
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2009TCA0001-000234
August 17, 2009

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

B.C. STRENGTHENS AND ALIGNS TOURISM PROMOTION

VICTORIA – Tourism BC will be brought into the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, reducing administrative costs and better co-ordinating all of the Province’s marketing initiatives, Minister Kevin Krueger announced today.

“While Tourism BC has served British Columbia well, in these difficult economic times it is critical that we maximize every tourism dollar for marketing B.C. to the world,” said Krueger. “Consolidating tourism operations in the ministry will allow for co-ordinated marketing campaigns, while ensuring resources are focused on getting the best results for British Columbia’s tourism sector.”

Bringing Tourism BC into the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts next year will reduce administrative costs and allow these funds to be re-invested into marketing initiatives. The integration of Tourism BC, effective April 1, 2010, will result in a new program under the leadership of the ministry with a renewed focus on marketing the regions of British Columbia.

The minister will be replacing Tourism BC’s board of directors with a new Minister’s Advisory Council, which will continue seeking input and advice on marketing plans from the tourism industry. The council will report directly to the minister.

“We must continue building on the successes B.C. has had over the past few years and remain top-of-mind with travellers,” said Krueger. “These changes will ensure we are maximizing our opportunities to showcase British Columbia, the best place on earth, to the world.”

Created in 1997, Tourism BC was the marketing arm for the Province, with primary offices in Vancouver and Victoria, approximately 146 employees and in-market representation in key markets including Australia, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom, South Korea and Taiwan. These changes will enhance B.C.’s international presence and ensure that the value of B.C.’s tourism potential is maximized at home and abroad.

Tourism generated an estimated \$13.8 billion in 2008, providing more than 120,000 direct and 170,000 indirect jobs across the province. The Province of British Columbia has supported the development of a strong infrastructure for the tourism industry since 2001.

For instance, the Province has:

- Provided \$25 million to the Union of B.C. Municipalities for its Community Tourism Program.
- Provided \$12 million in one-time funding to the province's six tourism regions.
- Invested \$8 million toward the construction of six Provincial Gateway Visitor Centres.
- Provided \$5 million over four years to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C. to implement its Aboriginal cultural tourism strategy.

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