

April 21, 2021

## **Press Release - Passenger Transportation Board to conduct an investigation on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on BC passenger transportation industry**

The Passenger Transportation Board, an independent tribunal with a mandate to make decisions on applications related to passenger directed vehicles in British Columbia, issued its decision to conduct an investigation focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the passenger transportation industry, which includes the taxi and Transport Network Services (TNS) sectors, to better understand the new economic landscape. The Board has retained the services of Hara Associates, a professional economist, to conduct this investigation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unpredictable impact on most sectors of the economy, including the passenger transportation industry. In order to help protect the industry's long-term well-being and to successfully fulfil the Board's mandate under the *BC Passenger Transportation Act*, the Board must always ensure it has access to reliable, up-to-date data and economic analysis to ensure evidence-based decision making.

"As an economic regulator and a key stakeholder within the passenger transportation industry, we have an important role of helping and guiding this industry out of COVID-19 towards healthy economic recovery. With that intent in mind, it has become critical to conduct this investigation which will promote fairness to all stakeholders while protecting the interests of British Columbians", said Carmela Allevato, Chair, Passenger Transportation Board.

She added, "We are also committed to completing the investigation without any delay so that decisions can be rendered on affected applications as soon as possible. For us to succeed collectively, we encourage all stakeholders contacted by Hara Associates to cooperate by providing relevant data and information. Getting a clear picture of current economic conditions is in the best interests of the industry as a whole."

The Board's objective is to gather information from the investigation that the decision-makers can use when applying the three factors outlined in section 28 of the Act: public need for service the applicant proposes to provide; applicant is fit, proper and capable of providing the service; and the application would promote sound economic conditions in the passenger transportation business in BC.

The investigation will be undertaken in the context of relevant applications currently before the Board—Uber Canada Inc. (#10268-20TNS) and Facedrive Inc. (#10149-20TNS). The related Preliminary Decisions can be reviewed on the Board's April 21, 2021 Bulletin. The Board has adjourned these proceedings pending the completion of the investigation. The investigation is expected to take 3-6 months, barring any unforeseen circumstances. All regular updates will be posted on the Board's website, <https://www.ptboard.bc.ca/>.

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