Regulatory and Service Improvements for British Columbians Annual Report 2017/18

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of cross-government progress towards regulatory and service improvement goals, which remain to:

Enhance access to quality government services.

Promote a modern, efficient and effective regulatory regime.

Enhance accountability for regulatory and service improvement activities.

The report showcases examples of the innovative work delivered by ministries over the past fiscal year to clarify and streamline requirements, improve processes and forms and leverage technology to deliver a more positive client experience. The report also provides an overview of the provincial regulatory requirements count as of March 31, 2018.

INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT

The world is changing at a rapid pace and British Columbia — like other jurisdictions — is facing more complex public policy challenges than ever before.

Recognizing the need for new ways to tackle these challenges, an Innovation Hub was established in 2016. The mandate of the Hub is to embed a stronger and more consistent innovative culture across the BC Public Service via building capacity, communications and change management, establishing networks and fostering collaboration.

Below is an overview of the disciplines that are working in tandem with ministries to improve regulations, policies and programs under the banner of the Innovation Hub:

The **Continuous Service Improvement (CSI) Lab** trains ministry project teams in agile ways and empowers them to use technology and teamwork to build better public services. Jumping into projects ranging from transport fuel reporting to groundwater well information, CSI Lab teams are developing applications — in real time — making improvements twice as fast, at half the cost.

Behavioural Insights is a discipline that applies the findings and methods of the behavioural sciences to behaviour-based policy problems. Whether it means helping people make better choices or making it easier for people to access government services, behavioural insights exerts an impact on policy outcomes by understanding how people behave in the real world.

Lean is a continuous improvement philosophy that empowers employees to identify problems and create solutions. It's about doing more of the work that adds value and less of the work that does not.

Service Design is changing how citizens access government services by using a client-centred approach, working directly with citizens, developing prototypes, testing, analysing and implementing the results.

The **Integrated Data Office** brings together B.C.'s largest collection of economic, geospatial, social and population level data. The group includes DataBC, BCStats and new investments in corporate data science capacity, advanced analytics technology and a world-class approach to privacy and security of British Columbia's data.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

British Columbians can now resolve small claims disputes of $5,000 or less through the Civil Resolution Tribunal, an online tribunal (https://civilresolutionbc.ca/). The digital service is a first in Canada to enable small claims to be filed, negotiated and resolved almost exclusively online. Plain language questions and answers give free legal information about claims as well as template letters individuals can use to directly resolve an issue. The tribunal provides British Columbians with a fair, affordable and easy-to-access administrative justice system.

BC MINE INFORMATION WEBSITE

The new BC Mine Information website brings together mine-related information in one place for the first time. Authorizations issued under the Environmental Assessment Act, Environmental Management Act and Mines Act, inspection records, and recent annual reclamation and annual dam safety inspection reports are now publically available for 19 major mines across the province. More mine-related information will be continually added to the site.

PARTNERING WITH TECH STARTUP COMPANIES

From modernizing the way people access land-use planning information, to providing social workers with real-time available housing options for children in need, the B.C. Startup in Residence (STIR) pilot project gave six technology startups experience working with government. As the first provincial program of its kind in Canada, the pilot brings the ideas and expertise of startup companies together with government business areas to rapidly solve public sector technology challenges. After 16 intensive

weeks collaborating on projects to improve government services for British Columbians, the six B.C. startups and their government counterparts demonstrated new technology solutions to challenges identified by the province

PROVINCIAL SALES TAX (PST) PILOT PROJECT

By sending timely reminders to small business owners to pay PST via the eTax portal, delinquent payments were reduced by half from 8.8% to 4.2% in the first six months, resulting in 2,500 hours of time saved by government in compliance related work. This pilot project was a success and sending reminders is now the way that we do business.

Accessible Services for Citizens

FASTER PROCESSING OF CHILD CARE APPLICATIONS

Differences between the Child Care Subsidy and Child Care Operating Funding programs were causing errors and lengthy delays in processing new applications for operating funding and subsidy payments. Improvements to the processes of both programs were identified and are being addressed in a phased approach. Phase 1 reduced storage of paper licenses and improved communication and data sharing between program areas. Phase 2 will include cross-training staff, centralized data storage and further improvements to data sharing between the two agencies. For approximately 90% of child care providers, these improvements have reduced application processing times from an average of 30 – 45 days to an average of 1 – 3 days.

SIMPLIFIED REPEAT COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Community Employment Partnership (CEP) program increases employment opportunities for unemployed British Columbians. The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction initiated a process review of applications for organizations wanting to repeat or renew agreements. This project resulted in a simpler application process, easier assessment by ministry staff, and a simplified process for managing agreements. The overall time from application to decision was reduced from 9 weeks to under 4 weeks — a faster turn-around time for applicants and reduced costs for government.

MODERNIZED PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS

Provincial assessments required for graduation have been modernized and enhanced to assess more broad learning and concepts in numeracy and literacy. These assessments are offered over week-long windows, rather than on one day so schools can schedule the assessments more flexibly for delivery to

students. The assessments are offered online to ensure students can access them on a variety of electronic devices, such as tablets.

EASIER ACCESS TO THE POST-SECONDARY TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM

As of September 2017, the tuition waiver program for former children and youth in provincial government care now includes all 25 B.C. public post-secondary institutions and Native Education College. The program is designed to be easily accessible and as inclusive as possible for a student population that has often felt marginalized. The entire process has been simplified by establishing a system navigator, replacing the application process by a signed statement, and eliminating income threshold tests. In the first reporting period from September – December 2017, program intake increased 40% over the previous year when only 11 BC public post-secondary institutions participated.

SIMPLIFIED STUDENTAID LOAN APPLICATIONS

StudentAid BC streamlined the student loan application process by moving to a fixed student contribution model of assessing need based on a student's family income from the previous year. As a result, one third of the questions on the application were no longer needed and removed. It has made the application process quicker for students, easier for students to predict their funding level, and decreased instances of students being awarded incorrect amounts of funding.

STREAMLINING ENGAGEMENT WITH FIRST NATIONS

The Province and the Kaska Dena Council of northern British Columbia used the Lean process to look for ways to streamline the existing engagement process under the Kaska Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA). This was the first time a Lean project has been undertaken with First Nations as full partners. The team successfully redesigned key engagement forms and provided recommendations to the Kaska SEA Natural Resources Council. The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and LeanBC are now working together to build a new framework that accommodates First Nations participation in culturally appropriate ways by implementing the Lean method. This approach will be more fully developed over the next two years as B.C. enters negotiations with Kaska on a new form of government to government agreement.

REDUCED TURN-AROUND TIMES

The Electric Vehicles in High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes (EV HOV) Program accelerates the adoption of zero emission vehicles by allowing eligible vehicles to drive in HOV lanes without meeting the minimum passenger requirement. In 2017, the EV HOV Program used a Lean process (see page 6) to reduce the number of steps in the application by 50%, and provide additional program information through an

improved FAQ list. These changes resulted in a reduction in turn-around time for applications from 4 – 6 weeks to 1 – 2 weeks and a 50% reduction in staff time per application.

ENHANCED ROAD ASSESSMENT (ERA)

The road assessment that determines whether drivers can safely remain at the wheel has been enhanced and made more accessible. The new approach extends the current ICBC reexamination time, incorporates new components to assess driving errors that may result from cognitive impairment and other areas of medical concern, and eliminates the in-office, computer-based screening. Instead, ICBC driver examiners will gradually increase the complexity of driving tasks, provide a break and feedback midway through, and have clear parameters for ending an assessment early if necessary, all to help maximize safety in real world driving conditions. Drivers can use their own vehicles, and access was improved with about 80 ICBC locations delivering the ERA province-wide, an increase from 26 locations. Drivers required to take an ERA will receive it at no cost.

ROADSIDE TICKETING

British Columbians will benefit from safer roads, and be able to pay their traffic fines more easily, as the Province moves to electronic ticketing (eTicketing). Key to these safety gains is a shift to electronic tickets printed at the roadside, which will eliminate data entry errors and improve the speed of ticket processing. Currently, the data from tickets written by police at the roadside is entered up to four times by police, ICBC and court staff which increases the potential for error and the likelihood a ticket may be challenged and overturned, and delays government's ability to identify and take action related to dangerous drivers. Soon, B.C. drivers will also be able to pay fines online.
Improving Services with Technology

ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FOR LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

A new online application makes it easier and faster to resolve tenancy issues. The online application guides the applicant through the process to make sure they are providing the right information. This helps avoid adjournments and dismissals due to incomplete or incorrect applications. Users can apply for dispute resolution directly from their computer or mobile device and low income tenants may apply for a fee waiver at the time of application and upload proof of income.

CALL BACK AND TEXTING OPTIONS ADDED AT SERVICE BC

Created with citizen satisfaction in mind, automated call backs and texting options have been added to Service BC's telephone capabilities. As the government's chief provider of services to citizens and busi-nesses, Service BC is working to consolidate contact centres throughout the province to become a single

point of contact for British Columbians to access, submit and update information, make payments, and obtain licenses or permits.

Medical Services Plan and Premium Assistance Improvement

Infographic: The Medical Services Plan and Premium Assistance enrollment forms and processes have been digitized, reducing the error rate from 40% to 1%. The online application takes about 15 minutes to complete. Digital images of documents for an application can be uploaded.

AGEDOUT WEBSITE IMPROVED

AgedOut.com is an innovative, engaging website that uses interactive learning modules, real-time chat, and text-to-speech technology to provide youth and young adults with resources and information to successfully transition to adulthood. Improvements in 2017/18 include tip sheets and information pages available in five steps or less, and two new learning modules developed in partnership with other ministries. A style guide ensures information on the site is presented in an accessible manner. Youth and young adults advised on the content, structure and form of delivery, to make sure it meets their needs. AgedOut.com now has over 2,200 users and half of current users are either current or former youth in care.

EASIER ACCESS TO EDUCATION INFORMATION

Information for all school districts is now available through a new smartphone and tabletfriendly website, making it easier for parents, students, and school districts to understand and use information that will enhance education for students. B.C. is one of the leading jurisdictions in the world for providing this level of information to parents and educators. The site provides easy access to a wide range of measures of student success, such as completion rates, for all school districts and the province. Reports by school districts include community and student demographics, post-secondary and career preparation, transition rates to post-secondary education, and student satisfaction.

WEBBASED STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS

A new Student Transcript Service improves online access to secondary school transcripts, certificates, scholarship information, and course and examination marks. Secure technology enables students to order secondary school transcripts and graduation certificates with enhanced functions and response times. Students can view or download a copy of their official transcripts, view scholarship status and order Graduation Equivalency Diploma transcripts online as well as pre-approve distribution of results directly to post-secondary institutions and employers. Graduates can get their transcripts and certificates sooner and post-secondary institutions will receive marks as soon as they are available.

MORE FREE WI - FI AT REST AREAS AND INSPECTION STATIONS

Free Wi-Fi is now available at five rest areas in B.C. with more locations coming soon. The expansion of free public Wi-Fi in rest areas allows drivers to take a break and stay connected while encouraging them to leave their phones alone while driving, creating safer conditions for all road users. Free Wi-Fi has also been installed at all commercial vehicle inspection stations throughout the province, improving safety and efficiency on B.C.'s roads by making it easier for commercial drivers to check DriveBC for highway information affecting their route, and obtain online transport permits for future trips.

MORE DRIVEBC WEBCAMS

Eighteen new cameras and 67 new webcam views were added to the DriveBC highway camera network this year. There are now over 740 highway webcam views at more than 400 locations throughout B.C., giving travellers easy access to weather, road and traffic conditions with near real-time coverage. DriveBC is the B.C. government's most popular website, with an average of more than two million visits per month. During the 2017 wildfire season, the DriveBC network was invaluable in helping travellers know which routes were open to traffic.

REMOTE AVALANCHE CONTROL SYSTEMS

During avalanche season, drivers can expect a 50% reduction in closure time along Highway 1 as a result of the installation of nine new remote avalanche control stations west of Revelstoke. This expanded Remote Avalanche Control System allows technicians to reduce the risk of uncontrolled avalanches and keep highways open and safe for motorists. While previous technology relied on a helicopter dropping explosives in specific conditions, remote avalanche control systems allow technicians to conduct explosive control missions with the use of a laptop. This means they can conduct avalanche control 24/7 and are no longer limited by daylight or weather conditions. This allows the avalanche technician to minimize road closures, reducing the impact on B.C. highways.

Improving Services by Updating Legislation

GROUNDWATER WAIVER PERIOD EXTENDED

Minor amendments have been made to regulations under the Water Sustainability Act to support existing groundwater users and clarify exemptions for drainage diversion at a mine site. Government has extended the groundwater licence application fee waiver period to March 1, 2019, a date which aligns with the deadline for existing groundwater users to apply for a licence. Changes also clarify the authority

to remove groundwater seepage from a mine site to reduce risks to workers and mine infrastructure, while protecting the environment.

RULE ALIGNMENT FOR ALCOHOL PRODUCERS

A change in regulations has all alcohol producers in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) operating under the same rules, levelling the playing field for British Columbia brewers, mead makers and distillers. The updated regulation enables alcohol producers to operate within the ALR, providing they source at least 50% of the primary farm product used in their alcohol (grapes for wine, honey for mead, barley for beer) from their own and other B.C. farms, which could create new opportunities for B.C. farmers.

CHANNEL TO ADDRESS REGULATORY CHANGES

Regulatory and service improvement provides ministries with a way to make small regulatory changes with a big impact. For example, to support the green economy, provisions for user fees were amended to permit strata corporations to adopt usage-based charges for use of common property, such as electrical consumption by electric vehicles. Removing this barrier for strata corporations is expected to increase the number of charging stations available in strata housing.

Measuring Progress

A longstanding performance measure used to monitor the overall number of provincial requirements for citizens, businesses, and government is the regulatory requirements count.

The count encourages government to remove unnecessary requirements and streamline regulation as new ones are developed. The methodology requires ministries to count each instance where a business, citizen or the provincial government must take an action or step to access services, carry out business or meet legal responsibilities. The number of requirements in British Columbia statutes, regulations, associated policies and forms is recorded and tracked in a database.

The current target for the regulatory requirements count is below 197,242, set in 2004. At the end of the 2017/18 fiscal year, the regulatory requirements count was 166,919 or 15.4% below the 2004 baseline.

Infographic

B.C. Regulatory Requirements Count

2001 330,812

2004 197,242

2018 166,919

Infographic:

Red Tape Reduction Day

13 regulatory changes

17 redundant regulations repealed

A regulatory requirement is any action that citizens, government or business must take in order to access government services, conduct business, meet their legal responsibilities.