Harrop II Ferry Makes a Big Splash

Submitted by Hugh Eberle, West Kootenay District Manager

A few years ago, I submitted a Road Runner article, *Not Your Typical Ferry Tale*, about our inland ferry system, and how strange it was to be writing about a ship building yard located inland, in Nakusp.

That shipyard, owned and operated by WaterBridge Steel, specializes in building vessels in remote sites, under difficult environmental conditions and with limited access to industrial infrastructure.

In 2016, WaterBridge Steel was successful on a contract for $27.9 million, to design and build four inland cable ferries, to replace cable ferries which are nearing the end of their service life. (The Glade II and the Adams Lake Ferry are the other recently finished cable ferries, and the final ferry is the Arrow Park III, expected to start service in early 2020.) The Harrop II is currently undergoing its “sea trials” in Kootenay Lake prior to going into operation this spring, to serve the communities of Harrop and Proctor.

I must say it’s quite exciting to see modules being assembled in the Nakusp shipyard, and then transported by truck to the final assembly point, where they are then welded together. It sounds like a terribly easy process when I write this. However, observing how a ship gets built from flat iron into curves and bends over a period of months, and then having all the intricate pieces combined into a beautiful vessel, seems more like a work of art than a manufacturing operation.

So how do you launch a 5,500-metric tonne cable ferry, like the Harrop II? Well, unlike other

More on Page 3...
Editor’s Note

As the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, our work goes much deeper than our name.

We’re more than a collective of people involved in transportation and infrastructure; we’re about transformation and creating new structures on an organizational, personal and societal level.

Each of us contributes to something bigger in our own personal choices, how we work and collaborate with others, and in our efforts to keep the public travelling safely and the economy moving.

A big example of transformation is the Development Approvals Enhancement Initiative where an extensive overhaul is underway by some extremely dedicated employees, to make things work better for development approvals practitioners and their varied clients. Those clients can be ranchers or property developers, non-profit organizations or utility companies, or film makers, business operators or athletic event organizers. That’s a wide pool of positively impacted people.

As individuals, sometimes we seek to alter or broaden our understanding, like when a district manager spends serious time in the field with staff to better know their work. Or transformation can be a rare face-to-face meeting, to clarify or strengthen policy and processes, and address complex issues. Working relationships can also be transformed when employees learn new coaching and problem-solving skills, from facilitators and each other.

On a more personal level, many of us are contributing to changing individual and societal attitudes that support abusive behaviour. We’re stepping up by wearing pink shirts and pinning on pieces of moose hide to show that harassment, verbal abuse and physical violence are not acceptable.

As you look through this issue, you’ll find these and more examples of employees making changes for the better.

Nancy McLeod
Editor
Sitting Around with District Managers in Front of 1,400 People

Submitted by Russel Lolacher, Web and Social Media Services Director

It’s always a little tense and awkward sitting below beaming, bright lights. There’s a “soon to be live” microphone pointing directly at your mouth and a camera targeting your personal space.

It gets even more complicated, when you’re joined by four other individuals who have never been in this situation before, and are feeling the pressure of the impending show that will be beamed live, to potentially 1,400 of their colleagues.

But that’s exactly the situation I found myself in, facilitating the District Manager Roundtable, on Jan. 24. I’ve had the pleasure of being behind the scenes for virtually all ministry-wide webcasts to date, as my team is directly involved in coaching, planning, shooting, editing and directing them. The webcasts have typically been members of the Executive providing updates from their areas.

But this was the first roundtable format, and the first one where I would be on camera.

In a nutshell, it was a blast. My partners in crime were all there to clarify the role of a district manager of transportation (aka DMT) – not only its importance to the ministry and the public, but also to dispel some myths about the job. DMTs head up the ministry’s work in 11 geographic areas of the province, and we wanted to provide employees with a greater sense of what was involved with the work and open some minds to the opportunities and rewards that come with the job.

Former Thompson Nicola District Manager and current Southern Interior Assistant Regional Director Paula Cousins, Rocky Mountain District Manager Ron Sharp, Vancouver Island District Manager Mike Pearson and former Skeena District Manager and current Southern Interior Region Project Delivery and Planning Services Director Darrell Gunn all joined in the hour-long conversation.

Some Highlights

Paula: “Districts are essentially the face of the ministry to the public. So, while district managers provide oversight of specific services like maintenance contracts, bridge and structure inspections, commercial vehicle safety, subdivision approvals and permitting, they are the ones the customer and end user sees as the owner.”

Darrell: A typical day of a district manager is atypical. There’s so much variety in the role, and the district is responsible for so many awesome things on a local level, that you never know what you’re going to be brought into. You can start the day on a small but very important file to a stakeholder, and end the day with an important call that’s affecting the minister’s team that goes out in the field.

As a district manager, your role is to support training, and to support employees in a positive workplace culture so that they come to work and feel empowered.

Darrell: Relationship building is one of the most important skills to the district manager role, whether that’s internally or externally. We’re serving the public, and trust is a big part of that, so how you build and maintain those relationships is absolutely critical.

Mike: I came from an engineering background. Something that I’ve found that really helped me in this role is your ability to make decisions. You have to be able to take calculated risks.

What do you love about being a DMT?

Paula: It’s unlike any other job in the ministry. What I didn’t expect when I became a DMT was the incredible pride and job satisfaction. It’s a tough job, but it’s the most rewarding job I’ve ever had. It is so diverse and rewarding that you can get in that job and stay there, and you’re not going to get bored.

More on Page 4…
Sitting Around with District Managers in Front of 1,400 People… Continued from Page 3

Ron: You’re able to be a part of something bigger than yourself. It is incredibly rewarding.

Mike: For me, I love the pace of it. The impact, the diversity, not knowing what’s going to happen in a day. I just love all that. It keeps it interesting, and you really get that sense of pride when you deal with all sorts of issues.

Darrell: One of the reasons I wanted to become a district manager, was that I have never met a current or past district manager who didn’t say the same thing, which is, the district manager is their favourite job they have ever had.

I had an amazing time hosting the District Manager Roundtable and I couldn’t have asked for a better group to do this with. The feedback from employees who tuned into the session has been really positive.

To get the best value from the efforts everyone put into the roundtable, we videotaped it, so that others can watch it when convenient. We’re also going to include the audio in our TRANsmissions Podcast library, so I hope you’ll give it a listen.

A huge thanks to our videographer Neil Judson and sound mixer/editor James Penner for their help in making the information sharing venture such a success!

The soundboard wired and ready to broadcast the District Manager Roundtable.

Share your story in the June 2019 Road Runner

Send articles and photos to RoadRunner@gov.bc.ca

District Manager Gets Avalanche Technician Experience

Submitted by Lindsay McKinnon, District Services Manager

The Rocky Mountain District’s avalanche program has a hefty responsibility to ensure public safety on the highways.

The team is responsible for three mountain ranges (Selkirk, Monashee and Rocky) covering 250 kilometres from north to south, and 100 kilometres east to west. There are more than 240 avalanche paths, three weather forecast areas (North Columbia, West Columbia and Rocky Mountains), eight remote avalanche weather stations and five remote weather information systems. Crew members work in elevations ranging from 440 to 2,600 metres.

Adventures are abundant during the winter months, and January was no exception.

One of the big events was giving District Manager Ron Sharp a glimpse into the work of an avalanche technician. Ron joined the team for two days, participating in the collection of snowpack information for avalanche forecasting, performing road patrols, and conducting avalanche observation from a helicopter above Highway 23, north to the Mica Dam.

“It was awesome to have our district manager spend two full days with us considering his busy schedule,” said District Avalanche Supervisor Val Visotzky. “It was great to show Ron some of the many things that our group does to keep highway travellers safe. The crew appreciated his interest and enthusiasm for the avalanche program.”

Thank you to avalanche team members Val Visotzky, Mark Karlstrom, Ian Kirschner, Neville Budgen, Greg Paltinger and Heather Milligan for your hard work and continued dedication to the Rocky Mountain District. Thanks also to Ron Sharp for taking his leadership to new heights by joining the team at work.

District Manager Ron Sharp and Assistant Avalanche Technician Neville Budgen on duty in the Rocky Mountain District.
Extraordinary Load Approvals Team Meets in Person
Submitted by Richard Mawhinney, Commercial Transport Policy Advisor

The team that works on extraordinary load approvals and permitting had the rare opportunity to meet in the same room last November, for the first time in about six years. The meeting included commercial transport advisors from Dawson Creek, Williams Lake and Coquitlam; structural engineers from Victoria, Coquitlam and Prince George; and vehicle engineers and commercial transport group staff from Victoria. The exceptionally big or heavy vehicle combinations that we deal with need custom analysis before a permit can be issued, to see whether they’ll fit on a proposed route and whether the bridges and culverts they travel over will be able to support their weight. Last year, about 2,000 extraordinary loads approvals were issued by Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement and the number has been rapidly increasing annually.

For a lot of us, it was the first time we actually met in person, which was interesting considering we communicate with each other on a daily basis. We started off by having a get together, the night before the meeting, at a local restaurant for introductions, food and a few beverages, which resulted in no shortage of great stories and laughter. We really enjoyed this chance to get to know each other more, outside of an office environment.

At our main meeting the next day, we discussed how we manage our extraordinary load approval process, did some team-building and improved on current policy and strategies that the team has been dealing with on a regular basis. Having this rare occasion to spend a full day discussing all these issues at the same table proved to be more productive than a few Skype or teleconference meetings held over many weeks or months.

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This gathering was a great way to learn more about each other’s strengths and weaknesses, who’s more of an introvert or extrovert, how to more effectively communicate with each other and to be surprised by the different projects that team members had been part of. We also made sure to bring light to our team’s successes, as it was important to make everyone aware of the great work we had already completed, and not just the challenges we are facing.

I believe the rest of the commercial transport team would agree with me that the meeting was an excellent opportunity to learn more about each other and share interesting work stories and life experiences. I would highly recommend conducting a meeting like this, to other groups. In our ministry, where employees are spread around the province, engaging face-to-face and building on our diversity was an invaluable experience.

Extraordinary Load Approvals Team (back row): Mark Frew, Kim Bedell, Christopher Rabbitt, Phil Folz, Gary Farnden, Nicole Hilborne and Joshua Joyce; and (front row): Bilal Bakht, Grant Herman, Nam Nguyen, Jan Lansing, Emma MacTavish and Jacob Pietrzyk. (Participant Richard Mawhinney took the photo).

Facilitator Jan Lansing kept us on track.

An extraordinary load transporting a transformer, with push trucks and pilot car in the rear.

Development Approvals HQ Moves to Business Services Management Branch
Submitted by David Fisher, Development Approvals Manager

The Development Approvals HQ Unit moved from the Engineering Branch to the Business Management Services Branch, in December.

David Fisher and Jim Prewett, who make up the unit, have been with the ministry development approvals program since 2003 and 2004 respectively. They connect with many ministry business areas for the benefit and support of development approvals practitioners around the province. These business areas include highway planning, engineering, maintenance, properties, insurance, Indigenous relations, field services, utilities and web services, to name a few.

“Since we joined the Development Approvals HQ Unit, we have been housed in three different branches – Highway Planning, Engineering, and now Business Management Services,” says David. “While that might seem like looking for a home, the reality is that development approvals activities are related to many ministry functions that work from various organizational units.”

More on Page 8...
Development Approvals Enhancements on the Way
Submitted by Rena Gibson, DAEI Working Group Lead

Often the things we don’t see can have the biggest impact. Electricity and water are two examples where a team of dedicated professionals work behind the scenes to ensure that you can flip a switch or turn on a tap without a second thought.

Our ministry’s Development Approvals Team is another example of a passionate employees who make things happen, without being front and centre. The team is about 70 employees who work to protect public safety and investment in the highway infrastructure, that supports the safe movement of people and goods throughout our province.

Development approvals (DA) technicians process a total of more than 6,000 applications annually, involving everything from new businesses seeking highway access, to utility providers placing lines, to permits for movie shoots or special events like parades or athletic competitions.

The range of applications from the public, and the corresponding knowledge required by DA technicians, is remarkably diverse. In a given week, a DA technician might deal with a developer creating a subdivision, a film studio shooting a movie, a family subdividing a property or a rancher looking for road access for a cattle drive. Along the way, technicians will research and weigh implications including drainage and geotechnical conditions, traffic, engineering, and ultimately, the safety perspective.

DAEI Driving Change
In 2018, the opportunity arose to innovate and improve development approvals with the creation of the Development Approvals Enhancement Initiative (DAEI).

The DAEI is now in its final phase – implementation – as the working groups move forward with more than a dozen recommendations. The five working groups are: Leadership, Succession, Policy and Guidelines, Resource Applications and Professional Development and Training.

Leadership Working Group – New leadership and a stronger community of practice
Creating and formalizing a strong community of practice is the latest initiative for the Leadership Working Group. The group, led by Rena Gibson from the Skeena District, is shifting focus now that its first recommendation to create a temporary position to lead the DAEI is moving forward.

“We’re starting in a good position with the community of practice we already have in in development approvals,” says Rena. “Our job will be to enhance it with the right technology platform, accountability and organization.” Reviewing and making recommendations about the DA organizational structure is another focus of the group.

Rajeeta Bains Leads Development Approvals Changes
The temporary position of Development Approvals Enhancement Initiative (DAEI) Lead was filled by Rajeeta Bains, in late February

During her seven-month appointment, Rajeeta will lead the important work of implementing the DAEI initiatives, with the support of the five working group leads, and DAEI board members from our ministry Executive. In fall of 2018, all five working groups of the DAEI identified that strong leadership was required for the DAEI to succeed, which resulted in the DAEI lead position being created.

Rajeeta will perform the role from her home base of Nelson, where she has recently been leading the DAEI’s Succession Group. Rajeeta started with the ministry 15 years ago as a development approvals TELP in the West Kootenay District, and is the district technician there. She has a geography degree from the University of Victoria, and her work has connected her with other development approvals and Highways Department employees from around the province.

Rajeeta’s enthusiasm, dedication and strong communication skills, along with her experience on the DAEI Succession Working Group, are a great foundation to keep the transformation of development approvals moving ahead.

Rajeeta will lead the implementation of more than a dozen recommendations to enhance leadership, policy and guidelines, resource tools, succession and training.
Succession – Updating job descriptions

The Succession Working Group is currently focused on revising outdated job descriptions for development approvals positions – a task that succession lead West Kootenay’s Rajeeta Bains says is a high priority. (Rajeeta was the group lead at the time of this article’s writing).

“The job descriptions for DA are out of date and inconsistent across the province,” Rajeeta says. “We’re updating the job profiles to more accurately reflect the current roles.”

The Succession Working Group is also seeking better ways to share and manage workload between district offices, and identify resources and efficiencies at the local level that can be made available to benefit DA practitioners province-wide.

Streamlining and improving the application process, is another focus. The group is also investigating the use of an updated fee schedule, as a tool to improve the quality and efficiency of the application process.

Policy and Guidelines Working Group – Sharpening the tools

The Policy and Guidelines Working Group is focused on reviewing, revising and improving the reference documents that are critical tools for development approvals practitioners. Permit documents were up first but working group lead Joan Brickwood says the group will also be collecting more reference materials for development approvals.

“We have worked very hard to get to the point where the long overdue review and revision of our reference documents can finally get underway,” says Joan.

Also on this group’s list is establishing DA involvement in policy, guidelines and technical documents that impact DA work. In addition, there is a need to develop Indigenous consultation guidelines for permits, approvals and subdivision.

Resource Applications – DA websites changes coming

Updating the highway permits and approvals site and the rural subdivisions applications website is the first focus of the Resource Applications Working Group.

Group lead Rupinder Prihar says work on the websites will roll out this spring and be completed this fall.

“We’re working with the Business Management Services Branch web folks and will be engaging with the development approvals community and our stakeholders to determine how best to improve the user experience,” says Rupinder.

Rupinder’s group is also establishing a searchable central repository for DA documents.

“We were pleased to find that the current Engineering Reference Library infrastructure is a ready-to-go platform that is much more user-friendly than SharePoint. It allows us to build a one-stop shop for development approval policy manuals, guidelines, onboarding documents and other reference materials.”

The group also plans to work with the Information Management Branch and Business Management Services Branch, to upgrade and enhance the Electronic Development Approvals System.

Professional Development and Training – DA survival guide on the way

The DA Survival Guide is the primary project of the Professional Development and Training Working Group.

Group Lead Haley Leech says better onboarding tools will help reduce the time required to train new development approval techs and increase retention.

“There is a steep learning curve for new techs, without many resources available. The onboarding package will serve as a survival guide for new hires, by giving them what they need to get up and running, fast,” says Haley.

The group’s other priorities are developing a regional training meeting, and training resources like a subject matter expert tool for DA.

What DA Employees Said They Wanted

The work of the DAEE was informed by a survey of all development approval practitioners in September 2018.

Approximately 85 per cent of the practitioners responded to the 30-question survey. The survey supported the direction of the DAEE and the recommendations of the working groups. Highlights of the results include:

- Survey respondents identified a need for provincial leadership and supported the idea of rebranding the program.
- 60 per cent of respondents said they were “stressed but managing” with their workload.
- More than 95 per cent of respondents said client service would be improved by updating and organizing the reference documents used by DA practitioners.
- Respondents provided a comprehensive list of Electronic Development Approvals System improvements and expressed confidence that those improvements would meet their needs.
- 98 per cent said that ongoing training was important.
“Having moved about has strengthened relationships and mutual understanding with others in the ministry,” says Jim. “Our recent move to the Business Management Services Branch allows us to continue to build on strong working relationships we have developed over the years, with the utilities, Indigenous relations and web services teams in the branch. Being part of this broader team, we also see opportunities to enhance our customer service focus to the regions and districts.”

Previously, when Development Approvals HQ was with the Engineering Branch, it was linked to engineering expertise, policy and guidance, which is vital to the assessment of design and construction proposal for new roads, accesses and other works on the right of way. As well, subdivision evaluations rely on expertise about natural hazard risks from geotechnical engineers. It was a bonus that the chief engineer was once also a provincial approving officer!

Development approvals exercises the minister’s authority over land development along highway corridors, preserving a safe and efficient route for highway traffic. So, when the Development Approvals HQ Unit was in the Highway Planning Branch, the branch’s expertise with network and corridor planning was a close source of guidance for dealing with access and corridor development approvals.

The reality is, that with its multi-disciplinary nature, the Development Approvals HQ Unit will continue to connect with individuals and business units from across the Highways Department.

The recent move to the Business Management Services Branch is yet another good fit for this group, given the branch’s organizational niches. We anticipate good things for the ministry, flowing from our new home within the branch.

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Development Approvals HQ: Moves to Business Services Management Branch

• Provides technical, policy and practice reference materials and guidance.
• Connects and collaborates with provincial ministries and agencies on related statutes, policies and practices.
• Represents the program and the ministry on provincial level issues.
• Provides internal and public web sites and the system for digital approvals processing.

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Reaching the Summit – Supervisors Share Learning and Coaching

Submitted by Johnathan Tillie and the Supervisory Excellence Succession Team

Following feedback we received through our supervisor survey, succession consultations and Employee Advisory Forum partners, the Supervisory Excellence Succession Team hosted four supervisor summits in the fall of 2018.

Supervisors from across the ministry gathered in Victoria, Burnaby, Prince George and Kamloops to look at their roles, and their impact on employee engagement, the public we serve and the culture we’re a part of.

The one-day sessions were spent sharing experiences, learning about taking a coaching approach to everyday situations and understanding the role and impact our supervisors have in shaping our ministry. A big highlight was the coaching trios. Teams of three took different roles: the coach, the person being coached and the observer. The person being coached, and the coach (using newly-honed coaching skills), engaged in conversations based on real-world situations, while the observer noted how the conversation went. Then each person in the trio, changed roles.

Not only did this create an opportunity to try out a new way of approaching a conversation, but it allowed supervisors to connect with each other and solve problems they are currently facing.

We also presented 19 supervisors with Supervisor Excellence Awards. These supervisors were nominated by their employees for things like, “always inspiring me to push the envelop,” “showing progressive model leadership and creating an environment that allows us to be engaged and proud to work for the ministry,” and “truly understanding and supporting a work/life balance.”

The supervisors recognized by their employees were:
• Christian Baerike
• Dan Baker
• Bruce Calbick
• Mark Cathrine
• Brent Davies
• Rodrigo Disegni
• Katrina Estoque
• Reg Faubert
• Renata Garcia
• Christina Klatt

A big thank you to everyone who supported the success of each of these four summits – we couldn’t have done them without you!

If you have any questions about the summits, or anything coming from the Supervisory Excellence Succession Team, please let us know by contacting StrategicHR.Transportation@gov.bc.ca.

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Development Approvals HQ: on the coaching trio experience.
Organizational Quality Management Benefits Engineers and Geoscientists
Submitted by Leanne Garand, OQM Lead and Senior Highway Design Engineer

A quality management system created for ministry engineers and geoscientists is improving professional work practices and increasing organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

In September 2015, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure developed its Organizational Quality Management (OQM) professional practice manual. OQM is a relatively new program developed by the Engineers and Geoscientists BC (EGBC) where employers commit to providing a quality management system that meets the requirements for professional engineers and geoscientists registered with EGBC.

An internal audit of the ministry’s OQM was completed in 2017, and an external EGBC audit was completed in 2018. The manual of policies, procedures and tools has been found to be consistent with the obligations required of EGBC professionals. It will benefit about 100 employees working in Provincial Engineering Services.

Why did we do this?
OQM is the new way that firms are simplifying the technical review process for their engineers, while still maintaining their high level of standard and conduct. The ministry set up OQM to support technical staff involved in engineering work throughout the ministry. This will improve professional practice at the individual and organizational level while providing consistency.

Who does this benefit?
The program benefits the ministry’s professional engineers and geoscientists who have dealt with technical items, be that for an FOI request, development approval, litigation issue, project management question, property question, construction issue, design issue or briefing note.

What does this mean to the way the engineering group spends its time?

Before:
– Documentation was kept based on ORCS and ARCS document retention but in reality, some of the naming was arbitrary. This required additional time to search for needed documentation, which in some cases could not be found.
– Professional engineers and geoscientists were randomly selected for Individual Practice Reviews.

Ongoing and moving forward:
– OQM engineering discipline-specific summaries are available, and file management systems have been implemented for improved on-boarding and consistency.
– Staff have defined processes that make creating, filing and finding documentation easier.
– Less issues during construction with a defined quality management process.
– Ministry professional engineers and geoscientists are exempt from Individual Practice Reviews.
– Limited Licence Engineers can use OQM processes in regular practice reviews.

For more information, please visit TRANnet Provincial Engineering Services at http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/eng/index.aspx.

Did you know?
When the ministry was certified in 2015, three employees had their Individual Practice Reviews put on hold, saving them up to 40 hours of preparing documentation.

Patrick Lumber Sign Marks Start of Pro Hockey in West
Submitted by Chanpreet Gill, Business Management Coordinator

Did you know that professional hockey in Western Canada is all thanks to a family from the Slocan Valley?

This intriguing aspect of B.C.’s history was recognized Jan. 14, with the unveiling of a Stop of Interest sign about the Patrick Lumber Company, at Crescent Valley Beach on Highway 6. Students and teachers from Brent Kennedy Elementary and Mount Sentinel Secondary, local dignitaries, West Kootenay District Manager Hugh Eberle and others came out for the event and to learn more.

According to a Stop of Interest nomination received by our ministry, in 1906, Quebec lumber baron Joseph Patrick bought timber holdings in B.C., and built a large sawmill at Crescent Valley. Joseph’s sons Frank and Lester, who were renowned hockey players in eastern Canada, moved to Nelson to help with the business, and continued to play locally. After the family sold the company in 1911, they used the proceeds to launch Western Canada’s first-ever professional hockey league and build Canada’s first artificial ice rinks in Vancouver and Victoria.

More on Page 10…
Highway 1 Priority Bus Lane Update
Submitted by Jonathan Bleackley, Transit Policy Analyst

The Western Communities area of Greater Victoria – stretching from View Royal west to Sooke – is among the fastest growing region in all of Canada, and transportation planning must keep pace to meet people’s needs.

The growth in population, along with the growing number of residents now commuting to Victoria, Saanich or Oak Bay, has put pressure on the existing road network. The ministry and BC Transit are working hard to alleviate the situation.

During peak times, BC Transit buses move 40 per cent of commuters in the corridor, while only making up three per cent of all traffic. However, until recently, these buses were forced to contend with the same “Colwood Crawl” that plagued drivers. With the roll-out of the Highway 1/Douglas Street bus priority corridor, the Province, BC Transit and local governments are working to ensure efficient and reliable transit service along the route.

The Highway 1/Douglas Street corridor consists of both City of Victoria and provincial roadways and both governments are collaborating on the solution. From Tolmie Avenue to Fisgard Street, the City of Victoria has already installed more than two kilometres of priority bus lanes in both north and southbound directions. In December of 2018, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure added 2.3 kilometres of northbound lanes from Tolmie Avenue to Burnside Bridges, just south of the new McKenzie Interchange. Now, the ministry is in the process of planning for complementary southbound lanes, while additional bus priority lanes are under construction as part of the McKenzie Interchange project.

Once completed, the full priority corridor will run more than six kilometres from Fisgard Street to the end of the new McKenzie Interchange, saving commuters 10 minutes during peak travel times. Over the course of a year, that is more than 80 hours of saved time that residents will have to spend with their friends and families, as opposed to waiting in traffic.

A recently completed study outlines additional options for bus priority measures and transit infrastructure along the Old Island Highway corridor between View Royal and Colwood. Next steps for the ministry are to work on these options with BC Transit and local partners. All these improvements are part of a comprehensive 25-year strategy to better connect downtown Victoria with the Western Communities, outlined in the Victoria Transit Future Plan.

The most recent phase of the project cost $14.2 million, with the Province contributing $9.575 million and the Government of Canada providing up to $4.625 million under the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund.

VICTORIA REGION DOUGLAS – WEST SHORE TRANSIT PRIORITY CORRIDOR

The transit priority corridor aims to more quickly transport bus riders who commute to Victoria, Saanich and Oak Bay from communities in the west.

Patrick Lumber Sign Marks Start of Pro Hockey in West... Continued from Page 9

Frank and Lester Patrick introduced the blue line, the forward pass, goal creases and the playoff system, and eventually coached and managed the Boston Bruins and the New York Rangers.

It’s hard to capture a story this big on a Stop of Interest sign (which is limited to 50 words) so to find out more, check out this article from the Nelson Star.

Stop of Interest signs each tell a story of a person, place or event significant to our provincial history. If you’ve travelled in B.C. or live close to a historic site, chances are that you have seen at least one of these signs which were first erected in 1958.

In 2016, our ministry put out a call for the public to suggest new Stop of Interest signs and received more than 500 submissions. Up to 75 new signs will be installed throughout B.C.

Schoolchildren and local dignitaries at the new Stop of Interest sign on Highway 6, about 24 kilometres southwest of Nelson.

▲ The bus lane on Douglas Street/Hwy 1 heading toward the Western Communities which adjoin Victoria.
How Our 2018 TransAction Winners Scored Peak Points

Submitted by Jenna D’Arcy, Client Relations Coordinator, Strategic Human Resources

Another fun-filled, energizing and competitive TransAction healthy workplace challenge, brought to you by your Employee Advisory Forum, happened in the fall.

We had 59 teams participate, and our top teams finished with a combined total of more than 170,000 points! First place went to It’s a Lifestyle, close behind was Trans Wars, and third place was Major Action.

The first-place champions were Anton Stefanac, Jenna Cochrane, Curtis Atkinson, Stephanie Taur and Allison Laidlow. Together they earned a whopping 58,125 points. That’s an average of more than 14,500 per week! TransAction participants get points for every 15 minutes of exercise based on the exertion level. One point is earned for a 15-segment of low-intensity exercise, two points for medium-intensity exercise and three points for high-intensity activity.

But how did they earn this many points over the one-month challenge? Let’s just say I considered myself to be a fairly active individual… until I chatted with this diverse group of folks.

So, what do you get when you combine a rock-climber, a trail runner, a mountain biker, a dancer and a triathlete? You get five highly competitive, endurance athletes – also known as It’s a Lifestyle!

It all started, when Curtis met Allison who he described as, “destined to be a champion and had a competitive spirit like no other.” The team grew from there to include the other dynamic new members.

Curtis has been participating in TransAction for the last three years, and this year he beat his personal best – totalling more 7,000 points! Despite rehabbing a knee injury, he was cycling to work, doing hot yoga and mountain biking on the weekends. Curtis is a strong supporter of TransAction because he says it gets him out and keeps him active.

Trips Add to Activity

Without giving away too many of their secrets to success, the other team members explained that taking trips during the month of October helped increase their overall points. Anton took a few exciting excursions, including one to Smith Rock in Oregon, where he climbed for six to eight hours a day. He also went to Tofino for some surfing and hiking, and then to Squamish for more climbing. He referred to October as “Rock-tober” because the beautiful weather made for ideal climbing conditions.

Stephanie also went on a few trips which allowed her to log a number of points. She was in Seattle for a boot camp workshop which included five hours of dance classes in the morning, and then an all-night social dancing event. She also went to Los Angeles for a week and walked more than 14 hours each day! Stephanie used her Fitbit to log her miles and track her intensity based on her heart rate and time. She finds this device really encourages her to exercise more. She sets daily goals which motivate her to hit her daily and weekly targets.

What else keeps them motivated?

Allison says she enjoys TransAction because, “It gets people talking about being active and the different modes of activity. By constantly sharing your activities, it drives you to do more.”

She claimed that anyone who wanted to hang out with her, had to walk; and she admits that she forced her mom to walk with her for eight hours! She started incorporating more stretching and yoga into her routine, but she went on significant walks after dinner for one to three hours, and spent her weekends hoofing 20 to 30 kilometres. Not your average walks!

Even though they weren’t all in the same office, It’s a Lifestyle motivated each other through funny emails. Jenna explained that they were mostly encouraging, but they were also trying to figure out what their fellow team members were doing, to get so many points and how they could have possibly exercised so much. She called it “healthy internal competition.”

Jenna’s biggest day consisted of cycling to the gym, 1.5 hours of strength training, cycling 35 kilometres to work and back, biking seven kilometres to frisbee and back, and playing two to three hours of Ultimate Frisbee. Even Jenna claims she didn’t know she could fit that much into the day, but she figured there was no better time to try!

Although these individuals are athletes with big goals, they were very strategic and incorporated activity into their day any way possible. By getting out of the office for a 30-minute walk at lunch or walking to get groceries – instead of driving – it all adds up, and by the end of the month they were thoroughly exhausted but in otherwise excellent physical condition.

As part of Healthy Workplace Month, TransAction encourages activity and creates healthy competition among coworkers. Thank you to everyone who participated this year, and thanks to It’s a Lifestyle for sharing a few of their secrets with me.

As a participant in TransAction, I know we’d all like to thank the Employee Advisory Forum for bringing the challenge to life each year. Kudos to Project Sponsor Patricia Marsh and Project Manager Cindy Middleton, and the terrific folks in the Information Management Branch who made it all happen behind the scenes.

I hope TransAction leaves you inspired and motivated to take steps toward a healthier lifestyle!
2018 PECSF Campaign – The Best Year Yet!
Submitted by Jenna D’Arcy, Strategic Human Resources Client Relations Coordinator

The results are in for the 53rd annual Provincial Employees Community Services Fund (PECSF) campaign, and it’s been our best year yet!

This year, PECSF raised a grand total of $2,051,335.37 across the public service. Not only did this total surpass last year’s impressive sum by $141,256.00 and 933 donors, but our ministry also exceeded our own past totals! We raised a whopping $47,811 from 165 donors which was an increase of $1,101 and 35 donors. Now that is something to celebrate!

Whether you donated, volunteered or participated in a PECSF event this year, we want to thank you for your contribution to such a great cause.

Deputy Minister Challenge

New this year was the Deputy Minister Challenge where Deputy Ministers put themselves on the line to raise awareness in their ministry. Even though we were in the lead for several weeks, the Ministry of Finance picked up speed in the final week and won the challenge. That meant Deputy Minister Grant Main and our Executive team had to dress up in pocket protectors, sweater vests and visors to pay up on their challenge commitment.

Incentive Prizes

This year, we also hosted three pledge incentive draws which kept the competitive spirit alive. We followed up with a few of our winners to hear about their unique experiences learning more about different areas of our ministry’s business.

Here’s what Murray Jacobs of Crown Agencies had to say about his big win...

“My day on the Snooper Truck was definitely one of the highlights of my past 30 years with the provincial government. Bridge Inspection Supervisor Rees Davidson and Bridge Inspection Operator Kelly McKen were most welcoming and we had a great time checking out the bridge on Pender Island. It was fantastic to see the passion that these guys have for their job, and it is heartening to know that there are people willing to be on the road for weeks at a time to make sure our bridges and highways are safe. As someone who plans to do some RV’ing around the province in my upcoming retirement, it is comforting to know that I can safely drive over the bridges. As I cruise B.C., I’ll be sure to keep my eyes open for the Snooper Truck and crew.”

Senior District Development Technician Julie Cooke got to visit the Port Mann Bridge, and she described her tour as awesome. Snow and Ice Technician Steve Robertson was able to schedule a day with good weather that worked with Julie’s schedule, and was kind of enough to give up his afternoon to provide her and a few friends with the full tour of the Port Mann Bridge. As you can see from the photo, the weather and the view was amazing. Julie said it was more thrilling than she expected, as “We had to climb a few ladders to get to the top – which was scarier on the way down than on the way up!”

Jeff Knight of the Southern Interior Region was the winner of round-trip Harbour Air tickets and although he hasn’t finalized any plans yet, he’s looking forward to his next trip!

Thank You!

Each year, PECSF continues to make an impact on our local community and we are so proud to support this campaign. Thank you again for showing your commitment to helping charities of your choice. No matter what agency you chose to support, you are making a difference in the communities where you live, work and play.

Thank you for all your efforts and a big thank you to Deputy Minister Grant Main and Executive for putting their wardrobes on the line for a great cause, and to everyone who helped make our incentive prizes a unique and informative experience for our winners!
An Evening to Remember at the 2018 Long Service Awards
Submitted by Sharon Cowden, Finance and Administrative Services Manager

On Oct. 10, we celebrated employees who had reached a milestone working for the BC Public Service.

The Long Service Awards were held in recognition of our employees’ 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service, and began with a pre-reception for ministry employees and their guests at The Parkside Hotel and Spa, in beautiful Victoria.

During the pre-reception, Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Claire Trevena and Deputy Minister Grant Main thanked the recipients for their dedication and commitment to the BC Public Service and to the ministry. While mingling over a buffet of appetizers, guests also had the opportunity to say a few words about fellow co-workers. Others enjoyed catching up with colleagues from across the province that they connect with often, but rarely get to see in person.

Following the pre-reception, our guests headed to the main event at Government House in a convoy of buses. Upon entering Government House, they were greeted by friendly staff working for the protocol office, and guided to the grand ballroom where the tables were lined with white tablecloths and set for dinner.

The atmosphere in the grand ballroom was warm and elegant, and the guests were relaxed, smiling, and catching up with fellow co-workers who were there to share in the evening’s festivities. The dining room table was covered with a wide variety of foods to choose from. The chefs worked their magic on delicious dishes of fish, fresh salads, a variety of pasta and a freshly carved roast. There was something for everyone.

Minister Trevena also spoke at the Government House gathering, that included provincial government employees from beyond our ministry. The sense of accomplishment and pride was high as pictures were taken and awards were presented by the minister.

After the formal part of the program, there was music and dancing. The evening ended at 10 p.m., and the buses arrived to transport employees that were heading back to the Parkside Hotel.

For employees celebrating a career milestone of five, 10, 15 or 20 years, the corporate Service Pin program is their opportunity to register and be presented with a pin to commemorate this notable achievement.

For more about the corporate Service Pin program or to register for your pin, visit [gov.bc.ca/career/service-pins](http://gov.bc.ca/career/service-pins).
A Day of Reflection at the 2019 Moose Hide Provincial Gathering
Submitted by Rakiya Larkin, Strategic Human Resources Branch Coordinator

To stand up against violence toward women and children, a group of ministry employees participated in the Moose Hide Campaign’s provincial gathering in Victoria, on Feb. 13.

As we marched along the cold, damp pavement; listening to the beat of the drum and hearing songs of Indigenous people of long ago, we stood in solidarity against violence toward all women and children from all walks of life. I thought of those that have come before us, and who have been speaking these words and spreading this message for generations and generations. At the same time, I found myself reflecting on the beauty, resilience and the significance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, community members and BC public servants, standing together in unity. Together we were saying “no more” and “enough is enough” for a cause that affects us all; no matter our gender, the color of our skin, where we come from or what we look like.

I was reminded that this is how justice happens; this is how we can and will shift the discourse and change the narrative. We, not as Indigenous or non-Indigenous people, but as human beings, friends and neighbours, can stand together and make a difference. Every time we stand up against an injustice, every time we say “no,” every time we say that a behaviour or language is not acceptable, we are changing that narrative and telling others and our society that we will not tolerate violence. We will not allow violence to control our loved ones and our communities anymore.

The idea for the Moose Hide Campaign came from Paul Lacerte and his daughter, Raven, while hunting for moose along Highway 16, in 2011. Since then, it has expanded nationwide. It encourages people to speak out and be role models in our communities, because a culture of silence is part of what perpetuates violence against women and children.

The BC Public Service recognizes all forms of violence are unacceptable, and with the Moose Hide Campaign to help create a safer world for women and children.

The provincial gatherings in Victoria and Prince George made Feb. 13 a historic day, not only because of the Moose Hide Campaign but because the day was part of the bigger vision toward reconciliation for the BC Public Service and Indigenous peoples. Ending violence toward women and children is one step closer to our journey towards reconciliation. Every conversation, every campaign and every march that we have and participate in, will help weave a new narrative, and a new story of what it means to work together.

These efforts allow us to build relationships and stand in solidarity, not only for this generation but for future generations that will continue to pave the way forward.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered and participated in the eighth annual Moose Hide Provincial Gathering Day of Fasting and to those who tuned in via the livestream. Your involvement supports our journey toward reconciliation and this campaign signifies our commitment to not only ending violence against women and children but to change, compassion and building relationships with Indigenous peoples.

“I hope that we continue to build good relationships with the Indigenous community and consult on the work we do and find ways to build respect and safety for everyone, with love.”
- Wendy Grant, Web and Social Media Services

“Order Moose Hide pins and wear them to show your commitment to honour, respect and protect the women and children in your life. Learn more at the Moose Hide campaign website and make a personal pledge.”

“We must stand in solidarity, now and forever, because our women and girls, and our other loved ones lives, depend on it.

Gilak’asla (thank-you).

- Sarah Duggan, Indigenous Relations

- Wendy Grant, Web and Social Media Services

- Associate Deputy Minister Kevin Richter, Nicholas Nixon, Sarah Duggan and Rakiya Larkin encourage registration for the Moose Hide Campaign events in Victoria and Prince George.
Doughnuts Delivered on Snow Day
Acting Highways Executive Director Ian Pilkington and Associate Deputy Minister Kevin Richter distributed doughnuts around HQ, to recognize employees who slogged to work on a (uncharacteristic for Victoria) snow day. Alex Nayler, Wendy Grant, Ian Pilkington, Devon Phillips, Holly Phillips and James Penner were delighted doughnut recipients.

Cupid Delivers Candy Grams
Messages of appreciation, accompanied by a candy, were shared among employees, by the cheery cupid.

Alex Nayler was the cupid who delivered Candy Grams at HQ, including to Grace Sherratt, on Feb. 14.

Keeping Livestock Moo-ving
These well-behaved cows obeyed the rules of the road as they walked facing traffic, alongside Agate Bay Road, in the Thompson Nicola District. By parading down that path, they also kept the asphalt clean. Thanks Michelle Evans, for sending in this fun photo.
Flood Response from Years Past
Submitted by Kristen Reimer, Multimedia Information Officer

As the first hints of spring start to show around the province, our thoughts in the ministry inevitably turn to freshet – that time of year just before wildfire season when the snowpack starts to melt away.

Most years, the water rushes down the hillsides, into rivers and onto the sea. Some years instead, that water overflows river banks and makes a royal mess of our highways and bridges. (As well as homes, properties and communities).

While sorting through some of our archival Road Runner images, I found a series of photographs from the early 1960s of flooding preparation and response, some of which were taken in the Lower Mainland. I thought now was a good time to take you down memory lane, to flooded highways of years gone by.

I hope you enjoy looking at these images and that they spur you to think about ways you can prepare yourself for the upcoming flood season. ♦