

January 28, 2021

Dr. Bonnie Henry  
Provincial Health Officer  
Office of the Provincial Health Officer  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1515 Blanshard Street  
PO BOX 9648 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9P4



**Re: Modified Abbotsford International Airshow**

Dear Dr. Henry

As the voice of tourism for British Columbia, we are writing to express our support for a modified, safe, COVID-friendly Abbotsford International Airshow (AIA) in August 2021.

As you are aware, British Columbia's visitor economy has been decimated by government imposed and necessary travel restrictions that have virtually shut down multiple tourism sub-sectors such as meetings, conferences and special events like the AIA since March of last year. Aside from significant economic impacts on employees, businesses and communities, the lack of events or social gatherings has had a profound effect on the mental health and well-being of residents throughout the province.

Given current and prolonged limitations on the movement of people and gatherings, the need and desire for social activities, including entertainment, has never been greater. To that end, many communities dependent on events and tourism are not only looking for innovative opportunities to host locals and visitors in safe and secure settings but do so by respectfully and diligently abiding by provincial health and safety protocols and orders.

From the Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia's (TIABC) perspective, AIA's 'drive-in airshow' proposal is a brilliant example of meeting government health and safety objectives while delivering benefits to locals, visitors, the City of Abbotsford, the region and province. AIA's in-depth work on health and safety protocols, event logistics, operations and other measures to protect guests is commendable and could be used as a template for similar events for the duration of the pandemic.

TIABC strongly encourages the PHO and Province to thoroughly review AIA's proposal, consult with organizers and the community on necessary adjustments, and ultimately approve the 2021 Abbotsford International Airshow soon to allow preparations for this exciting event to begin in short order.

Dr. Henry, thank you for your consideration. More importantly, thank you for all you are doing to keep British Columbians and visitors safe during this most trying time.

Sincerely,



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CC: Hon. Melanie Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport  
Neilane Mayhew, Deputy Minister, Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport  
Salman Azam, Assistant Deputy Minister, Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport  
Jim Reith, President – Abbotsford International Airshow  
Craig Nichols, Executive Director – Tourism Abbotsford

