

Office of the Premier

2019/20 Annual Service Plan Report



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Published by the Office of the Premier

Minister's Accountability Statement



The Office of the Premier *2019/20 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the *2019/20 – 2021/22 Service Plan* created in February 2019. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John J. Horgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Honourable John Horgan
Premier
August 20, 2020

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Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

The Annual Service Plan Report is designed to meet the requirements of the [Budget Transparency and Accountability Act](#) (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets documented in the previous year's Service Plan.

Purpose of the Ministry

The Premier serves as the President of the Executive Council (cabinet) of the Government of British Columbia. The Office of the Premier assists the Premier in overseeing and leading government. In addition, it supports the cabinet decision-making process. As a central agency, the Office of the Premier facilitates effective policy coordination across the public service and ensures a strategic and corporate level approach on the development and implementation of key priorities. The Premier is advised by the Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary and head of the Public Service on matters of public policy, and management and operational issues.

The Office of the Premier:

- Articulates government's goals, commitments and priorities through ministry mandate letters, and works with ministries and Crown agencies to ensure communication of those goals, commitments and priorities, and to track and monitor their implementation;
- Leads the public service and, with the Deputy Ministers' Council, commits to be a top employer that maintains and enhances public trust, builds capacity, increases our competitiveness and manages for results;
- Provides support for the operations and decision-making processes of cabinet and its committees; and
- Works directly with the federal, provincial and territorial governments, governments in other countries, and all ministries and Crown agencies to advance British Columbia's interests.

Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2017 shaped the [2019/20 Office of the Premier Service Plan](#) and the results reported in this Annual Report.

Operating Environment

British Columbia's economy was strong in 2019 with real GDP growth of 2.8 per cent compared to the year before. Labour market conditions in B.C. remained tight, highlighted by the lowest unemployment rate in the country at 4.7 per cent, unchanged in rank and level from 2018. Employment increased by 2.6 per cent on the year. Average weekly wages grew by 2.5 per cent, registering a second consecutive year of positive real wage growth, with the annual consumer price index up 2.3 per cent. B.C. retail sales increased by 0.6 per cent in 2019, a more moderate pace compared to 2.0 per cent growth in 2018, as consumer spending was weighed down by more cautious

overall consumer behaviour and declines in housing-related spending amid falling home sales year-over-year. Meanwhile, residential construction remained strong. Although the forestry sector faced significant challenges in 2019, LNG development provided some support for economic growth and job creation in the province. On the external front, global trade policy uncertainty, escalating trade tensions and commodity price declines weighed on B.C.'s export sector in 2019.

In the final quarter of 2019/20, British Columbia was impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency, and on March 18 Public Safety and Solicitor General Minister Mike Farnworth declared a provincial state of emergency to support province-wide response to the pandemic.

The measures taken throughout the world to slow the transmission of the virus down have been unprecedented in modern history. Some jurisdictions have 'locked down' most normal economic and social activity. British Columbia has taken a more nuanced approach, by allowing most businesses to continue to operate, albeit with modified operating protocols that minimize the risk of transmission. Consequently, the economic impact in British Columbia has not been as severe as elsewhere. Having said that, the impacts have been quite severe. Approximately 400,000 British Columbians lost their jobs between February and May of 2020 – the fastest rate of job loss in the historical record. The unemployment rate rose from 5.0 to 13.4 percent in that short period.

On March 23, 2020, Finance Minister Carole James introduced a COVID-19 Action Plan which provides an additional \$5 billion in measures, over and above what was already in the February 18, 2020 budget. The objective of these additional measures was to provide relief for people and businesses impacted by the pandemic and provide resources for the restart and recovery of the economy.

At the time of tabling this Annual Service Plan Report, the COVID-19 pandemic is still very much with us. British Columbia's approach has been supported by an unprecedented level of non-partisanship and collaboration amongst the three parties holding seats in the legislature. While there may be new developments as the pandemic continues, it is generally agreed that British Columbia's response to the pandemic so far has been the most successful in North America, and one of the most successful in the world. Infection and mortality rates are amongst the lowest in the world, the negative impact on the economy has been less here than elsewhere, and there has generally been strong public support for British Columbia's approach.

It is expected that responding to all aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic will be the dominant focus of the government for the 2020/21 year.

Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, Measures and Targets

Goal 1: Establish government goals, commitments and strategic priorities

Objective 1.1: Establish government goals, commitments and strategic priorities

Provide a government-wide emphasis on creating a fairer and more inclusive society and developing opportunities for all British Columbians to have a better life.

Key Highlights

- Government continued to deliver on its key goals, commitments and strategic priorities.
- The Deputy Minister to the Premier led the Deputy Ministers' Council, ensuring consistent information for senior leadership.
- The Office of the Deputy Minister produced a Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living, which provided an economic plan for 2019-20 to guide and focus Ministries' activities for the year.
- Working with all ministers and ministries, government stayed within its fiscal strategy while delivering existing and new priorities.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Actuals	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
1.1 Performance targets in place for Deputy Ministers	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data source: Office of the Premier

Discussion of Results

Deputy Ministers met regularly with the Deputy Minister to the Premier to discuss goals and issues within their ministries. 27 members of the Deputy Ministers' Council met performance expectations. This performance measure has changed in the 2020/21-2022/23 Service Plan to better indicate whether the work of government is in alignment with established goals, commitments and strategic priorities.

Goal 2: Provide guidance and direction for the Government British Columbia

Objective 2.1: Lead the Executive Council

Cabinet Operations supported the Deputy Minister to the Premier in setting out the framework for cabinet and cabinet committee decision-making.

Key Highlights

- Cabinet submissions focused on ensuring cross-government alignment with government's key objectives of making life more affordable, delivering the services people count on and building a strong and sustainable economy that works for everyone.

- Effective logistical support for the operations and decision-making process of cabinet and its committees continued throughout the year.
- Cabinet and cabinet committee decision-making was accurately recorded.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Actuals	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
2.1 Cabinet receives timely advice on all key public policy recommendations and plans.	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data source: Cabinet Operations

Discussion of Results

Cabinet committees and ministries provided prompt and effective advice enabling timely and well-informed cabinet decisions benefiting British Columbians.

Goal 3: Foster intergovernmental relations

Objective 3.1: Build strong and productive relationships with the Government of Canada, other provinces and territories, and key international partners

The Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat (IGRS) advances British Columbia's priorities through leadership in intergovernmental partnerships and international relations.

Key Highlights

- Strengthened partnerships with other provinces and territories through bilateral and multilateral co-operation at the Council of the Federation and the Western Premiers' Conference. Relationships nurtured at these tables provided the foundation for subsequent close cooperation among First Ministers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Worked closely with the federal government to ensure B.C.'s interests were conveyed, including negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding on the Electrification of the Natural Gas Sector that demonstrates common commitments to world-leading climate policies with strong economic growth.
- Enhanced delivery of French-language services to members of B.C.'s francophone community in priority areas such as health and social services, early learning, justice, tourism, arts and culture, and communication.
- Supported the Premier's mission to the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day and promote trade and investment opportunities in European markets.
- Delivered B.C.'s international objectives by hosting briefings and visits with foreign dignitaries and members of the Consular Corps. These meetings, including the Heads of Mission Economic Mission with participation of more than 50 ambassadors, high

commissioners and consul generals from 48 different countries, focused on enhanced trade and collaboration in pivotal sectors such as international education, tourism, clean technology, value-added wood products, agriculture and mineral exploration.

- Advanced the development of an innovative and resilient economy through B.C.'s participation in the Pacific Coast Collaborative and the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER)
- Strengthened relationships with Washington State, Oregon and California, acting together on climate change initiatives, increasing connectivity and transportation links and growing mutually beneficial trade.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Actuals	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
3.1 Progress on key intergovernmental objectives	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data source: Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat

Discussion of Results

Cabinet was informed on a regular basis of upcoming intergovernmental meetings and initiatives, including comprehensive strategic advice on engaging the federal and other governments.

Financial Report

Financial Summary

	Estimated	Other Authorizations ¹	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat	3,413	0	3,413	3,216	(197)
Executive and Support Services ²	7,936	346	8,282	8,479	197
Sub-total	11,349	346	11,695	11,695	0
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11,349	346	11,695	11,695	0
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
By Core Business	1	0	1	0	(1)
Total	1	0	1	0	(1)
Capital Plan (\$000)					
By Core Business (and Purpose)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)					
By Core Business (and Purpose)	0	0	0	0	0
Receipts	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Disbursements	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	0	0	0	0	0
Total Receipts	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Total Disbursements	0	0	0	0	0
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	0	0	0	0	0

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.

² Additional funding from the Contingencies Vote was approved to fund costs associated with operating requirements related to cross-government priorities.