

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 6th, 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.

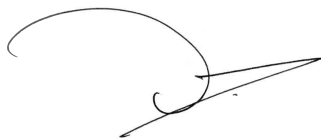
For many companies, generating any business at all in 2020 will be the difference between staying viable and solvent versus closing down permanently. For tens of thousands of people across the province who rely on this industry for their very livelihood, it will make the difference between future permanent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

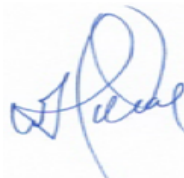
We applaud the Ministry of Health for its swift and necessary response to COVID-19 and support the Province's efforts to manage this crisis. We also appreciate your willingness to work with our industry towards recovery and to re-opening key sectors of the economy.

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

ORGANIZATIONS AND COMPANIES WHO ENDORSE AND SUPPORT THIS LETTER:

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

<p>Apex Event Productions Ltd. APPIX Technologies Esonic Production services ltd Events Plus Management Ltd. Evergreen Exhibitions Ltd eVoque event management group ltd EXPOsure Events Ltd. Fairmont Chateau Whistler Fairmont Hotel Vancouver Fairweather Cruises & 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 & Empowerment Services Glowbal Restaurant Group Go Golf Conference & Events Management Inc Grace Choi Events Ltd Great Northern Way Scene Shop Greenscape Design & 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 & 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 & Sears Marketing & Event Management Inc Live Nation Canada Inc. Loungeworks Inc. Lynn Fletcher Weddings Marika Productions Marketplace Events</p>	<p>Emerald Events Engagement Unlimited Events Moraine Lake Lodge Mr.Fireworks MRG Events Ltd. MVKA Productions MyBadges.com MYBC Consulting Nasco Staffing Solutions National Event Management Inc. New Car Dealers Association of BC Nicola Wealth Outback Team Building & 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 & Conference Centre Perfect Sense Events Photoart by Simpson Pinnacle Pursuuts Inc Podium Conference & Event Specialists Prestige Hotels and Resorts Prime Event Partners 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 & Display SFU - Meeting, Event & Conference Services Simply Eventful Management Inc</p>
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<p>MCI Group Canada Inc Mind Over Mountain Event Co. SMART Shows Spectra Event Group Stanley Park Operations Stanley Park Pavilion Strategic Site Selection Sun Peaks Grand Hotel & Conference Centre Spin Doctor DJ & Entertainment SW Event Technology 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 & Spa Whistler Time Pause Event Support Services Tradex TRAXX Coachlines Ltd. Trial Lawyers Association of BC UBC UBC Conferences & 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>SITE Global Slam Hospitality Inc.</p>
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