

ACHIEVING PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES THROUGH COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS: THE PROJECT AGREEMENT MODEL FOR PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

The labour movement has always had a difficult relationship with the state. Governments of the centre and right have normally sought to limit union growth, contain union wage demands and marginalise the economic and political economic influence of the labour movement. However, labour's relationship with social democratic governments has presented equally challenging issues. Given that Labour usually feels it has a stake in keeping social democratic governments in office, it has to evaluate what it can reasonably expect such governments to implement and shape its demands accordingly.

Historically, unions have pressed for improvements in labour legislation to make it easier to organise. They have also lobbied for changes to broader government policy, such as higher employment standards, fair wage requirements, ending privatisation and encouraging governments to use, or purchase from, unionised

contractors and suppliers.

In the construction industry, the building trades unions have historically focused on certifying the major contractors employing their members on a trades-by-trades basis. However, this practice has become increasingly difficult in recent years, as anti-union employers, often with government assistance, have systematically expanded their share of the industry.

British Columbia's building trades unions, that once had among the highest union densities in the country, were devastated by the overtly anti-union legislation and policies of the Social Credit Governments during the 1983 to 1991 period. Union density dropped dramatically and the certification success rate fell even more precipitously.² Membership declines in the trades were notable during periods of high unemployment. Many union members confronted the choice of non-union work or no work at all.

The election of the New

Democratic Party (NPD), a social democratic Government, in 1991 provided an opportunity for BC's building trades to regain lost ground. The new provincial Government revised the Labour Code, eliminating some of the worst changes enacted by the previous Social Credit administration. However most changes were not focused on the building trades, specifically, and hence provided only partial relief from the continuing pressures of the non-union contractors who were now dominant in the sector.

The building trades felt that the Government could do much more in the one area where it exercised direct control: publicly funded construction projects. They wanted Government contracts to be awarded to union contractors. In response, the NDP Government took some steps to assist the building trades, such as establishing fair wage requirements through the Skills Development and Fair Wage Act, a policy change the building trades had long advocated. However, the NDP was unwilling to face the onslaught from business sector and the corporate controlled media that would accompany a policy of awarding highway contracts exclusively to unionised construction firms.³

Instead, it adopted a different approach, based on BC's long history of Project Agreements in the hydro electricity sector. This offered a way of addressing some of the

concerns of the unions, while simultaneously enabling the Government to implement some of its key public policy objectives.

THE 'PROJECT AGREEMENT' MODEL

Adoption of a 'Project Agreement' model in other sectors of Government construction – specifically highways and transportation infrastructure – was not an obvious one. It was largely conceptualised by the (then) Minister of Finance (and, subsequently, Premier) Glen Clark who had cut his teeth in the labour movement as a building trades organiser. Clark fought successfully to have this approach accepted by his Cabinet colleagues. And Clark put together the team of negotiators who subsequently translated the Government's mandate into a viable collective agreement.

A Project Agreement is a collective agreement covering an entire capital project. All the major building trades unions are brought together under a single council which negotiates a common agreement with either a single employer or a council of employers. The agreement applies for the duration of the project and contains provisions for renegotiations of certain issues such as wage re-openers. It substantially reduces the risks – and costs – of disputes for Government, while providing a vehicle for resolving employee

grievances and other labour relations issues. In return for the benefits of a collective agreement and blanket unionisation of the project, the unions accept a no-strike, no lockout provision. On the union side, the Project Agreement approach was generally supported by the highway construction unions, many of whom had had direct experience of the model from their lengthy involvement with BC Hydro construction. (It should be noted that hydro construction is a different – and distinct - section of the construction industry with overlapping, but not identical, unions.)

The ‘Project Agreement’ model was initially limited to one major project: the \$1.2 billion Vancouver Island highway (VIHP). However, it was the largest capital project in Western Canada at the time.

Vancouver Island was a major labour stronghold in BC. The Island forest industry was almost entirely unionised and the region had a long and proud tradition of union activity. However, non-union contractors were pushing to make highway construction ‘union free’. Given the size of this project, a major confrontation between the building trades and the non-union contractors – a confrontation foreshadowed by bitter conflicts over the use of non-union labour in mill construction in Port Alberni. The adoption of a ‘Project Agreement’ model offered a way to

avoid this conflict.

In agreeing to negotiate a ‘Project Agreement’ with the Government, the building trades believed that the opportunities offered by such an agreement were worth the price of allowing the Government to achieve its policy objectives (discussed below).

For the Government, a Project Agreement provided a vehicle for implementing the 1993 Build BC Act. Its purpose was to use capital spending to expand and diversify the British Columbia economy. Its goals included job creation, regional development, training, and providing opportunities for “traditionally disadvantaged individuals and groups.” The Government felt that capital spending could generate major economic and social spin-offs, but only if there was a conscious and systematic effort to incorporate these objectives into the planning and implementation process.

The Act established a new Crown Corporation, the BC Transportation Financing Authority (BCTFA), with a specific mandate to apply these public policy objectives to major capital investments in transportation infrastructure across the province. The Build BC Act, was influenced by BC’s problematic history of major capital projects. Historically, much of BC’s economic growth was driven by resource, energy and transportation infrastructure mega-projects. These projects sometimes impacted significantly on the rural

and remote communities affected, often displacing other, locally based economic activities. Too often they failed to provide employment, economic development, training or related benefits for the communities affected. Jobs often went to outsiders while local businesses were relegated to a minor role as suppliers or service sub-contractors. First Nations had been particularly – and negatively - affected. Entire communities were relocated to make way for the construction of hydroelectric dams, transmission lines, pipelines and new highways. Little, or no training was provided to First Nations workers. Outside contractors actively discriminated against hiring them in favour of workers recruited from elsewhere. However, by the early 1990s, First Nations' treaty negotiations began to create new uncertainties for capital projects in BC. The proposed VIHP traversed the traditional territory of a number of First Nations. In other parts of the Province, First Nations had expressed their opposition to infrastructure projects through blockades. The Government wanted to avoid such incidents on the new highway. Moreover, the NDP had made commitments to promote employment equity in training and hiring. It was committed to incorporating this objective into major capital projects.⁴

Most of the highway construction unions were also signatories to the Project Agreement with BC Hydro and, therefore, were aware of the

way in which such Agreements supported unionisation. A Project Agreement for highway construction would ensure that the entire Project was unionised. And it would provide the opportunity to bring a significant number of new workers into the respective unions. A Project Agreement also offered the promise of a stable - and generally good - labour relations climate and effective health and safety programs.

HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS

To understand why both the building trades and the Government supported the concept of Project Agreements, a brief history of this approach is needed. BC Hydro and the building trades unions had brought the concept of Project Agreements, used in the Saint Lawrence Seaway Project, to BC in the early 1960s.⁵ In return for restrictions on the right to strike and an end to whipsawing, Seaway employers had agreed to 'International Signers Agreements' that guaranteed union membership on all phases of the Project.

BC Hydro had wanted labour peace for the construction of the massive dams on the Columbia and Peace Rivers. It did not want the kind of union/employer conflicts that had occurred in the 1950s at the Kemano smelter or at the Burrard power plant near Vancouver. The Columbia Treaty with the US included a completion schedule with penalties if BC Hydro did not get the

work done on time. So the BC Government had a major incentive to avoid labour disputes.

The easiest way, legally, to craft an agreement was to make BC Hydro the employer of record, rather than certifying each individual employer. On their side, the unions formed the Allied Hydro Council. The Council then negotiated 10 year Project Agreements with Peace Power Constructors (PPC) and Columbia Hydro Constructors (CHC), both subsidiaries of BC Hydro. What was different about the BC Project Agreements, compared to other construction agreements, was that the individual contractors were not certified with the relevant building trades unions. Rather, BC Hydro acted as the employer of the entire workforce. Contractors were not employers. Rather, they purchased their labour from CHC. All contractors, including those not certified with the building trades, had to use workers whose terms and conditions were established by the collective agreement. And, all workers had to be covered by the agreement.⁶

In the renegotiations of the CHC – building trades agreement in 1993, the NDP Government and the Board of BC Hydro pushed to include a number of new provisions which reflected the Government’s public policy agenda, including training and employment equity commitments. These were to be critical in the agreement

subsequently negotiated for the Vancouver Island Highway Project.

ADOPTION OF THE PROJECT AGREEMENT MODEL ON THE VIHP

The VIHP was the overall project, including planning, financing, engineering, construction and all the other related activities associated with a Government highways program. The VIHP was a new, high speed, controlled access highway stretching from Campbell River in the north to Victoria in the south. The Province set up a new company, Highway Constructors Limited (HCL), on January 13, 1994 to supply the labour needed by the Project. HCL was a wholly owned subsidiary of the BCTFA. Its Board included the Deputy Ministers of the key ministries with an interest in its policy objectives. Its purpose was to be the employer of the labour force for the entire Project and to manage labour relations. By becoming the employer of record, HCL would have the capacity to put in the Government’s policy objectives, including: employment equity, training, local hire and support for locally based contractors.⁷

On their side, the unions established the BC Highway and Related Construction Council to enable them to negotiate a collective agreement covering the entire Project.

KEY DETAILS OF THE AGREEMENT

The collective agreement required union membership on the Project, subject to the normal exclusions permitted under BC's Labour Code. Within 30 days of starting work for HCL, employees were required to join the appropriate building trades union. Regardless of whether a contractor was 'union' or 'non-union' in its other operations it would have to accept unionised workers assigned to it by HCL. This meant that contractors whose workers had never been organised in the past, or who had been organised by unions outside the building trades, would be supervising unionised building trades workers on their sites. To allow contractors to bring their core workers on site, they were permitted to 'name request' up to five of their customary workers on a 'one for one' basis with HCL assigned workers. However, workers named by the contractors would have to become HCL employees and join the union.

Once accepted as union members under the HCL agreement, workers could choose to remain members after leaving the project, as long as they were prepared to pay union dues. Membership, once granted, was not tied to working for HCL on the Island Highway and under most union constitutions, could be continued at the members' option. To accommodate the equity and

local hire provision of the collective agreement, the traditional hiring hall practice, where the union dispatches members to employers based on requests for labour, was modified to enable HCL to dispatch workers to the various contractors on the project. Although each union maintained its hiring hall list, HCL could give priority in dispatch to equity group members and, where the union did not have such members available, HCL could dispatch them from its pool of qualified employees.

Three other major modifications to the normal industry collective agreement are worth noting. The first was a limitation on the provincial seniority rights of existing union members. Preference was, instead, to be given to local residents living within 100 kilometres of the worksites. This meant that HCL could dispatch its trainees, qualified local residents and members of equity groups before any union members from other parts of the Province were offered jobs. Several unions affiliated to the Council had significant numbers of unemployed members in other parts of the Province. Consequently, the local hire provision was a major accommodation to the BC 21 goals of the Government.

Second, the agreement gave HCL the right to ask the unions to dispatch qualified equity workers, newly trained equity workers and equity trainees to the job sites first, in preference to other workers.

When combined with the local hire provisions that effectively excluded off-island workers unless no equity, or locally qualified, workers were available, this provision gave HCL the ability to implement employment equity goals.

Third, the agreement permitted HCL to train large numbers of workers from equity groups and local residents on Income Assistance to work on the highway. The training program only made sense if its graduates were given the opportunity to take jobs on the highway. The unions assisted in the development of the training program, both through sharing their curriculum materials and by offering places at the union administered training schools.⁸

The unions and HCL recognised that an accurate system for collecting data was essential to document progress in achieving equity goals. They agreed to collect extensive data in three main equity areas: applications for jobs, equity training and equity employment, both by numbers of workers and by hours worked. In addition, data on local hire was also collected. Later in the Project, the parties agreed to monitor youth employment – one of the priorities of the Clark Government. Finally, the database provided for the collection of detailed information on union membership, employment and contractor assignments.

IMPACT OF THE VANCOUVER ISLAND PROJECT AGREEMENT

The Project Agreement can be evaluated from a number of different perspectives. From the Government's point of view, the key issues were: cost; schedule; equity training and employment; local hire and community economic impact. On the cost side, the seven-year project came in slightly under the projected cost estimate – an estimate made in 1993 by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways before the HCL approach was contemplated.⁹

HCL resulted in a more competitive bidding process, with the number of bids per contract at over 5 compared with other highway projects that had a 3.7 bid per contract record. HCL's management of payroll and labour relations meant that it was able to pass on its economies of scale to the smaller contractors, enabling them to submit bids on work which otherwise would be beyond their resources and capacity.

With respect to training, according to HCL's data, 13% of hours worked on the Project were allocated to worker training. This was in addition to the training programs HCL provided. Over 330 Islanders were trained to be labourers, truck drivers or heavy equipment operators. According to HCL data, one-fifth of the workers were from underrepresented groups in 1998 (table 1).

**Table 1: Vancouver Island Highway Project - Labour Force Report
(For the period of January 1, 1998 to December 31, 1998)**

Classifications	Total	Men	Women	First Nations	Youth	People with Disabilities	Visible Minorities	Total Under represented
Bricklayers	5	5	0	0	1	0	0	1
Carpenters	90	88	2	6	18	0	1	27
Cem. Masons	28	28	0	1	2	0	1	4
Electricians	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ironworkers	57	57	0	2	5	1	0	8
Labourers	252	226	26	16	2	3	2	49
Operators	332	321	11	23	39	5	2	80
Painters	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1
Piledrivers	5	5	0	1	1	0	0	2
Pipefitters	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teamsters	200	191	9	9	10	0	2	30
Tech/Clerical	9	8	1	0	1	0	1	3
TOTAL	986	937	49	58	81	9	9	206

Total of Equity Individuals	125
Total Underrepresented Groups	206
Total Individuals	986
Total Positions Worked	1981

Percentage Equity Hours worked by Four Equity Groups	18.3%
Percentage Hours Worked by Youth	8.3%
Percentage Total Hours Worked by Underrepresented Groups	26.6%

Percentage of Four Equity Working	12.7%
Women	5.0%
First Nations	5.9%
People with disabilities	0.9%
Visible Minorities	0.9%
Percentage of Youth Working	8.2%
Total Underrepresented Groups Working	20.9%

Hours Worked by Underrepresented Groups	119,692 (26.6%)
Hours Worked by Other Workers	329,611 (73.4%)
Total Hours Worked	449,303 (100.0%)

Notes:

1. Adding across the rows may not equal the "Total Equity" number because some individuals may represent more than one group; however, the "Total Equity" column represents the total number of individuals.
2. The "Total Individual" columns represent those individuals who have self-identified as belonging to that equity group; they may identify themselves to be represented in more than one group (column).
3. The "Percentage of Equity Working" measures individuals working in that pay period and does not double-count equity groupings.
4. All equity statistics represent only those individuals who have completed a "self-identify" survey.
5. Youth are defined as those individuals who were at the time of hire between the age of 15 - 24 years and are not one of the other four equity categories.

Source: Highway Constructors Ltd.

Marjorie Griffin-Cohen and Kate Braid carried out a major study of the equity initiatives on the VIHP.¹⁰ They concluded that the project largely achieved its equity objectives, commenting that it was “stunningly successful” despite a number of teething problems. From 1996 to 2001 the percentage of equity hours worked ranged from a low of 15.5% (1996) to a high of 22.1% (1998). By the end of 1999, 463 people had benefited from the project’s employment equity program.¹¹

With respect to local economic impact, 93% of payroll went to local residents. Many of the trainees – especially First Nations – gained valuable job experience that they have been able to transfer to other projects on the Island.¹² The fact that HCL managed payroll, training, recruitment and labour relations made it much easier for local contractors to bid successfully on work and thus secured additional benefits for the local economy.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PROJECT AGREEMENT FROM A UNION PERSPECTIVE

From the perspective of the unions, there were both positive and negative experiences, but on balance, representatives of the building trades have seen the project as a sound model for future public construction. The fact that the largest construction project in Vancouver Island’s history was built

by unionised workers is the most obvious and significant outcome. However, there were others. HCL, with the co-operation of the unions, implemented a very extensive training program. This provided new employees with an orientation to the industry and the opportunity to learn specific skills, primarily in three occupations: construction labourers, teamsters and operating engineers. It also provided the opportunity to learn about health and safety issues and employment rights.

The one major criticism made of the training by some unions was that the agreement did not specify ratios of trainees to qualified workers. Because contractors were not clear about the expectations relating to training, some did not accommodate as many trainees as they might have. To be fair, however, HCL did push hard to provide opportunities to trainees, monitoring the number with each contractor and taking steps to expand trainee opportunities wherever possible.

One important accomplishment for the unions was the development and implementation of a very successful health and safety program that all contractors were required to follow.¹³ HCL had an accident related lost-time rate 38 per cent better than the province’s construction industry. It won three health and safety awards in 1996, four awards in 1997 including a national Award of Excellence

presented by Occupational Health and Safety Magazine and two more awards in 1998.

During the first two million hours worked on the project not a single complaint was filed under BC's Employment Standards Act – a remarkable record in light of the very large number of complaints normally received from the construction industry. According to Gary Kroeker, President of the BC Highway and Related Construction Council, the agreement also facilitated the expeditious handling of grievances as well as providing an effective framework for dealing with Workers' Compensation Board and Employment Insurance Issues. The Project Agreement model also enabled the unions to protect the financial interests of their members. In the construction industry it is not uncommon for sub-contractors and contractors to go bankrupt and fail to pay their employee's wages. Yet on the Project, every worker was paid.

The unions also were given the opportunity to recruit significant numbers of new members, many of whom were members of equity groups. While, initially, the equity component of the Agreement was a Government initiative, the fact that the unions had agreed to the equity training and equity hire provisions meant that they had a commitment to fulfil these obligations. Over time, and with the influx of new equity members, the unions became more accepting – indeed supportive – of

this aspect of the Project.

Relations between unions and First Nations in BC varied depending on the region and union. While some unions had been relatively welcoming to First Nations members, others had done little to recruit First Nations into their membership. However, many First Nations became union members on the Project and had the opportunity to continue their union membership afterwards. The VIHP and the BCTFA also put in place a demonstration project with a First Nations road building company in which it was able to 'partner' with private contractors for the construction of a segment of the highway. Tenders were also evaluated not only on the basis of low bid but also according to the training and employment opportunities provided to First Nations.¹⁴

One of the major challenges – and opportunities – provided for the unions under the agreement was to persuade the workers employed by HCL of the value of union membership. The VIHP was a very large project. Most unions did not have the resources on the Island that were required to carry out extensive education and membership orientation..

Moreover, one of the limitations of the collective agreement is that it did not require newly hired workers to visit their respective union offices before starting employment. Thus contact was generally limited to the

job sites. The opportunity to meet new members and explain the advantages of union membership at the beginning of employment might have made further organising much easier.

The issue of how effective the unions were in taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the agreement is controversial. Some HCL staff felt that the unions could have done much more to welcome members and persuade them of the benefits of unionisation. In some cases union educational efforts (as opposed to training) were minimal and contacts with members on job sites perfunctory. The percentage of workers who have maintained union membership is relatively small – one union official guessed that only 10% kept up their membership after the project was completed.

EXTENSION OF THE PROJECT AGREEMENT MODEL TO OTHER PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

The BCTFA carried out a detailed assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the Project Agreement for the Island Highway. It concluded that it was a sound – and cost effective - way to carry out major highway construction projects. Accordingly, in 1997, the BC Cabinet approved the expansion of this model to all major linear transportation projects valued at over \$50 million in the Province.

This included: the \$1.2 billion Millennium Line Skytrain expansion; the repair of Vancouver's Lion's Gate Bridge, the addition of a fifth (HOV) lane on the Port Mann Bridge and improvements to the Cape Horn Interchange, the John Hart Bridge and Interchange Project in Prince George; construction of \$60 million Trans Canada Highway HOV lanes in the Lower Mainland; and an upgrade to the Trans Canada Highway from Cache Creek to the Rockies and Nisga'a Highway, a project specifically negotiated with one of the northern First Nations.

Late in the NDP's term, the model was adopted for other projects outside the transportation sector. The most significant of these was the development of a new Project Agreement for BC's coastal silviculture industry. In April 1998, The IWA negotiated a collective agreement with New Forest Opportunities Ltd. (NEWFOR) a subsidiary of Forest Renewal BC (FRBC), a Provincial Crown Corporation established in 1994 with a mandate to reinvest part of the Government's stumpage fees in BC's forest base. NEWFOR was modelled on HCL and used HCL to manage the database and assist with labour relations issues. In fiscal 200-01 NEWFOR spent just over \$10 million on silviculture activities.

The success of the Project Agreement model in the transportation sector gives rise to the question of whether it could be used more broadly in other capital

projects funded by the Government. Again, no definitive answer can be given. But applying this model to other areas of public construction on a pilot basis would be a worthwhile experiment. Moreover, as the IWA-NEWFOR experience suggests, it might have applications outside construction as well.

The NDP lost the election, disastrously, in the late spring of 2001. On taking power, the new Liberal Government – whose election campaign received considerable support and policy advice from the non-union contractors – announced that it would dismantle HCL once existing contracts were fulfilled.¹⁵ Future public construction would be based on a return to the earlier practice of ‘open tendering’. There are also indications that the Government is considering ending BC Hydro’s longstanding practice of Project Agreements. This policy change means the end of BC’s interesting experiment in public construction – at least as long as the Liberals remain in office.

Hopefully, the promise of this approach – and its clearly demonstrated benefits – will be remembered and taken up by the labour movement in the future.

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NOTES

1. John Calvert was a Policy Advisor in BC’s Crown Corporations Secretariat. Blair Redlin is a former BC Government Deputy Minister.
2. The data fluctuate significantly from year to year for both indicators, but the long-term trend is clear. For example, in 1983, there were 373 successful certification applications. In 1992, there were only 47 successful applications, according to data compiled by David Fairey of the Trade Union Research Bureau from BC Labour Relations Board statistics.
3. The reality of these pressures was driven home when the NDP attempted to make major revisions to the Labour Code in 1998. The proposed changes, which were initiated by (then) Premier Clark, and designed to strengthen the building trades ability to organize, resulted in such a firestorm of opposition from business and the media that the Government backed down completely.
4. In adopting a new approach to highway construction, significant barriers had to be overcome. The road construction industry in BC has traditionally drawn its workforce from a narrow stratum of society: white males. It has provided relatively few employment opportunities for women, First Nations, visible minorities or people with disabilities. Data on the equity composition of the industry is very limited because neither governments nor employers have made a systematic effort to document the extent to which members of designated equity groups have been employed.

The best source of information for BC is a January, 1990 Employment and Immigration Canada study, entitled *Women, Native Indians, Visible Minorities and People With Disabilities Working for Employers*. (This is the only recent BC

- study of the issue.) According to this study, total employment of people from the first three of these equity groups was estimated at about four percent. However, the break down among the three equity groups revealed that of the 3929 individuals surveyed, only 12 were women, 5 of whom were apprentices. Aboriginal representation was only 41, including 2 apprentices. These two groups represented about 1.3 percent of the workforce. Visible minorities accounted for 105 workers, or about two thirds of the equity total. While this study was restricted to the unionised sector (and carried out with the co-operation of the unionised employers and organised labour), there is no reason to assume that equity representation was - or is now - any higher in the unorganised parts of the highway construction industry.
5. The first collective agreement embodying this process was reached in December 1961. Interview with Wayne Morris, former labour relations manager of BC Hydro, October 2, 2002.
 6. While the agreement covers all workers, a modified RAND formula applied to workers who chose not to join the union. In practice, union membership was almost universal.
 7. The legitimacy of this arrangement was challenged by non-union contractors who went to the BC Labour Relations Board, arguing that HCL was not the true employer. They failed.
 8. Three key occupations were the focus of the training program: construction laborers, operating engineers and teamsters (truck drivers). There were also some apprentices on the project, but the number of workers in apprenticed trades was much smaller and the training timelines were considerably longer.
 9. The actual budget was not determined until after the passage of the Build BC Act. It was formulated by the Board of the BCTFA based on Treasury Board debt limit allocations. The BCTFA also determined (and modified) the scope and schedule of the Project.
 10. Marjorie Griffin-Cohen and Kate Braid, 2000, *The Road to Equity: Training Women and First Nations on the Vancouver Island Highway*. Vancouver: The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
 11. BC Ministry of Transportation web site.
 12. Statistics from the BC Ministry of Transportation and Highways web site.
 13. The unions and HCL recognized that contractors had to be made responsible for the safety of their operations. As a result, for WCB purposes, contractors were assessed by the WCB on the basis of the normal experience rating system. Thus they had a financial reason to comply with the HCL safety program.
 14. YMC, a First Nations owned road construction company partnered with P.C.L./Ledcor to build a section of road.
 15. The Independent Contractors and Businesses Association of BC (ICBA) was the largest single financial donor to the Liberal Party in the last Provincial election.