

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

June 22, 2010

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### **CELEBRATE CANADA DAY SAFELY WITH BC TRANSIT**

**VICTORIA, B.C.** – To maintain a safe and enjoyable Canada Day celebration in the Capital Region, BC Transit will reinstate the one-day alcohol ban on buses to ensure a safe and secure transit atmosphere for BC Transit customers and employees.

"We have an obligation to our customers, our staff and the general public to provide a safe transit environment," said Manuel Achadinha, President & CEO of BC Transit. "We recognize the importance of the Canada Day celebrations in our community. Last year, the support of the police and the cooperation of our customers helped us provide a safer way to travel to and from the festivities."

"In any large scale public event, we are constantly focused on public safety; that is balancing the rights of individuals with the safety of those attending. BC Transit's initiative, which we support, will assist us in ensuring that the celebration of our nation's birthday remains a fun and safe event for everyone," said Jamie Graham, Victoria Police Chief.

The change in transit policy was prompted by past celebrations where excessive alcohol consumption led to a number of assaults, injuries, and vandalism on buses. Once again this year, BC Transit, the Victoria Police and local police agencies will work together to provide a safer transit atmosphere for celebrating families, BC Transit customers and employees. This is the second consecutive year this policy is in effect for the Victoria Regional Transit System.

Service will be monitored to ensure that customers comply with the ban before entering the bus, which is a fare-paid zone. Customers may be asked to demonstrate compliance by BC Transit staff or local police. Searches may be conducted by police. No person will be required to submit to a search if they choose not to board the bus.

This policy is within the guidelines outlined in the British Columbia Transit Act.

The alcohol ban, only in force on July 1, will be communicated to the public through signs at main bus stops, transit exchanges, online and on buses before and during the Canada Day celebrations.

During the 2009 Canada Day celebrations, BC Transit reported four smashed windows (approximately \$200 each), interior ceiling damage (approximately \$1000), and 48 reports for non-compliance. The total damage from 2009 is far lower compared to previous celebrations.

**SERVICE CHANGES:** As July 1 is a holiday, Customers are asked to refer to the Saturday bus schedule in the Victoria Regional Transit System Rider's Guide or online at [www.bctransit.com](http://www.bctransit.com).

BC Transit is expecting large crowds to leave downtown immediately after the fireworks. In order to safely and efficiently move customers, the bus stops located in the downtown core will change (map attached). Please make note of temporary changes. BC Transit staff will be present to assist customers and temporary signs will mark the new bus stop locations.

**FARES:** Regular fares are in effect for the statutory holiday. Cash fares are as follows: Adults/College (\$2.50), Senior/Youth (\$1.65). Children five and under may board for free.

Families can take advantage of BC Transit's Family Travel Program to join in the festivities. Up to 4 youths aged 12 and younger may ride BC Transit free anytime when travelling with parent or guardian 19 years or older. The adult simply pays the fare using their monthly pass, DayPASS, ProPASS, U-PASS or BC Bus Pass.