

Ministry of
International Trade
and Minister Responsible for
Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

2015/16
Annual Service Plan Report



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Minister's Message and Accountability Statement



I am pleased to present the *Annual Service Plan Report* for the Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism. This report outlines our priorities for the 2015/16 fiscal year and our progress towards achieving them.

Over the last year, we have made significant progress on our mandate to pursue strategic opportunities to showcase British Columbia internationally as a preferred place to invest and do business, particularly in Asia. We have also continued taking large strides in promoting the value of multiculturalism, both domestically and as a bridge connecting British Columbians and their businesses to global markets.

During the 2015/16 fiscal year, we exceeded our goal of attracting 15 national and international offices to British Columbia with 21 businesses choosing to open offices here. This outcome is a result of a focused effort by Ministry staff to identify high-potential international companies in key markets and to provide them with specific information and connections they need to make positive investment decisions about locating in British Columbia.

We also surpassed our 2015/16 target for foreign direct investment, attracting \$1.407 billion to the province through focused, concentrated efforts by local staff and overseas trade and investment representatives. The low Canadian dollar and the signing of the *Canada–Korea Free Trade Agreement* also contributed to British Columbia's strong performance.

In support of the #BCTECH Strategy, we announced a \$100 million venture capital fund to help promising tech companies shine on the global stage while creating well-paying jobs back at home for British Columbians. As a critical building block to stimulating innovative ideas in the marketplace, the venture capital fund reflects government's commitment to creating an investment environment that stimulates new economic growth.

Further, as per the Chinese Legacy BC initiatives, which flowed from the 2014 formal apology for historical wrongs, my ministry, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, launched Bamboo Shoots: Chinese Canadian Legacies in BC, an education resource that acknowledges the contributions of Chinese Canadians and the historical injustices they faced. The provincial government has also taken action to recognize historic sites of significance to the Chinese Canadian community. In partnership with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, 21 locations across B.C. were recognized under the *Heritage Conservation Act* in January 2016.

The *Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism 2015/16 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the *2015/16–2017/18 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa Wat". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honorable Teresa Wat
Minister

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Purpose of the Ministry

The [Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism](#) pursues strategic opportunities to promote British Columbia internationally as a preferred place to invest and do business. This is done by delivering services that accelerate B.C.'s exports, attract strategic investments—including international offices—develop international partnerships, increase awareness of B.C.'s competitive advantages—such as our diverse, multicultural population—as well as by negotiating and managing trade agreements and delivering venture capital programs. The Ministry also promotes the benefits of B.C.'s diverse cultures within the province and connects communities with services to eliminate racism and foster the full and free participation of all British Columbians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of the province. These efforts promote economic prosperity in communities across B.C. while simultaneously positioning the province for long-term growth and creating jobs for British Columbians.

Specifically, the Ministry works to:

- Open and expand priority markets for B.C. goods and services, particularly in Asia, Europe and the United States, and engage B.C. exporters in new opportunities.
- Attract strategic investments to B.C.'s priority sectors that create jobs and grow competitiveness.
- Leverage investment capital programs (venture capital and infrastructure) to support a competitive business environment.
- Leverage B.C.'s cultural diversity to connect the province with global markets and to promote the value of diversity and inclusiveness in B.C. communities.

The Ministry has an oversight role for the following Crown agencies: the [BC Immigrant Investment Fund](#) and its subsidiary the [BC Renaissance Capital Fund](#), and [Forestry Innovation Investment](#). Please see Appendix B for information on these agencies.

Strategic Direction and Context

Premier Christy Clark's June 10, 2014 *Mandate Letter* to Honourable Teresa Wat—which informed the Ministry's *2015/16–2017/18 Service Plan*, on which this *Annual Report* is based—included direction to: balance the ministerial budget; attract major Asian firms to invest in B.C. and locate their North American presence in the province; coordinate government trade missions; work to ensure that B.C.'s interests are represented in the renegotiation of the *Softwood Lumber Agreement*; and work with provincial multicultural organizations to ensure they are connected to government programs and activities. Additional direction for the 2015/16 fiscal year was provided through Premier Clark's July 30, 2015 *Mandate Letter*. More information on both these letters can be found in Appendix D of this report.

The Ministry plays a key role in delivering on [Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan](#), the government's strategy for gaining access to Asian and other priority markets to open doors for B.C. businesses.

Additionally, the Ministry works with its Crown corporations to implement the [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#) to strengthen accountability, promote cost control and support strategic alignment. In 2015/16 this included developing engagement and evaluation plans for its Crown corporations in order to ensure that these public sector agencies continue to be effective and efficient in their service delivery, while respecting the best interests of taxpayers. Additional detail about the plans can be found in each Crown's 2015/16 annual report.

The strategic context in which the Ministry operated in 2015/16 was marked by:

- A subdued global economy: global growth is estimated at a moderate rate of 3.1 per cent in 2015 compared to 3.4 per cent in 2014. While economic activity in the U.S. remained resilient, uncertainty persisted in Europe and growth slowed in some major Asian economies, setting the stage for an increasingly competitive landscape for trade and investment.
- Improvement in a number of B.C.'s economic indicators in 2015, including employment, exports and retail sales. The provincial economy grew by 3.0 per cent, or \$6 billion, in 2015 and was second in the country in terms of job creation.
- Several ongoing risks to British Columbia's economy, including: the potential for a slowdown in domestic and U.S. activity, ongoing fragility in Europe and slower than anticipated Asian demand, particularly in China. Additional risks include exchange rate volatility and weak inflation.

Report on Performance

Over the past year, the Ministry successfully completed seven of the eight deliverables outlined in Premier Clark's June 2014 *Mandate Letter*, which informed the Ministry's service plan for 2015/16. The eighth deliverable is ongoing in nature (see Appendix D for more detail).

Consistent with its *Mandate Letter* direction, the Ministry worked to achieve the following two goals:

- Goal 1: B.C. is recognized globally as a preferred place to invest and do business
- Goal 2: British Columbians value diversity and inclusiveness in our communities

Of its four performance targets for the year, the Ministry exceeded three and met one. More detail about the Ministry's goals, strategies and performance measures is provided below.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: B.C. is recognized globally as a preferred place to invest and do business

This goal is shared with the Ministry of Job, Tourism and Skills Training, which is leading *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*, government's strategy to a secure and prosperous future for all British Columbians. This goal supports B.C. business and industry in the creation of long term jobs and investments in the province and converting B.C.'s strengths into strategic, competitive advantages in the global economy.

Objective 1.1: Open and expand priority markets for B.C. goods and services, particularly in Asia

Strategies

Key strategies in 2015/16 included:

- Promoting B.C. internationally and expanding markets in key sectors—including forestry, tourism, technology, mining and energy, natural gas, agrifoods, transportation and international education—by continuing to capitalize on more than sixty international trade and investment representatives in overseas offices and deploying dedicated sector and market staff both domestically and abroad.
- Providing B.C. exporters with services, information and in-market assistance to help them expand exports, enter new markets and achieve their export goals.
- Reducing barriers to trade and investment by advancing B.C.’s priorities in international and domestic trade negotiations and reducing or eliminating protectionist measures in other jurisdictions through engagement and, where necessary, more formal processes.
- Examining the strategies and best practices of other international and sub-national trade and investment organizations, for example Australia, and developing and implementing recommendations from the most successful strategies.

Performance Measure 1: Total number of international business agreements facilitated by Ministry programs

Performance Measure	2013/2014 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Total number of international business agreements facilitated by Ministry programs	178	276	120	250	125 ¹	135 ¹

Data Source: Ministry internal performance tracking system.

¹ Targets are shown as reported in the Ministry’s latest service plan. They may be revised in the Ministry’s next service plan, in February 2017.

Discussion:

Exports of goods and services are a key economic driver and support jobs in communities across the province. International business agreements indicate export activity, as they involve purchases of B.C. goods and services by foreign buyers, research and innovation partnerships, and agreements between industry and government that create the environment for deeper commercial relationships between companies. In 2015/16, the Ministry facilitated 250 international business agreements with a financial value of approximately \$950 million. The Ministry supports the conclusion of these international business agreements by connecting B.C. businesses and institutions to potential buyers, supporting B.C. businesses to build brand awareness at key international trade events, organizing and supporting inbound and outbound trade missions to target markets, providing information necessary to conclude agreements, assisting parties to work with all levels of government in B.C. and Canada, and providing

other services tailored to the needs of the parties. B.C.’s Special Representative in Asia also supports business success by promoting and advancing B.C.’s trade and economic interests and strengthening the Province’s government-to-government relationships in Asia. In December 2015, the Ministry released *The BC Jobs Plan Trade Strategy: Raising Our Game in Asia* and announced the opening of two new offices in Southeast Asia to strengthen and diversify our trade with Asian markets and grow the economy.

Objective 1.2: Attract increased investment to B.C.’s priority sectors

Strategies

Key strategies in 2015/16 included:

- Identifying strategic investments and—working closely with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and other ministries—supporting successful outcomes from investment opportunities.
- Encouraging reinvestment from companies that have previously invested in B.C.
- Attracting investments, including international offices, to B.C. in order to strengthen our key sectors and industries.
- Working with the federal government and private-sector partners to implement HQ Vancouver, the International Head Office Attraction project to make B.C. the first choice for Asian companies looking to locate head offices in North America.
- Facilitating positive investment decisions by identifying potential obstacles to investment, developing strategies and delivering timely solutions for clients considering B.C. as an investment location.
- Launching the new online community portal on britishcolumbia.ca that gives communities, First Nations and businesses in British Columbia a platform to market their investment opportunities to the world.

Performance Measure 2: Foreign direct investment facilitated by Ministry programs

Performance Measure	2012/2013 Baseline	2013/2014 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Total value of foreign investment facilitated by Ministry programs	\$4.295 billion	\$2.499 billion	\$1.91 billion	\$800 million	\$1.407 billion	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism internal performance metrics tracking system.

Discussion:

Attracting investment is an important way to help ensure B.C.'s continued economic growth and to create new jobs across the province. When investments are made in B.C.'s communities, the local sectors in those communities are strengthened, are able to take advantage of more opportunities, and are better equipped to compete globally. B.C. has fostered a highly competitive and open investment climate and has included strong investment provisions in trade agreements to show investors that B.C. is a desirable and secure place to do business. The Ministry has also committed to annual trade missions that support and secure investments by facilitating successful ventures for investors interested in B.C.'s opportunities. The Ministry established a target of \$800 million in investment attracted in fiscal year 2015/16. The target was predicated on the uncertain global economic conditions that continue to persist, most notably, a significant decline in the value of commodities. Global foreign investments have been decreasing year over year, resulting in increased competition among countries for fewer investment dollars. Despite these conditions, the Ministry exceeded its target because of focused, targeted efforts by domestic staff and overseas trade and investment representatives. The low Canadian dollar and the signing of the *Canada–Korea Free Trade Agreement* also contributed to B.C.'s strong performance.

Performance Measure 3: National and international offices locating in British Columbia

Performance Measure	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Total number of national and international offices that locate in B.C. annually as a result of the Ministry's assistance	N/A ¹	15 Offices	15 Offices ²	21 Offices	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

Data Source: Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism internal performance metrics tracking system.

¹ This measure first appeared in the Ministry's service plan for 2014/15.

² This number is exclusive of work led under the Head Office attraction program, which is focused on attracting five major Asian head offices.

Discussion:

Attracting foreign offices to B.C. creates jobs, increases innovation, supports talent development, increases contributions to the tax base, grows demand for business services—such as accounting, legal, advertising and real estate leasing—and raises national and international awareness of B.C. as one of the most competitive business jurisdictions in North America. In 2015/16, the Ministry exceeded its goal of 15 national and international offices locating in B.C., with 21 offices opening in the province. These outcomes are a result of a focused effort by the Ministry to identify high potential international companies in key markets and provide them with the specific information and connections they need to make positive investment decisions about locating in British Columbia.

Objective 1.3: Leverage investment capital programs (venture capital and infrastructure) to support a competitive business environment

Strategies

Key strategies in 2015/16 included:

- Continuing to deliver the Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit program to facilitate access to investment capital for small businesses in B.C.
- Completing a venture capital review and implementing findings through the development of a multi-year action plan.
- Targeting venture capital programs and policy to support the Technology and Innovation Strategy, including the expansion of “anchor” technology companies that drive job creation and innovation.

Goal 2: British Columbians value diversity and inclusiveness in our communities

Objective 2.1: Celebrate B.C.’s rich diversity as a source of innovation and global networking

Strategies

Key strategies in 2015/16 included:

- Working to integrate multicultural festivals and events with in-bound trade and investment missions to highlight the strong cultural ties that connect B.C. to our overseas business partners.
- Supporting capacity-building across B.C. through the development and recognition of leaders in the areas of inclusive workplaces, anti-racism and cultural diversity.
- Collaborating with key business sector partners to identify and share best practices of inclusion and multiculturalism in the workplace.

Objective 2.2: Collaborate with communities and partners to challenge racism and barriers to inclusivity

Strategies

Key strategies in 2015/16 included:

- Fulfilling the requirements and objectives established in the *BC Multiculturalism Act*, which includes developing the annual *Report on Multiculturalism* and supporting the Multicultural Advisory Council in its public engagement and advisory role to the Minister.
- Providing support to B.C. communities to deliver locally led anti-racism and multiculturalism projects.

- Promoting awareness and understanding of cultural diversity in B.C. through public education, including online resources and community events.
- Implementing legacy projects to support the apology for historical wrongs committed against British Columbia’s Chinese Canadian community, which includes working with the Ministry of Education on the new Asian and South Asian curriculum.

Performance Measure 4: Number of participants engaged in the EmbraceBC network

Performance Measure	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Number of participants engaged in the EmbraceBC network to promote multiculturalism and challenge racism	341	363	Maintain or improve	371	N/A ¹	N/A ¹

Data Source: Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism.

¹ This measure was discontinued in 2016/17. See the Discussion section below for details.

Discussion:

This measure provided an indication of the strong foundation of community partners working to continually challenge racism and promote multiculturalism in B.C. It measured the number of primary organizations and individuals active in the EmbraceBC Network until March 2016.

The EmbraceBC brand has since been decommissioned as a result of the termination of the *Canada–British Columbia Immigration Agreement, Annex A–Responsibilities for Federally Funded Settlement and Integration Services* by the federal government. In future service plans and annual reports this measure will be replaced with one measuring the number of B.C. communities who are active members of the Organizing Against Racism and Hate network.

Financial Report

Discussion of Results

This Discussion of Results reports on the Ministry's financial results for the year ended March 31, 2016 and should be read in conjunction with the Financial Report Summary Table that follows.

Operations

- This year, the Ministry realized savings in certain program areas (see table and notes below) which were used to offset the costs of:
 - Supporting B.C. businesses in international trade disputes.
 - Funding Headquarters (HQ) Vancouver, an initiative focusing on encouraging major Asian companies to use Vancouver as their head office location.
 - Engaging cultural groups, promoting multiculturalism and fighting racism in B.C.
- Additional financial appropriation was provided through Contingencies access to fund:
 - An expansion of B.C. Trade Investment Offices in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region; and,
 - Oversight and administration of the new, \$100 million BC Tech Fund, and the BC Immigrant Investment Fund (BCIIF), whose governance and operations were transitioned into the Ministry in 2016.

Financial Report Summary Table

	Estimated	Other Authorizations ¹	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance ²
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
International Trade and Investment.....	22,338	377	22,715	18,740	3,975
International Strategy and Competitiveness	5,538	306	5,844	9,482	(3,638)
Multiculturalism	1,628	-	1,628	2,110	(482)
Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies.....	17,300	-	17,300	17,300	-
Executive and Support Services	1,717	-	1,717	1,572	145
Sub-Total	48,521	683	49,204	49,204	-
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ³	-	-	-	(27)	(27)
Total	48,521	683	49,204	49,177	(27)

Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Executive and Support Services	1	-	1	0	(1)
Total	1	0	1	0	(1)

¹ “Other Authorizations” include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the “estimated amount” under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act* for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the *Act*.

Contingencies access: Maximum amount approved / (Utilized) in Millions

- Venture Capital BC Tech Fund \$0.306
- ASEAN Trade Investment Office Presence \$0.377

² Explanations for variances greater than five per cent:

- International Business Development: Under expenditure due to operational savings to offset pressures in other divisions.
- International Strategy and Competitiveness: The additional expenses incurred by this branch were funded from savings realized elsewhere in the Ministry.
- Corporate Initiatives and Multiculturalism: The additional expenses incurred by this branch were funded from savings realized elsewhere in the Ministry.
- Executive and Support Services: Under expenditure due to operational savings to offset pressures in other divisions.

³ The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$0.027 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

Appendix A: Contact Information and Hyperlinks

Minister's Office

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To learn more about the many programs and services provided by the Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism, please visit:

www.gov.bc.ca/mit

To find a specific person or program in the Ministry, please search the [B.C. Government Directory](#).

Appendix B: List of Crowns, Agencies, Boards and Commissions

[BC Immigrant Investment Fund \(BCIIF\)](#)

This Crown corporation promotes economic development and job creation through its investments in public infrastructure projects and venture capital funds that are focused on four key technology sectors: information technology, digital media, clean technology, and life sciences. Over the course of 2015/16, BCIIF worked collaboratively with the Ministry to support a review of its mandate and to implement the subsequent recommendations. The review resulted in transitioning BCIIF and its subsidiary, the BC Renaissance Capital Fund, back into government as of April 1, 2016. Please see BCIIF's 2015/16 Annual Report for details.

[BC Renaissance Capital Fund \(BCRCF\)](#)

This subsidiary of the BC Immigrant Investment Fund invests in venture capital funds that focus on four key sectors: information technology, digital media, clean technology and life sciences. As a result of a mandate review in 2015/16, the BCRCF transitioned back into government as of April 1, 2016. Please see BCIIF's 2015/16 Annual Report for details.

[Forestry Innovation Investment \(FII\)](#)

This Crown corporation is the B.C. government's market development agency for forest products. FII works closely with industry associations and other levels of government in marketing B.C. forest products around the world.

[Multicultural Advisory Council \(MAC\)](#)

This council is a legislated body officially created in 1988 to provide advice to the Minister Responsible on issues related to multiculturalism and anti-racism. The council also performs other duties and functions as specified by the Minister as set out in Section 5(1) of the *Multiculturalism Act*.

[Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council](#)

This council works with Chinese Canadian communities and other key partners to support and advise government and ensure that the legacy projects recommended in the Chinese Historical Wrongs Consultation Final Report are successfully implemented and are known and communicated throughout the province.

Appendix C: N/A

This appendix relates to significant independent or semi-independent operating segments. There are no such segments within the Ministry.

Appendix D: Minister's Mandate and Actions Summary

The Premier's June 10, 2014 *Mandate Letter* to the Honourable Teresa Wat provided direction on strategic priorities for the 2015/16 fiscal year. Those priorities and the resulting actions are summarized below.

The Ministry received additional direction for the 2015/16 fiscal year through the Premier's [July 30, 2015 Mandate Letter](#). Detailed reporting on the actions resulting from that letter will be available in the Ministry's annual report for 2016/17.

Mandate Letter Direction	Ministry's Action (in 2015/16)
1. Balance the ministerial budget in order to control spending and ensure an overall balanced budget for the province of B.C.	COMPLETED – The Ministry balanced its budget in 2015/16, as verified by the public accounts released in July 2016.
2. Develop a government-wide trade mission plan by August 1, 2014 for the upcoming fiscal year.	COMPLETED – The Ministry submitted government's annual trade mission plans for fiscal years 2014/15 and 2015/16 to the Premier's office.
3. Coordinate trade missions across all ministries to ensure maximum coverage and minimal duplication as ministries execute <i>BC Jobs Plan</i> strategies.	COMPLETED – The Ministry worked with ministries across Government to ensure approved trade missions align with <i>BC Jobs Plan</i> priorities and that international travel is coordinated.
4. Undertake a sectorial analysis of export opportunities for BC manufacturers and exporters by December 31, 2014.	COMPLETED – The Ministry completed this analysis in early December and submitted its findings to the Premier's Office. The findings informed the Ministry's business case for expansion in the ASEAN region.
5. Continue to work with Canada and the BC Business Council to attract major Asian firms to invest in BC and locate their North American presence in our province as committed in <i>Strong Economy, Secure Tomorrow</i> .	COMPLETED – The project was announced by Minister Wat and federal Minister Moore in February 2015. The first Head Office announcement was made on May 1, 2015. The project spans three years and includes ongoing operational alignment between the Ministry and HQ Vancouver .
6. Work with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to ensure British Columbia's interests are well understood by Canada and represented in our negotiating position as we approach the 2016 renewal date for the Softwood Lumber Agreement.	ONGOING – Ministry staff continue to provide support to these important negotiations by representing B.C. at meetings and completing economic analysis and support.
7. Work with provincial multicultural organizations to ensure they are connected to and are participating in the activities of the provincial government.	COMPLETED – Ministry staff continued to implement province-wide multicultural programming in 2015/16 and to leverage B.C.'s multicultural advantage.
8. Work with the Ministry of Education as they develop the new Asian and South Asian curriculum.	COMPLETED – As an initiative related to the Apology to the Chinese Community for Historical Wrongs, the Ministry worked with the Ministry of Education to develop the Asian and South Asian curriculum.