Passenger Transportation Branch Welcomes Ride Hail

Submitted by Katrina LaRoy, Communications Officer PTB/CVSE

Over the last year, the Passenger Transportation Branch (PT Branch) has changed locations within the Coquitlam office, welcomed a new leadership team, and seen substantial growth in staff numbers – from 15 in January, to more than 30 expected by October.

The increase in this once-small branch is directly related to a government and ministry priority – the introduction of ride hail to B.C., and taxi modernization. New employees are needed to successfully implement and support a completely new commercial passenger vehicle industry.

The PT Branch will now license transportation network services (TNS), also known as ride-hail. (Think companies like Uber, Lyft, Kater and TappCar). These services use online-enabled platforms to connect people needing transport, with local drivers who use their personal vehicles to carry paying passengers. The branch has been working hard over the past months to prepare for this new industry, conducting systems updates, taking training, developing new databases and performing policy tasks like the development of an appeals and audit framework.

In November 2018, the Passenger Transportation Amendment Act was introduced to allow for ride hail companies to operate in B.C., and for the modernization of the taxi industry. On July 8, Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Claire Trevena announced that new regulations were passed to enable TNS companies to apply to the Passenger Transportation Board (PT Board) for licensing, starting in September 2019.

On Sept. 3, the PT Branch began receiving applications from interested TNS companies, and staff have been working diligently to process and transfer the applications expediently to the PT Board, for its determination.

(To distinguish between the Passenger Transportation Branch and Passenger Transportation Board – which could both get confusingly called PTB – we refer to them as the PT Branch and PT Board.)

The PT Board is an independent tribunal and although its work is related to the PT Branch, each organization has distinct responsibilities. The board makes decisions on applications requiring special authorization – taxis, limousines, inter-city buses, and now TNS companies.

If the PT Board approves a new applicant, the PT Branch implements that decision and issues the licence. The PT Branch also handles the more general licence applications for commercial Executive Director (and Registrar) Michele Jaggi-Smith.

Members of the Passenger Transportation Branch deliver licensing, education and enforcement for a big variety of commercial passenger vehicle services.

More on Page 3…
The RoadRunner employee newsletter is published four times a year, on the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Internet site.

We welcome your story submissions. Email your article as a Word document (approx. 500 words) 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.

For contributor guidelines, writing tips and upcoming deadlines, see Road Runner on TRA Net.

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.
Alex Fraser Bridge Movable Barrier System – Second in Canada
Submitted by David Chang, Project Director, Alex Fraser Bridge Capacity Improvements Project

Built in 1986, the Alex Fraser Bridge is a major crossing of the Fraser River and a vital transportation link for both commuters and goods movers, on the Highway 91 corridor in the Lower Mainland.

It was built for six lanes and operated four travel lanes, until 1987. The bridge carries an average of 119,000 vehicles each day, and experiences significant queueing (three to five-kilometre-long lineups, adding up to 20 minutes in delays) in the morning and afternoon peak hours.

In January 2017, the ministry announced a $70-million investment in the Alex Fraser Bridge to reduce congestion, improve safety and create better movement on the corridor. The federal government partnered on this project contributing up to $34 million from the New Building Canada Fund. The project has three components:
- Adding a seventh lane to the bridge;
- Adding an innovative new counter-flow movable barrier system to improve capacity and help reduce traffic congestion during peak periods; and
- Installing 13 new dynamic message signs throughout the Lower Mainland, as part of a Fraser Advanced Traveller Information System, so that road users know estimated delays on the four major Fraser River crossings.

The project is currently at the final construction phase. The structural girder strengthening and highway widening at both the north and south approaches have been completed. The seventh lane has been added by a slight narrowing of the existing six lanes and eliminating the shoulders. The speed limit has been lowered to 70 km/h to help keep travellers safe and traffic flowing efficiently, during the counter-flow operation.

In mid-September, the movable barrier was installed and seven lanes opened to traffic, i.e. four lanes southbound and three lanes northbound. The seventh lane adds capacity and helps ease traffic congestion on the corridor, especially during the afternoon peak period, in the southbound direction. The installation of 13 new dynamic message signs is upcoming.

In addition to commercial vehicle licensing, the PT Branch is responsible for compliance and enforcement of the Passenger Transportation Act and Regulation. The passenger transportation enforcement officers often collaborate with Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement officers, bylaw officers, and local police to check and enforce commercial passenger vehicle licensing.

Passenger transportation enforcement officers also specialize in communication and education to ensure passenger transportation compliance is understood and upheld within the industry. With about 3,200 taxis on our roads, and the many other commercial passenger vehicles, these employees stay busy.

Change is constant right now, but we can echo Minister Claire Trevena’s message in saying we expect people will be using licenced ride-hailing services by the end of the year, in our province.

Ride-Hailing Coming to a Province (and Branch) Near You… Continued from Page 1

The first zipper truck arrived at the Nordel yard in August.

The movable barrier system on the Alex Fraser Bridge will be the second in Canada – the other one is in Montreal. We have 3,005 units of movable barriers and two barrier transfer

More on Page 4…

▲ PTEO Virginia Bishop (right) and Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement officer Trevor Nettleton gearing up for joint enforcement at the Ogden Point cruise ship terminal, in Victoria.

▲ PTEO Kajan Yogaratnam conducting a licensing check at the Kelowna airport.
machines, aka “zipper trucks,” at the ministry’s Nordel yard. The zipper trucks are manufactured in California.

(To watch a zipper truck move barriers on San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge, click here).

This month, zipper truck operators who had been training extensively in the Nordel yard, began practising transferring the barrier from lane line to lane line on the bridge deck, at night. The final step will be installing the Intelligent Transportation System signs for the counter-flow operation, and thoroughly testing the system before it goes “live” later this year.

Once the counter-flow system is in operation to allow four lanes northbound and three lanes southbound during the morning rush hour, and four lanes southbound the rest of the time, motorists can expect time savings of 12 to 16 minutes during the southbound afternoon rush and about six minutes during the northbound morning rush.

Watch for “before and after” photos of the Alex Fraser Bridge, in the next Road Runner. ♦
Checking our Temperature this Spring and Summer

Submitted by Brittney Speed, Workforce Programs Manager, Strategic Human Resources

The Employee Advisory Forum (EAF) is excited to share the results of our most recent Temperature Check, conducted by our EAF members this spring and summer.

Temperature Checks gauge employees’ opinions on a variety of timely topics and issues, and are used by the EAF, Executive, Strategic HR and the Succession Planning Committee to build programs and resources in our ministry. We offer these confidential one-on-one conversations between EAF members and their colleagues twice a year.

From June 10 to July 5, a total of 159 of you were interviewed – a big thank you to everyone who participated! The Temperature Check focused on professional development and gender-based analysis plus. Here is a bit of what you told us:

Professional Development

We asked how you think the quality of training and development you receive could be improved to support your professional development goals. Responses included:

• Having dedicated time set out to allow for professional development
• Having access to professional development opportunities outside of the Learning Centre
• More specific training opportunities that relate to the job, to develop subject matter expertise
• More opportunities for job shadowing and stretch assignments

We asked what you perceive as roadblocks to your professional learning and development. Responses included:

• Workload and time issues
• Budget and travel
• The opportunity to participate in more in-person learning – an abundance of e-learning courses are available, but we are often interrupted when online

Eighty-two per cent of respondents have spoken with their current supervisor about professional development and career growth goals, and 59 per cent reported that their MyPerformance Profile discussions are meaningful. So we asked about other ways to receive feedback. Responses included:

• Understanding how each employee wants to receive feedback; the relationship between supervisor and employee is very important.
• While the tool is perceived as useful, there needs to be a greater emphasis on having regular, frequent conversations to provide feedback and discuss goals – discussions should be ongoing and not limited to the MyPerformance cycle.
• The tool needs to be used properly and in a meaningful way, not just something that needs to be done and rushed to meet the performance cycle deadline.

During this Temperature Check, we consulted with the ministry’s Succession Planning Committee and asked how knowledge transfer within business units supports employee professional development. We will be sharing the responses from the Temperature Check with the Knowledge Management Priority Team.

Gender-Based Analysis Plus

We asked about our colleagues’ preferred ways to learn more about how they can apply a gender-based analysis plus lens to the work that they do. Not surprisingly, the majority of our co-workers want to learn through in-person presentations/workshops, and they stressed that scenario or situational learning, and real examples, are key to helping employees understand their role within our ministry and the BC Public Service.

Next Steps

EAF Chair Mark Traverso and EAF Administrator Brittney Speed are in the process of sitting down with each of our Assistant Deputy Ministers to review the ministry results as well as department-specific results from the Temperature Check. EAF members are assessing the results to determine priority projects, initiatives and communications to help support our colleagues. If you have any questions about the Temperature Check results or our next steps, please feel free to email the EAF leadership team at MoT.EAF@gov.bc.ca or get in touch with your EAF representative.

The next round of Temperature Checks will be conducted this fall. Don’t miss the next opportunity to provide your thoughts and ideas!

We extend a big thank you again to everyone who participated, and to our EAF members for conducting the interviews and working to create a better workplace for everyone!

The EAF Family is Growing!

Submitted by Jenna D’Arcy, Client Relations Coordinator

Congratulations to EAF Member Nikki Schneider, on the arrival of her healthy baby boy, Felix William Schneider.

Felix was born two weeks early on July 11, weighing in at 7.13 pounds and measuring 53 centimetres long. Mom and babe are both doing great and adjusting to their new lives together.

Recently, Felix got the chance to meet the Saanich area office folks, while visiting with Nikki.

We wish you the best, Nikki. Enjoy your maternity leave!
Department Golf Event Inspired by EAF Findings

Submitted by Andrew MacKinnon, Land Project Manager and EAF Member

For the second year in a row, Major Projects, Infrastructure and Properties Department employees from headquarters enjoyed a fun round of golf and a barbecue at the Cordova Bay Ridge Golf Course, to promote teambuilding.

As an Employee Advisory Forum (EAF) member, I have heard employee feedback through channels like EAF Temperature Checks, the Work Environment Survey and EAF projects focused on teamwork. The findings have emphasized the need for opportunities to connect and celebrate the work that we do together. Making time for teambuilding is extremely important, which is why I coordinated this event.

The July 4 event included Assistant Deputy Minister Kevin Volk, and staff from the department’s branches and their guests. The invitation was also extended to spouses and other ministries, including colleagues from the Legal Services Branch of the Ministry of the Attorney General. This year’s top golfers were Land Project Manager Warren Alexander and Transit Branch Executive Director Andrea Mercer.

Thankfully the weather cooperated, and everyone enjoyed a sunny late afternoon on the golf course, and on the patio for dinner and beverages.

The October offers include Healthy Workplace Learnings.

Join the Health Where you Work Work group to be notified of weekly posts during Healthy Workplace Month on topics like mindfulness, defining work-life quality and overcoming barriers. You can participate in discussions, enter to win prizes and learn about services, programs and resources to support your health and well-being. More information about the theme and prizes can be found here.
SIRGEO to the Rescue – Success with GIS in the SIR

Submitted by Muqsit Faruqi, Geospatial Coordinator; and Matt Kemper, Spatial Analyst

The awesome powers of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have been benefitting Southern Interior Region (SIR) staff since the first geospatial employees began work, in September 2017.

Southern Interior Regional Director Mike Lorimer was the visionary who knew that GIS and people who know how to use it, would dramatically help the region’s employees do work more efficiently.

In the past two years, the "SIRGEO" team has delivered many spatial products and services for almost every SIR business unit. The team is made up of Geospatial Coordinator Muqsit Faruqi, Spatial Analyst Matthew Kemper and GIS Co-op Renso Ronquillo.

Two of the team’s "biggest hits" have been the creation of Freshet Reporting and Mobile Monitoring Reporting tools which greatly improve efficiency, data quality and response times.

Freshet Reporting

The SIR’s freshet reporting seasons prior to 2019 were challenging, due to the time it took staff to capture data in the field and then enter the data into a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet could only be accessed by one employee at a time, and allowed for typos, missing information and incorrect spatial (location) information. This made accurately populating and reporting the region’s daily report to headquarters challenging. Regional staff would often go back to district staff to verify data and ask for missing information.

SIRGEO heard these frustrations, researched products that could help and selected the Survey123 mobile application for field data capture of freshet sites. The team developed a form that can be used simultaneously by multiple users and ensures data integrity by providing dropdowns and required fields. Sites are visible on an online dashboard immediately after being submitted. The regional daily spreadsheet that goes to headquarters is created through a fully automated process, requiring no human interaction. This takes seconds instead of hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshet Reporting Time Comparisons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average total time spent reporting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshet 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 hours/day</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Time Savings: An average of 9 hours/day cumulative for SIR employees

Mobile Monitoring Reporting

Prior to 2019, SIR road and bridge area managers would collect highway maintenance monitoring information on paper, while in the field, and enter it into a spreadsheet, back at the office. Different service areas approached data capture differently. This lack of standardization and the use of a single provincial spreadsheet with its “one user at a time functionality” made reporting challenging.

Utilizing Survey123, SIRGEO developed a custom mobile monitoring form. Data is captured in a standardized manner regionally, and available in real-time on the dashboard and in daily reports. Area managers can now email maintenance contractors directly from the field if a specification is not met, rather than back at the office.

Here’s a testimonial:

“Once again I want to say how much I am impressed with Survey123 – extremely well done, easy to use, quick and provides everyone with all the information they require in a timely manner.”

– Ken T. Namislo, Roads Area Manager, Service Area 13

More Information

If you would like more information about SIRGEO visit our website: http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/sir/geo/index.aspx. The website hosts a plethora of information about GIS and various maps, and is accessible to all ministry staff.
RTMC Re-brands to TMCBC

Submitted by Porya Khorsandi, TMCBC Supervisor; and Aidan Mouellic, TMCBC Agent

Chances are that if you’re reading this you’ve already interacted with the handiwork of the Regional Transportation Management Centre (RTMC).

Whether you’re reading a dynamic message sign, working as an avalanche technician in Meziadin or managing a special event on the Sea-to-Sky Highway (hope your work for the Gran Fondo went well!), the centre is an integral hub in the ministry’s operation.

To better express our true nature as a province-wide communications and operations centre, we are now known as the Transportation Management Centre BC (TMCBC). We want everyone to know that the centre is committed to serving the whole province, not just the region.

The TMCBC functions with a team of 11 TMC agents (formerly known as RTMC operators) who provide coverage at the centre around the clock. (We never close, and we drink more coffee than you!)

We are a dedicated team that provides a timely and valuable service to ministry staff, maintenance contractors, emergency services, media partners, the public and various other stakeholders. We operate out of our state-of-the-art command centre in Coquitlam, where we work alongside our local maintenance contractor partners from Miller Capilano and Mainroad who manage and operate the lane control systems for the Lions Gate Bridge, George Massey Tunnel and Cassiar Tunnel.

Since the TMCBC began operating, it has embraced dynamic industry trends, while anticipating future operational needs. Our forward-thinking focus has us working closely with our traffic, electrical and intelligent transportation systems engineering colleagues, and the Information Management Branch, to implement the latest traffic management systems.

We manage weather, road and traffic incidents using various intelligent transportation systems and communicate useful information to the public via our on-the-road, social media and web-based platforms. We’re responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information relating to events which affect our highways system, to ensure that the flow of goods, people and services across the province can be done safely and efficiently.

Over time, our work has been recognized with three Premier’s Awards, and by being selected as a finalist for another Premier’s Award. Last year, we received a Deputy Minister’s Award for teamwork, and a Top Work Unit Award.

As we look ahead, we aim to increase awareness of our services, and provide greater value to British Columbians so that we can all safely enjoy all that the province has to offer.

TMC Operators Leah Catton, Dave Collins, Jennifer Markham, Neil Woolward and Jonathan Norrish.

TMCBC Quick Facts – What We Do:

- Manage the @DriveBC Twitter account, and eight regional @DriveBC Twitter accounts to deliver valuable information to an audience of almost 145,000 followers, including our contractors, the media, emergency services and the public.

- Monitor and provide quality assurance for all content created and posted by maintenance contractors and ministry staff, on the DriveBC public website.

- Provide technical support and manage the Variable Speed Limit System (VSLS) throughout the province.

- Operate 160 highway signs (dynamic message, open/closed, chain-up and weather station-controlled) which display important highway safety information, amber alerts and campaign messaging like cone zone awareness and Bike to Work Week.

- Participate in the provincial highway avalanche control program by tracking and monitoring avalanche technicians when they are in the field, and ensuring their safety and well-being through check-ins and GPS location tracking software.

- Operate a network of more than 750 traffic cameras which monitor road conditions and events.

- Advise the public, during occasional snow buildup on the Port Mann and Alex Fraser bridges, of falling snow or any lane closures required to remove built-up snow from the structures.
The Indigenous Cultural Awareness Series has been refreshed to align with our ministry’s journey towards reconciliation. The goal of this three-part series is to bridge the gap that has existed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures and provide an opportunity for continuous learning. This trio of webinars has been one of the most attended virtual series by ministry employees.

- **Part 1: Understanding Our Shared History as Canadians**, discussing the impacts of colonization, residential schools, 60s scoop and the child welfare system – attended by 464 employees.
- **Part 2: Evolution of our Relationship and the Key Legislation** that has impacted our relationships and connections – attended by 319 employees.
- **Part 3: Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and Communities** – attended by 257 employees.

Each presentation in the series provides both personal and factual insights and connections to our shared history. It is extremely important that before we co-create the future we want to see, we must have a common understanding of the past and what transpired, to lead us to where we are today. Part of our responsibility is ensuring that we continue to learn and grow.

The Indigenous Cultural Awareness Series goes back to 2016 when I began my internship with the Indigenous Youth Internship Program with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The concept for this series emerged after I gave two presentations to ministry employees, discussing cultural awareness and my involvement through the program. Both presentations were an opportunity to bridge the gap between cultures and share information in an open and welcoming way.

The Strategic Human Resources Branch (SHR) and the Indigenous Relations team received great feedback on these two presentations and we decided to put our heads together to draft and develop the Indigenous Cultural Awareness Series to reach all ministry employees. I delivered a total of six presentations that were drafted and approved by SHR, the Indigenous Relations Team and ministry Executive. The Indigenous Cultural Awareness Series goes back to 2016 when I began my internship with the Indigenous Youth Internship Program with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The concept for this series emerged after I gave two presentations to ministry employees, discussing cultural awareness and my involvement through the program. Both presentations were an opportunity to bridge the gap between cultures and share information in an open and welcoming way.

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We all have a role and a responsibility to help bridge the gap that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. I encourage you to get involved and actively participate in supporting positive relationships within our workplaces and our communities.

Here are some resources and contacts that can further support your learning:

- **Journey Towards Reconciliation**
- **Diversity and Inclusion – Learning and Resources**
- **Contact the Indigenous Relations Team:** Sarah Duggan or Jillian Zavediuk

Gilak’asla (thank you).

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**We Are Prepared – Are You?**

Submitted by Andrea Mercer, Transit Branch Executive Director

The Transit Branch is feeling a little bit more prepared, thanks to some encouragement and gentle nudging which eventually turned into an all-out contest, to see who could put together the best personal emergency preparedness kit for work.

Thanks to our Branch Mom (aka A/Branch Administrator Renée Finn) for organizing a bit of fun while at the same time making us all think a bit more about our own level of preparedness.

Sure, we all likely have a dust mask, gloves and (if you are lucky) an un-expired ration of water taped under our desks, but how many of us have a pair of running shoes, extra cell phone battery, flashlight, emergency blanket and a few snacks tucked away in a grab-and-go bag at work? After showing us her own fairly extensive supply bag, Renée dropped a few hints that as nice a person as she is, we shouldn’t plan on her generosity with her personal supplies, during an emergency. She has a great point!

Thanks Renée, for taking the time to help us all make sure we are all a bit more prepared. I for one, now have my own Twizzlers, granola bars, un-expired water, flashlight, basic first aid items and other supplies under my desk. I won’t be wishing I had taken the time to prepare, after it’s too late, and I won’t be enviously eying Renee’s spare running shoes, as I’m navigating my way out of the rubble after the big one hits!

For those wondering, Senior Policy Analyst Gillian Moxham was deemed to have the best personal emergency kit. For this, she received the grand prize of a first aid kit.

Renee’s spare running shoes, as I’m navigating my way out of the rubble after the big one hits!

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Rakiya Larkin, presenter of the Indigenous Cultural Awareness Series.
TEL P and EIT/GIT Hires Contribute to Succession
Submitted by Brittney Speed, Workforce Programs Manager, Strategic Human Resources

Things are in full swing with our ministry’s Technical Entry Level Program (TEL P) and Engineer-in-Training and Geotechnical Engineer-in-Training programs (EIT/GIT).

TEL P is the largest succession planning and employee development program in the ministry, and EIT/GIT is the longest-standing succession planning and employee development program in the ministry.

Both programs are administered by the Strategic Human Resources branch. EIT/GIT is led in conjunction with Executive Director of Engineering Services Ed Miska and most recently, Chief Engineer Ian Pilkington (welcome Ian!)

Recruitment is managed by ministry staff. In 2019, EIT recruitment was led by Senior Manager of Business Services Samantha Eburne, with support from Senior Project Manager Danielle Soloducha. TEL P recruitment was led by Bulkley-Stikine District Manager Carl Lutz, with assistance from A/District Program Manager Jayson Chaplin and Regional Manager of Business Services Corrin Peet. On average, we hire five EITs and 10 TELPs per year, but in 2019, we hired more than 25 TELPs based on operational requirements!

Congratulations and welcome to our new 2019 TELP and EIT/GIT employees! ♦

Our ministry is an accredited employer with Engineers and Geoscientists BC.
**Joint Committee Provides Leadership for Organizational Balance**
Submitted by Amber Davies, Information Management Lead

After 13 years with the provincial government, and eight with this ministry, I am still interested to learn about programs that support public service employees and our work environment.

I was recently advised for example, that the ministry has a BCGEU/Management Joint Committee, whose members work continually to maintain a cooperative and positive labour relations climate for all ministry employees. This was news to me, and I thought it might interest others as well.

Also called the Article 29 Committee, the group is a requirement of the Collective Agreement between the provincial government (the employer) and the BCGEU (the union). Its membership is divided equally between four union and four employer representatives.

The committee is a forum to discuss ministry-wide issues and concerns, to ensure the continuation of good working conditions, fairness and safety. As union and management employees operate under different requirements, they may experience different impacts when there are shifts in government decisions and direction, and in our evolving workplaces.

Topics of discussion range from workplace health and safety, to employee recruitment and retention initiatives, ministry contracting practices, training, technology changes and more. Results from the Work Environment Survey, and Employee Advisory Forum Temperature Checks are also reviewed.

"Our committee embraces honest and respectful conversation, healthy conflict and the sharing of contrasting perspectives," says Sandra Toth Nacey, Article 29 Committee employer representative and director of the Transportation Services Branch. "By trusting one another and engaging openly, we continue to find mutually beneficial solutions to ministry-wide issues."

"With our ears to the ground, our eyes to the horizon and our fingers on the pulse of the ministry, the eight of us do our best to keep abreast of any issues," says Brandie Frawley, Article 29 Committee union representative and commercial transport enforcement officer. "We want to hear from ministry staff about workplace issues that matter to them."

For information on how to add an item to a future meeting agenda, or to see past meeting minutes, check out the Article 29 Committee website. The only matters the committee cannot discuss are those related to collective bargaining and personal grievances.

I hope you have found some value in reading about the ministry’s BCGEU/Management Joint Committee, and that this has helped you to feel connected to and supported by your representatives and the ministry.
Without knowing it, the word “Toastmaster” could invoke images of a culinary aptitude for preparing bread.

Indeed, the English language can be complicated, as toast – a homophone describing a breakfast accompaniment – could be confused with the celebratory custom of raising one’s glass in honour of something or someone special.

Giving a toast can be challenging. Anyone who has given one, knows it is an art that requires practice and skill. That skill is part of speech-giving and communication – something valued at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

For that reason, we’re proud to announce the MoTI Transformers – our very own chartered Toastmaster’s club – at the South Coast Region (SCR) office in Coquitlam.

MoTI Transformers is part of the world-renowned Toastmasters International, which is devoted to empowering its members to become effective public speakers, communicators and leaders.

The conception of MoTI Transformers began with SCR Executive Director Ashok Bhatti, who recognized the potential to enhance the communication and public speaking skills of ministry employees, and to empower them to become leaders in our workplace. The club receives key leadership from John McKenzie and Joyce Chang, whose dedication to providing resources and guidance – essentially getting the club off the ground – was critical to our success. With the hard work of the founding committee, we are happy to announce that since kicking off in January 2019, MoTI Transformers has 22 fully registered members and that number is growing.

At meetings, there are various roles that members can take on. This is all part of the fun! While some members give speeches, there are others who evaluate those speeches, members who spot-check for grammar, a time keeper and officials to introduce participants and moderate.

“Toastmasters has allowed me to hone my public speaking and leadership skills. My confidence has greatly increased as a result.” – Henry Lew

An always-exciting exercise is Table Topics, where members are picked at random to perform an impromptu one to two-minute speech. And of course, at each meeting members apply formal Toastmasters etiquette, such as lengthy applause for the speaker and handshaking upon handover at the lectern.

Our mandate is to create a welcoming, fun environment that is supportive to everyone, from seasoned public speakers to members with no public speaking experience. Many of our members agree that it’s a safe environment where participants can practice public speaking without the pressure of critical or unfamiliar faces. It would be accurate to say that what happens in Toastmasters, stays in Toastmasters.

“I enjoy and see a lot of value in Toastmasters. As a nervous public speaker, I find that the group is a safe space of individuals who all have a common goal of bettering themselves on the stage. The Transformers are supportive, foster development and give helpful tips and feedback for everyone to be successful.” – Adelle Corrado

MoTI Transformers is an opportunity for all employees, and for that reason, everyone is welcome to register. Our meetings are held every second Wednesday from noon to 1:30 p.m., in Boardroom 3208 in the SCR’s Coquitlam office. If you are unsure whether Toastmasters is for you, feel free to join our meetings as a guest. The only way to find out is to be present. See you soon!
Awarding Field Services Safe Practices
Submitted by Tracy Wynnyk, Provincial Occupational Risk and Safety Advisor, and Cheralee Miket, Safety Advisor Assistant.

Like years past, 2018 was a busy year for Provincial Field Services with many projects successfully delivered all over our beautiful province.

Good safety practices, planning and communication play an essential role in successful project completion and our Field Services crews have demonstrated these attributes, as well as a commitment to each other’s safety, through inclusive and dynamic crew discussions.

Each year, we dig into our vault of records and statistics to proudly present toolbox awards which include categories for best paving, best grading and best manager. Winners in these categories have not only met the minimum toolbox submission compliance goals, but they have also demonstrated a high level of safety engagement through the development and sharing of valuable discussion topics.

After reviewing the content of the monthly toolbox submissions, and the safety engagement scores, we are proud to announce the award winners.

Best Paving
This year, our Prince George paving team, which was divided into three different crews, earned the 2018 Best Paving Award for their consistent, timely submissions and active participation in the Field Services Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee meetings. It should be noted that Mary Quinn and crew played an integral role in securing this win by bringing forward great topics for discussion, including tips for managing age gaps in the workplace, handling distractions while driving, supervising former peers, working in remote areas and driving safely. Great work!

Best Grading
Peter Dzugus and his crew from Williams Lake are the deserving recipients of the 2018 Best Grading Award, as the crew demonstrated continual commitment and consistency, in the criteria for the monthly toolbox compliance. This is the first year Peter and crew have received this award – keep up the good work!

Best Manager
This award is presented to the manager who achieves the highest toolbox compliance amongst all the Field Services crews. In his last year with the ministry, Ken Aura wins this illustrious award for the first time! Congratulations to Ken!

Safety Supervision Certificates Earned
Field Services would also like to congratulate the following employees for successfully completing their Safety Supervision Certificates, from the BC Municipal Safety Association, over the past year:

- Erin Weatherwax
- Nikki Haynes
- Joanna Sirett
- Ryan Earle
- Scott McRae
- Blaine Larson
- Ben Koops
- Eric Robinson
- Greg McKenzie
- Jamie Goodridge
- Thomas Seaborn
- David Ganner

Well done everyone!

Best Manager – Ken Aura (second from right) with (left to right) Provincial Occupational Risk and Safety Advisor Tracy Wynnyk, Field Services Director Shawn Grant and Field Services Deputy Director Wayne Fraser.

Not pictured: Best Paving – Paul Eftodie, Randy Pollock

Dzugus Crew – Best Grading: Peter Dzugus, Eric Graham and Matthew Pearce (missing: Andrii Soroka).

van der Holt Crew – Best Paving: Safety Advisor Assistant Cheralee Miket and Field Services Deputy Director Wayne Fraser (far left) with Director Shawn Grant (far right) recognize Barry Hartt, John van der Holt and Jeff Jones.

Quinn Crew – Best Paving: Field Services Deputy Director Wayne Fraser (far left) and Field Services Director Shawn Grant (far right) with (left to right) Blake Evans, Sue Doddridge, Mary Quinn and David Ganner.
Public Service Week: Celebrating Diversity with Good Fun and Food
Submitted by Jenna Langejan, Client Relations Coordinator, Strategic Human Resources

Public Service Week (PSW) is an annual opportunity to celebrate the achievements, hard work and dedication of public service employees.

The “Celebrating our Diversity” theme highlights that the public service is made up of a diverse group of people respected for their ability, professionalism and commitment to their job. It recognizes that the public service is essential to a healthy economy, the development of communities and the well-being of individuals.

Various recognition activities were held in offices and other locations across the province, throughout the week of June 10-14.

The Public Service Week Planning Committee did an outstanding job organizing various events.

Compliment Trees
This was our tenth year offering the Compliment Trees as part of PSW activities. Compliment Trees were set up throughout 940 Blanshard and in the South Coast Regional Office where employees left kind comments for their fellow workers.

“This is a great way to recognize colleagues in a fun and meaningful way,” said Maia Biel, strategic program support, with Strategic Human Resources. “As part of a team that has remote co-workers, it was nice that cards were mailed out to recipients that are not physically with us on a day-to-day basis, to brighten their day.”

In the Northern Regional Office, they set up a Compliment Highway. Shelley Ruiz created all sorts of automobiles for employees to write compliments on for their co-workers.

Online Crossword Puzzle
Collaboration and research were required for this new activity.

“It was a great opportunity to learn more about our ministry such as our Minister Claire Trevena’s previous line of work,” said Provincial Approving Officer Joan Brickwood. “I had to Google that one!” Congratulations to Joan and to Andrea Mercer who answered all the questions correctly and were the lucky winners in the final draw.

Jelly Belly Count
This is always a fan favourite! The travelling jelly belly jar made an appearance at each event held at headquarters. Congratulations to Bob Steele whose guess was closest to the actual count of 738, with his amazing estimate of 737.

Bob admits that while the temptation was there to eat the jar of winnings all himself, he graciously shared the colourful candies with colleagues and family. It was no surprise that they disappeared rather quickly!

Bob also wanted readers to rest assured that even though he also won the jelly bean counting contest in 2016, “There is absolutely no collusion between myself and the amazing folks that put on our Public Service Week events.” How’s that for luck? Good guessing Bob!

Amazing Relay Race
The Coquitlam office had participants going through a series of challenges including hot pepper tasting and dipping their hands in buckets full of bugs (eew!). Congratulations to the winning team, The Parade of Slackers. Catherine Grisewood from Business Management Services, who was on the winning team, said she loved the entire event, especially the pepper eating contest with all of the judges donning sombreros and Mexican music playing in the background!

What is Your Ancestry Map?
A map was displayed in the lunchroom of the Coquitlam office and employees pinned flags according to their ancestry. “It was very cool to see that the South Coast Region has family members that can be traced from every continent on the globe, except Antarctica,” said Katrina Estoque.

Shout Out Wall
Employees at the Nanaimo office wrote complimentary messages on stars to recognize their colleagues.

Crib Tournament
Denzil Amor set up a crib tournament in the Northern Regional Office that ran for the week. A big shout out to Jed Zimmerman who took home the glory as this year’s crib tourney winner!

Route of the Day
Set up by Danny Arndt and Tamara Brooks in the Northern Regional Office, the daily route took about 15 to 20 minutes to walk, and went in all different directions of Prince George’s downtown. What an innovative way to get employees stretching their legs!

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Mini Golf
Every business unit in the Northern Region and Fort George District hosted its own mini golf hole at the offices in Prince George. Such creativity went into this by everyone — check out the photos for proof! Congratulations to Sydney Mellett for winning the golf tournament. The competition for creation of the best hole ended with a three-way tie between Finance, Business Services and the Fort George District.

Coconut Bowling
Millie Furlong and Corrin Peet at the Northern Regional Office arranged this unpredictable event. The top score was a tie between Ryan Todd and Emily Cooke.

Public Service Blood Drive
Employees were encouraged to “Give Life, Donate Blood,” at the Victoria Conference Centre on June 10, and at a larger BC Public Service blood drive which ran from June 10 to Aug. 5.

Verna Chow from Canadian Blood Services said that “Public Service employee donations made a big difference to the beginning of summer.” Donations are always desired, but especially during the quiet summer months, when hospitals still need blood. Although these blood drives have ended, we are reminded that Canadian Blood Services hosts clinics all year round and regular donors are always welcome!

What’s a celebration without great food?
Throughout the week, various treats were served to deserving employees. At headquarters, employees enjoyed morning goodies, a sandwich lunch and afternoon treats.

The Coquitlam office enjoyed a barbecue lunch, waffle breakfast and ice cream day. The Chilliwack office served up lunch and the Vancouver Island District (Nanaimo, Saanich and Courtenay) offices had coffee and cinnamon buns, lunch and more ice cream!

In the Southern Interior Region, PSW was celebrated with a staff barbecue. Mike Lorimer, Paula Cousins and other members of the regional management team flipped burgers which were then served with salads and beverages.

A potluck was hosted at the Northern Regional Office complete with pulled pork, finger foods and apple crisp. It was a feast fit for royalty! They also cooled off with (you guessed it) ice cream! Ryan Todd and Kat Graham set up an ice cream bar complete with fruit, candy and syrups to create the true ice cream dream.

Public Service Week continues to be a great success year after year. A big thank you to all the volunteers who contribute to this recognition event. Give yourselves a pat on the back!

Every employee deserves to be celebrated and acknowledged for the great work they do as part of our ministry and the BC Public Service.

*Minister Claire Trevena is a former journalist, activist and international development worker.
Area Manager on a Payphone
Submitted by Elisabeth Pocock, Social Media/District Clerk

This summer at Big Creek, west of Williams Lake, there has been a lot of flooding – a changing situation. With no cell service out there, Road Area Manager Kristen Konge has had to call the district office collect, to give us reports or to talk to management. It’s a good thing that payphones still exist in places!

A Quail Tale
Submitted by Lynda Lochhead, Development Officer

I spotted these quail hiding under a ministry truck during a pouring down rainfall. I thought this picture was indicative of the ministry’s day-to-day efforts to keep the public safe from harm to the best of our ability including, occasionally, our fine feathered friends.

Kristen Konge makes a collect call to the Cariboo District office in Williams Lake.
Making Graduation Dreams Come True

Submitted by Rakiya Larkin, Strategic Human Resources Branch Coordinator

High school graduation is an exciting right of passage and one of the first major milestones of adult life. But if you are living in poverty or are otherwise disadvantaged, graduation day may feel more like a burden than a fairy-tale ending. Financial barriers to celebrating graduation exist for some families, especially for those living in our child welfare system.

This spring, the Ministry of Child and Family Development put a call out to BC Public Service Employees, to help collect grad wear donations. I was inspired by this initiative and felt a strong urge to do something. I reached out to ask how I could support the 2019 graduates and before I knew it, our very own Strategic Human Resources team got involved and began collecting grad shoes, dresses, jewelry, gift cards and new make-up. It’s a privilege to work with such generous co-workers who also wanted to help this year’s graduates feel as special as possible during such an amazing milestone. With short notice and a quick turn around time, I was impressed, inspired and proud of what can happen when hearts come together to support others.

The organizing team from the Ministry of Child and Family Development set up a “Grad Boutique” where the grads were able to “shop” for their formal attire. Here’s what the organizers had to say:

“The event was held at the Nanaimo Street Youth office and was a huge success! We dressed more than 23 grads from Victoria, Saanich, Westshore and even Salt Spring Island! The Wet Cleaner provided dry cleaning for all of the chosen attire and Wild Abandon provided beautiful jewelry sets for the grads! Education Minister Rob Fleming provided a letter of support and offered congratulations to the grads. We were able to provide youth with a huge selection of dresses, suits, tuxedos, shoes, jewelry, purses and gift certificates which were all donated by government staff and their friends and family! I would like to thank everyone for helping and for all of the donations which helped make this year’s event so special for the grads that attended.”

It’s important as public servants to take the time to volunteer and give back to our local community. This is part of co-creating a new beginning and helping each other as neighbours, friends and human beings. When there is an opportunity to standup and take action, I reflect on when others have been there for me and lifted me up in my time of need. This allows me to reflect on family members and friends that I know who have resiliently and courageously made it through the child welfare system. This takes strength, and it’s important to remember that they are real everyday heroes we need to be acknowledging and celebrating.

In the spirit of acknowledgement, celebration and making change, my hands are raised up to all our grads, and those everyday who constantly stand against injustices in our society and support those in need. If you are interested in how you can get involved with this initiative, please let me know, or if you know of other worthy ways we can support others, please do not hesitate to share.

Gilak’asla (thank-you) my friends and colleagues!

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

– Margaret Mead

▲ An assortment of suits and dresses were offered to the deserving graduates.

▲ Beautiful jewelry sets donated by Wild Abandon artisans.
A Trip In Time Down Holiday Road

Submitted by Kristen Reimer, Information Officer

The road trip.

A time-honoured tradition…

What could be better than packing up the family truckster and heading out onto the highway in search of adventure?

British Columbia has some of the most beautiful highways in the world and our ministry has an amazing collection of historical images that capture that beauty perfectly.

In celebration of summer and all the road trips that came before, here are my favourite road trip pics., from the ministry’s archives. Enjoy! 

Two youngers heading out on the newly paved Trans-Canada Highway in search of adventure, circa 1965.

How many road trips included the Fraser Canyon and its tunnels? This station wagon is loaded up for family vacation fun, circa 1969.

Two women stop during a road trip near Savona, to enjoy the rolling hills of the interior, circa 1940.

From our “Road Trip Time Machine” series of 1966 photolog videos, this vacation shot would make even Clark Griswold jealous.

Our highway pullouts and rest areas give road-trippers a place to take a break. This car (and boat in tow) look like it’s transporting the owners to summertime fun in the Okanagan.

Car and trailer on the Highway 97 holiday road, circa 1975.

Stopping to enjoy the breathtaking beauty of British Columbia, on Highway 1, circa 1962.

A car and trailer on the Highway 97 holiday road, circa 1975.

Two youngsters heading out on the newly paved Trans-Canada Highway in search of adventure, circa 1965.