



Tourism British Columbia
2005/06 – 2007/08 Service Plan Update
September 2005



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August 2005

LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR TO THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE

To the Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts:

The 2005/06 – 2007/08 Tourism British Columbia Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the contents of this Plan, including the selection of performance measures and performance targets. The Plan is consistent with government's strategic priorities and overall strategic plan. All significant assumptions, policy decisions and identified risks as of July 28, 2005, have been considered in preparing the Plan.

I am accountable for delivering on the Service Plan and for measuring and reporting actual performance. This Plan describes the programs and activities that will be undertaken over the next three years to respond to the opportunities and challenges arising from prevailing tourism market conditions. It is consistent with the Ministry's broad policy direction and general principles, supporting the government's strategic priorities and overall strategic plan. It also references new funding for Tourism British Columbia announced by Premier Gordon Campbell at the annual meeting of the Union of BC Municipalities on September 24, 2004. The Board of Directors and staff look forward to working with government and industry partners to apply these funds in the most sensible manner to ensure maximum return on investment.

Tourism British Columbia continues to achieve success on behalf of the province's tourism industry and these resources will help to expand British Columbia's tourism opportunity. These accomplishments have come by focusing upon those markets and sectors that can best build visitation to British Columbia. To further stimulate tourism growth, the 2005/06 – 2007/08 Service Plan will continue to build on marketing programs in established markets, and introduces several new initiatives that are intended to nurture, grow and maximize tourism opportunities across sectors. It targets new efficiencies in product and travel information management, technology, marketing and human resource development.

I would like to thank the Board for their input into the planning process for 2005/06 – 2007/08, and all Tourism British Columbia staff for their commitment to developing and delivering strategic programs and activities that directly support the organization's mandate. Additionally, we would like to thank the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts for their support and commitment to the industry.



Michael Duggan

Chair

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Tourism British Columbia became a Crown corporation in April 1997, and is the responsibility of the Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. The corporation's principle stakeholder group is the BC tourism industry, and is appropriately governed by an industry-led board of directors with management, financial and legal authority as ascribed under the *Tourism British Columbia Act*. In March 2002, new board appointments reflected Premier Gordon Campbell's commitment that "all members of the Tourism British Columbia Board be nominated by the industry, from the industry." Until the end of fiscal year 2004/05, funding was derived directly from 1.65 points of the 8% provincial Hotel Room Tax. Following Premier Campbell's announcement that the government would "double Tourism BC's marketing budget from \$25 million to \$50 million," funding is now a combination of the existing hotel tax and a grant from the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.

Tourism British Columbia Act

Purpose:

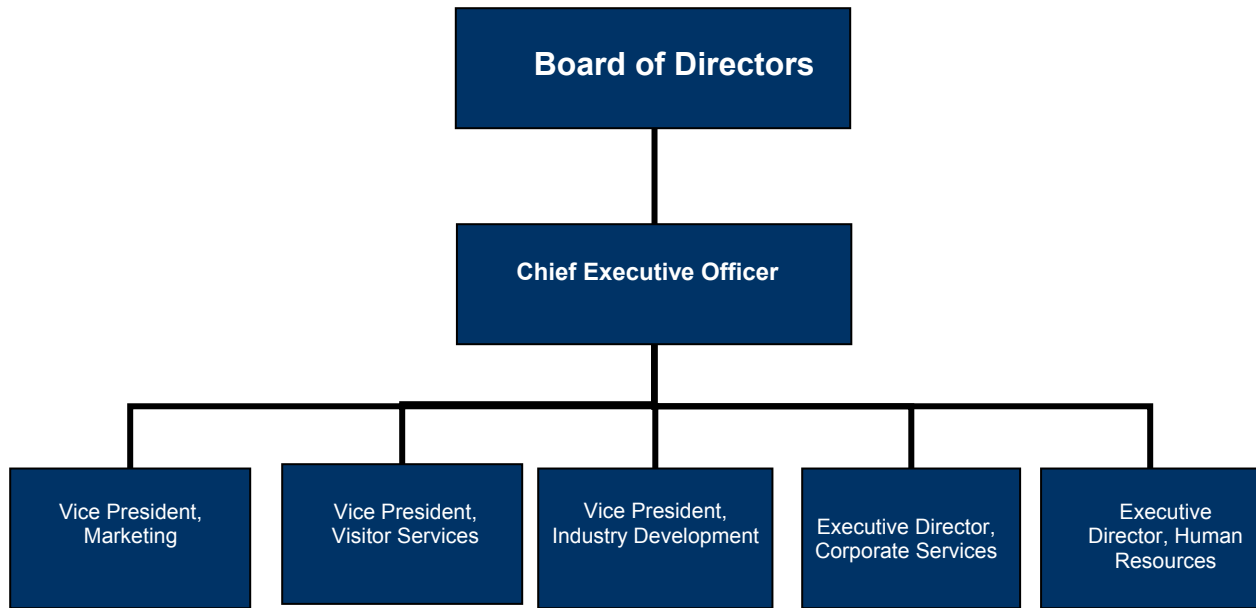
- To promote development and growth in this vital sector.
- To increase revenues and employment throughout British Columbia.
- To increase the economic benefits generated by the tourism industry.

Mandate:

- Market British Columbia as a tourism destination.
- Provide information services for tourists.
- Encourage enhancement of standards of tourist accommodation, facilities, services and amenities.
- Enhance professionalism in the tourism industry.
- Encourage and facilitate the creation of jobs in the tourism industry.
- Collect, evaluate and disseminate information on tourism markets, trends, employment, programs and activities, as well as on the availability and suitability of infrastructure and of services that support tourism activities.
- Generate additional funding for tourism programs.

Tourism British Columbia works closely in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts whose mission is to build strong partnerships to foster sustainable tourism, sport and arts sectors and creative, vibrant communities where people want to live, visit and invest.

Tourism British Columbia - Organizational Structure¹:



Core Business Functions

Tourism British Columbia is structured as a professional marketing organization, comprised of the following core business functions:

- The *Marketing* Division develops consumer and trade marketing strategies and programs based on consumer needs in key geographic markets to increase demand for British Columbia as a preferred travel destination. All activities are integrated and strategically targeted to help move the consumer through the purchase cycle of awareness, interest, knowledge, purchase, and then ongoing repeat purchase. The primary goal of this division is to increase tourism revenues from two types of markets: “volume” (British Columbia, Alberta, Washington) and “high-yield” (long haul North America and Asia/Pacific and Europe).
- The *Visitor Services* Division strategically continues the consumer purchase cycle and has as its primary goals, to enhance the visitor experience and to increase length of stay and dollars spent per visitor. The division’s programs/activities include:
 - Providing information to travellers via Visitor Info Centres, *HelloBC*[®].com, the toll-free *Super, Natural British Columbia*[®] reservation and information service and worldwide distribution of British Columbia travel guides.

¹ Does not include supporting staff

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- *Accommodation Services & Standards*, which encourages the continual enhancement of tourist accommodations, facilities, services and amenities in British Columbia through inspection and rating systems, with approved properties featured in the *British Columbia Approved Accommodation Guide*.
- *Training Services* builds a professional, well-trained workforce through the world-class *SuperHost*[®] training programs, ensuring consumer loyalty and repeat business.
- The *Industry Development* Division is responsible for assisting new and emerging tourism product businesses, communities and sectors achieve market readiness. Its programs focus on providing useful tools for tourism businesses and communities to help grow their business opportunity. The division is also responsible for providing research to industry partners for the measurement, evaluation and management of growth in all sectors, developing new revenue-generating opportunities, and the award-winning *British Columbia Magazine*[®].
- Tourism British Columbia is strongly committed to disciplined management practices and accountability, while ensuring a positive corporate culture. Through the development and implementation of efficient financial, administrative, information and human resource systems, Corporate Services and Human Resources continues to help contribute to the positive performance of the organization. The corporation recently placed number 2 in Watson Wyatt's Survey for the Best Companies to Work for in British Columbia, moving up from 12th place two years earlier. The corporation remains the only public sector organization named in the top 25. With employees confirming their confidence in the organization's leadership and practices, Tourism British Columbia continues to demonstrate qualities of a highly effective organization.

Tourism British Columbia delivers many of its services and programs by leveraging its resources through various partnerships, including regional and city destination management organizations (DMOs), Visitor Info Centres and other tourism organizations at the federal and provincial level.

The Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts complements Tourism British Columbia's mandate with its three core business areas:

- Tourism and Resort Development which is responsible for implementing the provincial Tourism Strategy, in addition to strategies to increase tourism, all-season resorts, commercial recreation, investment in recreation facilities and support of the sustainable development of tourism.
- Sport, Recreation and Volunteers which supports a strong sport sector, recreation opportunities, physical activity and volunteer policy and programs
- Art, Culture and Heritage which supports cultural and heritage policy and programs and the administration and delivery of government programs under the various Acts; and protects and conserves archaeological resources throughout the province.

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STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Vision: to be a recognized world leader in tourism destination management.

Mission: to ensure quality visitor experiences that grow the success of British Columbia's tourism industry.

Corporate Values:

- Integrity – what we bring as individuals.
- Enthusiasm – what we portray.
- Teamwork – how we work together.
- Progressive – what we strive for.

PLANNING CONTEXT AND KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Tourism British Columbia's funding for marketing and program delivery is derived, in part, from the provincial Hotel Room Tax, which may be significantly affected by the prevailing market conditions in any given period of time. These market forces are largely beyond the corporation's influence; consequently, Tourism British Columbia's planning context regularly incorporates a broad analysis of these events and conditions.

British Columbia Tourism Industry

In terms of context, doubling of the BC tourism industry will be highly significant to the provincial economy. There are almost 17, 000 tourism-related businesses throughout the province, with more than 115,000 people employed in jobs directly related to tourism.

In the 2004 calendar year, it is estimated that a total of 22.4 million people travelled in British Columbia, an increase of 2.4% over 2003. Corresponding industry revenues for the same period are estimated at \$9.4 billion, a 5.6% increase over 2003.

Overall, British Columbia residents contributed 27.5% of the province's total tourism revenue. California, Washington, Alberta and Ontario form the rest of North America's core markets.

The United States continues to be a vital market for British Columbia tourism, and 2004 estimates for the US overnight market show a modest increase in revenues of 1.6% compared to 2003.

Visits from Asia/Pacific are expected to increase by 24.9% compared to 2003, while European visits are expected to show an increase of 11.6% over the same period.

Building on Success

Tourism British Columbia enjoyed many accomplishments in 2004, further enhancing the foundation for further success in 2005/06. A few examples include:

BC Escapes[®] - The BC Escapes[®] campaign is an acclaimed marketing program that has won numerous awards for results, most recently a Silver RSVP Award by the Canadian Marketing Association for the direct mail portion of the 2003 campaign. More than 200 accommodation properties participated in the 2004 campaign with results generating approximately 60,000 inquiries to *HelloBC[®]* channels. While the original revenue target was for \$45 million, the total visitor expenditures attributable to the campaign were \$51.5 million, delivering a 12:1 return on investment.

The Spirit of 2010 Trail – In August 2004, Premier Gordon Campbell announced the opening of the trail network, a collaboration of the Province of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, Tourism British Columbia and a number of regional partners. Four significant rail trails have been converted across the province, including The Kettle Valley Rail Trail, The Slocan Rail Trail, The Cowichan Valley Rail Trail and The Salmo-Troup Rail Trail. This network of trails will lay the foundation for increased tourism visitation throughout rural communities across southern British Columbia.

China – Approved Destination Status – In anticipation of Canada achieving Approved Destination Status from China, Tourism BC has been strategically establishing a foundation to build future opportunities in this massive key market. In fiscal 2004/05, this included co-hosting a trade familiarization tour of operators from Beijing/Shanghai, production of a Lure brochure and a Tour Planner, and participation at the China International Travel Mart (CITM).

Risk Assessment

The planning context also takes into consideration a number of factors that may influence the competitiveness of the British Columbia tourism industry. Recent increases by the Canadian dollar versus US currency have triggered concerns that British Columbia may lose some American visitors. US visitation in 2004 is expected to improve slightly over 2003. While the decline of the US dollar is factored in for US visitors, a return to modest growth in US visitation is expected for 2005.

British Columbia has seen dramatic turnarounds from most Asia/Pacific markets, following the devastating impacts of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003. Although it clearly demonstrates that demand

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for *Super, Natural British Columbia*[®] tourism products remains high in this market, it has exposed the general vulnerability of the tourism industry to pandemic diseases.

In January, 2005, Canada and China formally agreed to negotiate Approved Destination Status (ADS). This has the potential to dramatically increase visitation from this market, as Chinese citizens will now be able to apply for a visa to travel to Canada for pleasure purposes. To maximize future growth from the Asia/Pacific market, and all of British Columbia's other key markets, the primary objectives of accessibility and affordability must continue to be addressed in federal airline policy. Tourism British Columbia fully supports the provincial government's efforts to ensure this issue is prioritized at the federal level and is working cooperatively with the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.

The potential impacts of new US security initiatives introduced late in 2004 are unknown, and Tourism British Columbia will monitor consumer feedback resulting from their experiences crossing borders. Increased security measures have already negatively impacted overall US visitation since 2001, particularly same-day visitors who are valuable to close-in destinations such as Vancouver.

ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The Tourism British Columbia Board of Directors and staff, in partnership with the British Columbia tourism industry, and the Ministry of Tourism Sport and the Arts, develop and deliver programs and activities that support government's commitment to "stimulate tourism with a plan to improve operators' ability to successfully compete for visitors from around the world," which was identified within the government's strategic plan.

Recognizing the provincial government's role in developing policies that support a competitive business climate, Tourism British Columbia undertakes activities that support broader objectives of various provincial agencies while remaining true to its legislated mandate. As identified in the *Tourism British Columbia Act*, Tourism BC's purpose is to promote development and growth in the tourism industry; to increase revenues and employment throughout British Columbia, and to increase the economic benefits generated through tourism. This aligns directly with the provincial government's "Golden Decade" goal to create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

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GOALS, KEY STRATEGIES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

Tourism British Columbia has consolidated service plan goals to strengthen its focus on its longer-term targets and vision. Performance measures and targets have also been refined with the same purpose. The number of performance measures has been reduced to focus on core aspects of performance and to increase the focus on outcomes. Targets have been revised to reflect the new resources allocated to Tourism British Columbia in fiscal year 2005/06 and conditions in the operating environment. The most significant factors driving Tourism British Columbia to refine its service plan have been the recent budget increase announced by government and Tourism British Columbia's *2005-2015 Tourism Strategic Framework*.

On September 24, 2004, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that the provincial government was “*going to double Tourism B.C.'s marketing budget from \$25 million to \$50 million*”. These new resources will have immediate impact on British Columbia's ability to compete with other jurisdictions.

To accelerate the implementation of new strategies that will improve tourism operators' ability to compete, Tourism British Columbia held a forum on December 13, 2004, that brought together representatives from all corners of the British Columbia tourism industry to discuss the *2005-2015 Tourism Strategic Framework*, a detailed draft plan developed by Tourism British Columbia with the input of industry stakeholders that maps out key priorities. Over the next 10 years, Tourism British Columbia will be implementing programs that work towards two long-term outcomes:

- Double provincial tourism revenues by 2015 to \$19.6 billion.
- Maximize the long-term tourism benefits of the 2010 Olympic Games for all of British Columbia.

To accomplish these outcomes, Tourism British Columbia has identified four primary goals:

1. Increase provincial tourism revenues by attracting visitors from “volume” markets (British Columbia, Alberta and Washington) and “high-yield” markets (long haul North America, Asia/Pacific and Europe).
2. Optimize the BC visitors' experience through enhanced customer service.
3. Improve tourism market readiness of new and emerging tourism sectors and products.
4. Create a positive corporate culture within an efficient and effective organization.

The changes to the Service Plan structure now mean that Tourism British Columbia is significantly more focused with less complexity of goals and measures. The increased budget and other factors in the operating environment

were considered and, in many cases, targets have been adjusted to reflect Tourism British Columbia's expectation of increased performance.

Goal 1: Increase provincial tourism revenues by attracting visitors from both “volume” markets (British Columbia, Alberta, Washington) and “high-yield” markets (long haul North America, Asia/Pacific and Europe).

Goal 1 is the focus of the Marketing Division. Consumer-driven strategies target key geographic markets to increase demand for British Columbia as a preferred travel destination. Strategies focus on building awareness, interest, knowledge, purchase and ongoing repeat purchase. The focus is on two types of markets: First, those in close proximity to British Columbia, including British Columbia residents, which produce high volume but still have daily expenditures that are relatively low. However, the opportunity for repeat visitation is high within this market. The second type of market are those farther away where visitors look to British Columbia as a destination and tend to stay longer and spend more on a daily basis. By increasing tourism revenues, opportunities for sector growth are maintained along with many associated benefits, including job creation.

With the announcement that Canada has negotiated Approved Destination Status (ADS) from China, marketing efforts will be accelerated to capture the potential of this market. Tourism BC will work closely with the Canadian Tourism Commission, Chinese tour operators and relevant Destination Marketing Organizations to maximize the opportunity. Activities will include trade education, fam trips, travel media relations and website development.

Key Strategies

- Generate getaway business to British Columbia in spring and summer through the *BC Escapes*[®] advertising program by offering specially priced packages to key markets with high potential (British Columbia, Washington, Alberta and California).
- Expand current TV, print and online activities in California, Oregon, New York and Chicago to build on short and long-stay programs.
- Launch new province-wide sector campaigns that support the BC Resort Strategy.
- Support regional and sector-focused marketing activities such as advertising, publications, consumer and trade shows, as well as provide cooperative marketing opportunities to businesses through the Tourism Partners Program.
- Expand trip-planning functionality and access to information on consumer website.
- Provide opportunities for industry to reach consumers with listings and enhancements in publications and website.

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- Increase travel trade and travel media initiatives in emerging markets of South Korea and Mexico.
- Continue to build awareness of British Columbia’s tourism product with key media.
- Increase British Columbia’s position with the **travel trade** through educational programs, cooperative marketing campaigns, familiarization tours and sales calls.
- Capitalize on Canada’s ADS status with China by expanding development of collateral materials, education for travel trade and increased travel media relations.

Performance Measures	Performance Targets				
	2003/04 actuals	2004/05 actuals	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Industry Measures					
Provincial tourism revenues from “volume” markets* (\$billions)	4.77	4.92	5.08	5.30	5.53
Provincial tourism revenues from “high-yield” markets* (\$billions)	4.19	4.55	4.78	5.03	5.30
Visitation – overnight customs entries US market (millions)	3.50	3.56	3.57	3.68	3.79
Visitation – overnight customs entries overseas markets (millions)	1.17	1.439	1.49	1.56	1.64
China Growth - anticipated visitation*	59,500	74,400	100,000	150,000	200,000
Corporate Measures					
Direct tourism revenues generated from <i>BC Escapes</i> [®] program (\$millions)	51	51.5	72**	72	72
Return on Investment, <i>BC Escapes</i> [®] (tourism revenues per \$ invested)	11.8	12.5	12.0	12.0	12.0
Number of consumer travel guides distributed through Tourism Partners Program (thousands)	920	905	950	970	1,000
Equivalent dollar value of unpaid editorial coverage worldwide (\$millions)	156	126.5	180	190	200

* Forecast growth under review

**Increase over last year due to increase in funding for 2005/06.

Goal 2: Optimize the BC visitors' experience through enhanced customer service.¹

Goal 2 is the primary focus of the Visitor Services Division. The quality of a visitor's vacation experience while in British Columbia is critical to the ongoing success of the tourism industry. In the long term, British Columbia's tourism industry must continue to grow its reputation as a provider of high-quality services and products. Tourism British Columbia's strategies under this goal are designed to ensure that visitors have access to the information required to make informed purchasing decisions, to continue to enhance standards of tourist accommodation, facilities, service and amenities, and to enhance professionalism in the tourism industry.

Key Strategies

- Provide tourism product information and secure booking with potential visitors through the call centre and *HelloBC*[®].com consumer website.
- Through 110+ provincial Visitor Info Centres, provide visitors touring the province with the information and tools to purchase BC tourism product.
- Provide the consumer with publications such as the *Approved Accommodation Guide*, *Vacation Planner* and *Outdoor Adventure Guide*, which have information to plan and book vacations.
- Deliver accommodation inspection programs to more than 3,000 properties to ensure acceptable standards are maintained.
- Continue to provide customer service training to tourism businesses through *SuperHost*[®] training programs.
- Support the *go2* tourism human resources agency in its recruitment and retention programs for the tourism industry.

¹ Goal #2 identified in the February, 2005 Service Plan (*Enhance the visitor experience to increase length of stay and dollars spent per visitor*) has been revised, due to the difficulty in obtaining data that directly reflects length of stay and dollars spent per visit.

Performance Measures	Performance Targets				
	2003/04 actuals	2004/05 actuals	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
<u>Corporate Measures</u>					
# of parties visiting Visitor Info Centres (millions)	1.55	1.68	1.75	1.90	2.00
# of accommodation properties inspected	1,270	2,019	1,400	1,400	1,400
# of participants trained through <i>SuperHost</i> [®] training programs.	21,100	19,600	22,000	23,000	24,000
Unique visitors to <i>www.HelloBC</i> [®] .com (thousands)	733	878	900	1,000	1,100

Goal 3: Improve tourism market readiness of new and emerging tourism sectors/products.

Goal 3 is supported by the Industry Development Division. Strategies under this goal are intended to improve the ability of existing and new tourism operators to access information and services that will help them grow their business by identifying opportunities, acting on them and continuing to innovate. Successfully implemented, these strategies will create the conditions needed to ensure the tourism industry is forward-looking and responsive to tourism market demands.

Key Strategies

- Launch a new cooperative product sector development program that assists businesses to become market-ready.
- Develop and implement a Community Foundations development program to assist communities with long-term planning and implementation.
- Work with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia to develop and implement the Circles of Opportunity program through implementation of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan.
- Develop a Community Sport Tourism program in partnership with 2010 LegaciesNow and the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance.

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- Produce and distribute a portfolio of research information in print and on the corporate website to the tourism industry, including an annual *Tourism Outlook*, the *Value of Tourism*, as well as market/regional and sector profiles.
- Continue to develop educational materials and workshops to assist individual operators.
- Continue to develop and improve “rails to trails”.
- Identify new revenue opportunities for the corporation.

Performance Measures	Performance Targets				
	2003/04 actuals	2004/05 actuals	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Number of product sectors assisted	n/a	n/a	6	6	6
Corporate program revenues (\$thousands)	7,806	7,188	7,980	7,700	7,850

Goal 4: Create a positive corporate culture within an efficient and effective organization.

Goal 4 is supported by the Corporate Services and Human Resources divisions. Strategies supporting this goal contribute to Tourism British Columbia’s performance by continuing to strengthen the qualities that make it a highly effective organization.

Key Strategies

- Conduct survey of Tourism British Columbia stakeholders to evaluate effectiveness of programs.
- Leverage Tourism British Columbia funding with partners to maximize purchasing power and exposure of tourism product.
- Keep administration costs below those of comparable organizations.
- Continue to instill a values-based and productive corporate culture.

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Performance Measures	Benchmarks		Performance Targets			
	National Tourism Org.	City Tourism Org.	2004/05 actuals	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Industry Stakeholder satisfaction survey of Tourism British Columbia programs and services (3 out of 5 is satisfactory)	n/a	n/a	3.93	4.0	4.0	4.0
Cost of office space per employee	\$22,683	\$20,000	\$9,730	<\$10,000	<\$10,000	<\$10,000
Support Services costs per employee	\$40,732	\$25,000	\$22,126	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
Employee absence rate (days/yr)	4.3	8.3%*	5.0	< 5	< 5	< 5
Employee turnover rate	10%	5.5%*	5.4%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5%

* Benchmark is Provincial Government

SUMMARY FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

\$000s	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Forecast	2006/07 Forecast	2007/08 Forecast
Revenue				
Provincial Government				
Hotel room tax	\$ 26,015	\$ 26,700	\$ 27,800	\$ 29,000
Government grant (note 1)	12,025	23,300	22,200	21,000
	38,040	50,000	50,000	50,000
Corporate				
Program and other	7,298	8,080	7,800	7,950
	Note 4			
Expenses				
Marketing	13,810	27,255	27,900	28,000
Visitor servicing	11,070	13,765	14,000	14,100
Industry development	3,613	10,810	11,000	11,100
Support services	2,529	2,455	2,500	2,550
Amortization	1,289	3,225	2,400	2,200
Grants to regional marketing organizations	12,000	-	-	-
Writedown of intangible asset (note 2)	1,008	570	-	-
	45,319	58,080	57,800	57,950
Net operating revenue	19	-	-	-
Investment in marketing capital (note 3)	(3,511)	(7,340)	(2,400)	(2,200)
Non-cash items (amortization, writedown)	2,297	3,795	2,400	2,200
Contributions/change in working capital	3,117	(450)	-	-
Cash from/(used in) operations	1,922	(3,995)	-	-
Cash, end of year	\$ 5,029	\$ 1,034	\$ 1,034	\$ 1,034
FTEs	111	122	127	127

Key Assumptions and Risks

Note 1 Treasury Board has made a decision on Tourism BC's funding, whereby the difference between the Ministry of Finance's forecast for Tourism BC's 1.65 share of the 8% hotel tax and a \$50 million total budget will be provided through an annual operating grant from a voted appropriation from the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. Any variance in actual versus forecast in a given year will be credited or debited in the following year.

Note 2 The intangible asset represents the value of *British Columbia Magazine's*[®] subscription list when purchased by Tourism British Columbia.

Note 3 Increase in marketing capital from original Service Plan includes a \$2.0 million contribution from the Province for the Osoyoos Visitor Information Centre, and other capital projects deferred from 2004/05.

Note 4 Other revenue is \$470,000 less than original plan due to a change in accounting treatment for trail improvements. Amortization expense is also reduced by \$470,000 for a net effect of \$0.

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TOURISM BRITISH COLUMBIA OFFICES

Vancouver Office
12th Floor, 510 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 3A8
Tel: (604) 660-2861
Fax: (604) 660-3383

Victoria Office
Box 9830 Stn Prov Govt
3rd Floor, 1803 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 9W5
Tel: (250) 356-6363
Fax: (250) 356-8246

Australia Office
Level 5, 68 Alfred Street
Milsons Point
NSW 2061
Australia
Tel: 61-2-9959-4277
Fax: 61-2-9929-4543

UK Office
British Columbia House
3rd Floor, 3 Regent Street
London
SW1Y 4NS
United Kingdom
Tel: 44-207-930-6857
Fax: 44-207-930-2012

Germany Office
Frankfurter Strasse 175
63263 Neu-Isenburg
Germany
Tel: 49-61-02-202 993
Fax: 49-61-02-207 947

Japan Office
Nishimura Building 2F
1-5-6 Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo 160-0004 Japan
Tel: 03-5368-0782
Fax: 03-5362-2950

Taiwan Office
7G03, 7th Floor,
No. 5, Sec. 5
Hsin-Yi Rd.
P.O. Box 109-857
Taipei, Taiwan
Tel: 886-2-2722-0805
Fax: 886-2-2723-9364