

# METRO VANCOUVER TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY TASK FORCE

Hon. Lisa Beare  
Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture

Hon. Adrian Dix  
Minister of Health

Hon. Michelle Mungall  
Minister of Jobs, Economic Development & Competitiveness



May 7, 2020

**RE: MEETINGS, CONFERENCES & EVENTS SECTOR**

Dear Minister Beare, Minister Dix, and Minister Mungall,

On behalf of the thousands of businesses and organizations that represent or supply British Columbia's multi-billion dollar meetings, conferences and events industry, we are writing to ask for the Province's assistance in helping this vital sector manage and recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

Since the start of the crisis, countless numbers of local, regional, national and international groups have cancelled their meetings, conferences and events...a pattern we know will continue over the next few months. Needless to say, the impact has been catastrophic.

While we understand and support the restrictions on events and gatherings to stop the spread of COVID-19, many in our sector are still planning for and working towards event business occurring later this year (Q4). The scope and scale may be significantly different and smaller than original plans. However, the hope is that some meetings, conferences and events will take place in 2020.

During a press conference two weeks ago, Dr. Henry responded to a reporter's question by stating, "meetings where we all got together, conferences, those are not going to happen this year anywhere in the world." Since then, the province's meetings, conferences and events sector has plunged into further uncertainty with the potential to completely devastate the industry and ground business to a standstill for the remainder of this year.

In BC's Restart Plan, phase 4 is conditional on community wide vaccination, immunity or broad successful treatments. Unfortunately the timeline is undetermined. In his address to the province on Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, Premier Horgan emphasized that until these things happen, BC will not be hosting rock concerts, conventions or any large gatherings beyond 50 people.

Our understanding of the current Provincial State of Emergency and Provincial Health Officer Order is as follows: *You are prohibited from permitting the gathering of people in excess of 50 people at a place of which you are the owner, occupier or operator, or for which you are otherwise responsible. This Order expires on May 30, 2020 and is subject to revision, cancellation or extension by me (Dr. Henry).*

While we respect the official order and commend BC's Restart Plan, we respectfully submit the following recommendations for consideration:

- A. To allow the sector to potentially salvage business in 2020, implement a rolling evaluation plan to assess and/or adjust restrictions on gatherings and events every 30 days.
- B. To allow larger gatherings in proportion to the size of the venue or outdoor space, utilize space configuration measures or models in conjunction with accompanying distance protocols.

If as many as 300 people can shop at the same time in a big box retailer, conceivably the same number of people could attend an event in a convention facility, hotel, venue or outdoor setting within a controlled environment managed by professionals with expertise in crowd control and space configuration.

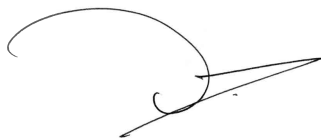
For many companies, generating any business at all in 2020 will be the difference between staying viable and solvent versus closing down permanently. For tens of thousands of people across the province who rely on this industry for their very livelihood, it will make the difference between future permanent employment versus long-term unemployment.

Ministers, our unique sector supports local and regional economic activity, while at the same time generating significant visitor spending and GDP, and adding to the social vibrancy and well-being of our province. We simply cannot afford to lose valuable talent and force facilities and venues to sit idle for a prolonged period of time across British Columbia.

We applaud the Ministry of Health for its swift and necessary response to COVID-19 and support the Province's efforts to manage this crisis. We also appreciate your willingness to work with our industry towards recovery and to re-opening key sectors of the economy.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you further, and to submitting our sector's best practice guidelines for review and approval in the near future.

Sincerely,



Ted Lee  
Acting CEO, Tourism Vancouver  
Chair, Metro Vancouver Tourism and Hospitality  
Industry Response and Recovery Task Force



Walt Judas  
CEO, Tourism Industry Association of BC  
(778) 953-0620

## **SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS AND COMPANIES**

Tourism Vancouver	Bright Ideas Events Ltd.
Vancouver Hotel Destination Association	BUKSA Associates Inc.
Tourism Richmond	C4 Production Services Inc.
Richmond Hotel Association	Cal Travel International Ltd
Richmond Hotel Destination Association	Can-West Display Services Ltd.
British Columbia Hotel Association	Canada West Coachlines Ltd.
Tourism Whistler	Canadian Tours International
Tourism Victoria	Cantrav Services Inc
Tourism Burnaby	Canwest Productions Inc - Kevin Blackburn
Tourism Tofino	Capilano Group
Destination Castlegar	Capilano Suspension Bridge Park
Tourism Abbotsford	Capital Cooler Rentals Vancouver
Tourism Langley	Carly Foster/Carly Foster Project Management
Parksville Qualicum Beach Tourism	Cathedral Mountain Lodge
Tourism Rossland	Charter Bus Lines of BC Ltd.
Tourism Golden	Chella a Levesque Inc
Tourism Chilliwack	Chemistry Consulting Group
Tourism Harrison	Clark's Audio Visual
Tourism Revelstoke	CNH Holdings Ltd
Tourism Prince George	Coast Mountain Photography
Tourism Ucluelet	Coastal Publications Ltd
Tourism Smithers	CONEXSYS Registration
Destination Campbell River	Conferences and Accommodations at UBC
Travel Penticton	ConnectSeven Group Management
Tourism Squamish	ConferenceDirect
Tourism Cowichan	CrewCall Services Inc
Tourism Kamloops	Crown and Summit LLC
Vancouver Event Sector Collective	Cruelty Free Cartoons
Meeting Professional International BC Chapter	Culinary Capers
Professional Convention Management Association	Cvent
Canada West Chapter	Debut Event Design Inc.
2nd Wind Distributors	DFC Events Inc.
5 Star Catering Ltd.	Digitalglitter Creative
50th Parallel Estate Winery	Dominion Tours Inc.
A111 Power of Conference Service	DreamGroup Productions Inc.
Airside Event Spaces	Duncan Cowichan Chamber of Commerce
Angel Destination Management Services Ltd	emc2 events
Anigraph Productions	Emelle's Catering Ltd.
Anvil Centre	Emerald Events
Apex Event Productions Ltd.	Engagement Unlimited Events
APPIX Technologies	Esonic Production services ltd
BBW Event Staff	Events Plus Management Ltd.
BC Event Management	Evergreen Exhibitions Ltd
BC Home Shows Ltd	eVoque event management group ltd

<p>BrandLive  Brett Productions  British Columbia Hotel Association  Fairmont Hotel Vancouver  Fairweather Cruises &amp; Events  Filosophi Events  Fired Up Events Ltd.  Flash And Frame Photo Booth And Events  Flowerz Inc.  FMAV  Focus Audio Visual Services Ltd  Forevery Occasion Ltd.  Freedom Training &amp; Empowerment Services  Glowbal Restaurant Group  Go Golf Conference &amp; Events Management Inc  Grace Choi Events Ltd  Greenscape Design &amp; Decor Inc.  Grouse Mountain  Idea Incentives Inc.  Inn at Laurel Point  Innovation Lighting  Insite Event Design  International Conference Services (ICS)  Inventa World  Itz-a-Wrap! Gift Baskets  JGS Events Inc.  Jordan Zwicker Entertainment  JPdL West  JTB International (Canada) Ltd  Kenmuir &amp; Company  Koncept Events Inc.  Kris Kringle Craft Market  Law Courts Inn  IDesign Network Ltd  Leading Edge Audio Visual Services Ltd.  Levy Show Service Inc.  Lewis &amp; Sears Marketing &amp; Event Management Inc  Live Nation Canada Inc.  Loungeworks Inc.  Lynn Fletcher Weddings  Marika Productions  Marketplace Events  MCI Group Canada Inc  Mind Over Mountain Event Co.  Moraine Lake Lodge  Mr.Fireworks  MRG Events Ltd.  MVKA Productions</p>	<p>EXPOsure Events Ltd.  Fairmont Chateau Whistler  National Event Management Inc.  New Car Dealers Association of BC  Nicola Wealth  Outback Team Building &amp; Training  Pacific Coast Tents Inc.  Pacific Destination Services Inc.  Pacific National Exhibition  Pacific Strategies Inc.  Paintertainment  Paradise Events Inc.  Pedersen's Event Rentals Vancouver, BC  Penticton Lakeside Resort &amp; Conference Centre  Perfect Sense Events  Photoart by Simpson  Pinnacle Pursuuts Inc  Podium Conference &amp; Event Specialists  Prestige Hotels and Resorts  Promosa Management Inc.  Proshow Audiovisual  Prospect Point  PV Events Inc.  Quick Coach Lines Ltd.  Radisson Hotel Vancouver Airport  Rare Affairs Event Management Inc.  Rare Indigo Ventures Inc.  Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of Canada  Reveal Events Group Ltd.  Riggitt Services Inc.  Saab magazine international limited  Scene Ideas Inc.  Sea to Sky Meeting and Association Management  Second Stage Management Services Ltd.  Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel  Sherpa Group Events Inc  Showkraft Production Services Ltd.  Showtime Event &amp; Display  SFU - Meeting, Event &amp; Conference Services  Simply Eventful Management Inc  SITE global  Slam Hospitality Inc.  SMART Shows  Spectra Event Group  Stanley Park Operations  Stanley Park Pavilion  Strategic Site Selection  Sun Peaks Grand Hotel &amp; Conference Centre</p>
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<p> MyBadges.com  MYBC Consulting  Nasco Staffing Solutions  Tantalus Productions Inc.  The Old Courthouse Inn  The Pitblado Group  The Polygon Gallery, North Vancouver  The Robert H Lee Alumni Centre  The Social Concierge  The Westin Bayshore, Vancouver  The Westin Resort &amp; Spa Whistler  Time Pause Event Support Services  Tradex  TRAXX Coachlines Ltd.  Trial Lawyers Association of BC  UBC  UBC Conferences &amp; Accommodation  Vancouver Aquarium, an Ocean Wise Initiative  Vancouver Foodie Tours  Vancouver Pride Society  Venue West Conference Services Ltd.  Vision Event Photography Inc.  Western Retail Lumber Association  Yellow Cab Company Ltd. </p>	<p> Spin Doctor DJ &amp; Entertainment  SW Event Technology </p>
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