run for the Cure would like to thank everyone who helped the team raise almost $1,000 more than their initial goal. A special thanks to the Fraternal Order of Eagles and Ladies Auxiliary to the Eagles, in Prince George, for their generous donations.
Ministry Employees Debut in Playful Panto
Submitted by Nancy McLeod, Social Media Researcher/Writer

Five ministry staff from headquarters celebrated their Christmas holidays in a decidedly different manner. They were involved with their first panto – a traditional British form of theatre enjoyed by the young and young at heart.

Kathy Macovichuk, a veteran community theatre actor, made her directorial debut by delivering Goldilocks and the Three Bears. This tale of a girl, three bears and some porridge had a modified storyline in keeping with the panto format. (Who knew that hypno-honey could drive the normally benign and lovable three bears to hunger for people rather than porridge?)

Gislene Guenard and Selene Hinkley were cast in several roles, changing off as villagers, bears and even flowers. Beverly van Druten-Blais played the irretrievably love-struck Buzzbee, one of the evil Queen Bee’s minions. Kristen Reimer contributed a big collection of woody props.

For those of you not familiar with pantos, they are a far cry from regular theatre entertainment. They’re high-energy productions with larger-than-life, colourful and quirky characters, who act, sing and dance. Audience participation is a big part of the scene, with children usually invited on stage to sing a song with the actors, for which they are rewarded. Bad jokes and puns abound and the audience is encouraged to cheer for the good guy and “boo” the villain. And when the big, bad wolf appears on stage, the audience warns the unaware good guys with cries of “He’s behind you!”

These antics in Goldilocks and the Three Bears drew shrieks of delight from the children, and plenty of belly laughs from the bigger kids (some of whom were into their eighties). There were 12 performances which all sold out two weeks before the first show.

Several employees came to the panto, bringing family and friends, and left their comments.

“Great fun to watch and so many of my friends and co-workers involved… Well done and thanks for a magical evening.” — Gord Smith

“Loved, loved, loved it. Hilarious. Very well done.” — Bonnie Kormansek

“I enjoyed my first panto and the entire show was delightful!!” — Tina Schaefer
Hnefatafl [pronounced nhev-eh-TAH-full] means the “king’s board or game”. It is a game of strategy and is older than chess.

Vancouver Island District Technician Ryan Spillett’s passion for the ancient Scandinavian board game of Hnefatafl spilled over to his Victoria colleagues recently. Awe-struck staff watched as Spillett won game after game against all ministry challengers, often in dramatic, unpredictable, and rule-changing fashion.

“The Vikings never actually wrote down the rules of the game, archaeologists have never found more than a fragment of any original playing pieces or board, no one knows if they actually used dice... but other than that it’s a hoot!” explains Ryan. “People may quibble with the fact that I’m beating them at a game that they don’t understand, or didn’t even want to play, but that’s been the Hnefatafl way for centuries.”

Pronounced Nhev-eh-TAH-full, the word means the “king’s board or game”.

With his playing pieces jealously guarded in a Prince George Spruce Kings hockey bag, Spillett explains his theory for how the Norseman played their mysterious game. He struggles to keep his barely controlled rage for the “dicers” conspiracy theorists in check.

“There couldn’t have been dice,” claims Spillett. “It’s the only way to allow for four-horn captures of the king. Any other theory is just that – a theory.”

Spillett’s passion and rule-making creativity have not gone un-noticed in the Hnefatafl community. The on-line chatter is openly skeptical, yet nervous, of Spillett’s eminent rise to stardom.

“Spillett plays a classic Oslo 3-4 prevent defense, but he can’t keep it up forever. Plus, he’s going to run out of rules to randomly change every time he starts to lose,” said one blogger.

Despite the on-line skepticism, Spillett’s co-workers fully support his endeavour.

“Heavyweight boxer Muhammad Ali said that champions aren’t made in the gyms,” says the Transit Branch’s Levi Timmermans. “Champions are made from something they have deep inside – a desire, a dream, a vision. When I think of Ryan and Hnefatafl, I think of that kind of champion.”

The Pacific Gateway Branch’s Nathan Popp reflected on a recent match played against Spillett. “I came ready to play, and even applied reverse psychology to try to shake his confidence and concentration, but he’s solid, the real deal. I think he’s probably the fastest rising-star in the competitive world of no-rules Hnefatafl.”

Enjoying a Spillett-made cafe latte, the Transit Branch’s Kevin Volk said, “Ryan’s never been the type to back down from a challenge. Hnefatafl is next in his list of conquests, now that he’s mastered latte art.” ★
“High Fashion” Meets Hibernation Challenge

Submitted by Jessica Ling, Policy Analyst

Here’s a curious equation: 1,500 government employees + ugly sweaters = a smaller carbon footprint.

What is it? Why, the Hibernation Challenge of course!

Corporately organized by the Climate Action Secretariat, the Hibernation Challenge encouraged all B.C. public service employees to commit to energy-saving behaviours, Nov. 26 – 30. The reason for this was simple – more than 50 per cent of the B.C. government’s total carbon emissions come from energy consumed in government buildings. Reducing energy consumption in this area has enormous potential to reduce our overall emissions.

Ministry staff from across the province came through and showed their dedication to green behaviours. Staff committed to energy-saving tactics like turning off computer monitors and closing blinds at the end of the day, turning off lights when leaving a room and using natural light where possible. All your actions added up to significant savings – both in dollars and cents, and in the form of a smaller carbon footprint.

As part of the Hibernation Challenge, an ugly sweater competition was held on Nov. 28 and brave souls at ministry offices across the province took part in the photo contest. Employees courageously donned sweaters that were adorned with snowflakes and snowmen, and one brave employee wore a sweater that was adorned with bells and tinsel! There was an old national curling competition sweater, and a bubble-gum pink and mint green elephant sweater, complete with a swinging tail. The variety of sweaters made it difficult to select a clear winner, but in the end, three submissions were chosen that stood out among all the entries!

Thank you everyone for participating in the Hibernation Challenge. Remember, turning off your monitor and closing the blinds is fashionable all year long! ★

Pat Egan at the Prince George office in his 32-year-old curling sweater.

Thompson Nicola District staff show their sweater spirit: (back row) Glenn Taylor and Joan Brickwood; (front row) Megan Cullinane, Emily Robertson and Nicole Hansen.

Nadia Lebel, Chrystal Jones and Oliver Schwuchow donned festive sweaters in Fort St. John.