



Media statement

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GVBOT joins the call for federal and provincial governments to cooperate on a science-based plan to reopen travel

VANCOUVER, B.C.— The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, together with the members of the Canadian Travel and Tourism Roundtable (“The Roundtable”), is urging the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces, to release an implementation plan based on the recommendations made in the COVID-19 Testing and Screening Expert Advisory Panel (Expert Panel) report. Two notable British Columbians, Dr. Mel Krajcn, the medical director of the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory and Sue Paish, CEO of Canada’s Digital Technology Supercluster, joined ten other doctors and leaders on the Expert Panel.

The federal government convened the Expert Panel to provide independent, science- and data-driven recommendations to the federal government on testing, border restrictions and quarantine measures. The report, released on May 28, 2021, recommends eliminating quarantine for fully vaccinated travellers, implementing changes to testing and screening, and eliminating the hotel quarantine policy, among other things.

“It is crucial that the federal government work collaboratively with the provinces to begin to implement the recommendations of the Expert Panel on the reopening of travel,” said Bridgitte Anderson, President and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. “In the same way that the B.C. Restart Plan built confidence of the path forward if we hit vaccine and public health criteria, we need a Pan-Canadian, science-based strategy for when businesses can resume travel, families can be reunited, and vaccinated travellers can return to support local jobs in B.C.”

Before the pandemic, YVR was the second busiest airport in Canada, hosting more than 25 million passengers and generating \$16.5 billion in economic output. Since then, traffic in most months has declined by 90 per cent, significantly impacting the economy across British Columbia.

“It is going to take years for travel and tourism to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and for Vancouver to be the global city it once was,” noted Anderson. “We won’t get there without a clear plan and a path forward.”

-ENDS-

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Background on the Expert Panel Report

The Expert Panel's full report can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/medical-devices/testing-screening-advisory-panel/reports-summaries/priority-strategies/borders-frontieres-eng.pdf>

In November 2020, the Minister of Health established the COVID-19 Testing and Screening Expert Advisory Panel. The Panel provides evidence-informed advice to the federal government on science and policy related to existing and innovative approaches to testing and screening. The Panel considered 3 broad principles in developing its recommendations.

- Border measures must evolve to reflect the experience gained and the global situation regarding VoCs and vaccination
- Border measures must be simple, easy to understand, equitable and consider both benefits and harms
- Changes to border measures should be implemented in a phased approach

Along with recommending that all travellers follow public health requirements (including physical distancing, mask wearing), the Panel offers the following recommendations for each type of traveller:

For unvaccinated non-exempt travellers:

- pre-departure polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test within 72 hours of departure or an authorized rapid antigen test within 24 hours of departure
- PCR test on arrival at the border testing station or the quarantine location (for land border crossing, a home-sampling kit may be used)
- travellers with a negative PCR test result taken at day 7 of quarantine to be permitted to leave quarantine, those with a positive result to isolate according to public health guidance and those who do not take a day 7 test to complete 14 days of quarantine

For partially vaccinated non-exempt travellers:

- pre-departure PCR test within 72 hours of departure or an authorized rapid antigen test within 24 hours of departure
- PCR test on arrival at the border testing station or the quarantine location (for land border crossing, a home-sampling kit may be used)
- travellers with a negative PCR test taken on arrival to be permitted to leave quarantine and those with a positive result to isolate according to public health guidance

For fully vaccinated non-exempt travellers:

- acceptable proof, as defined by the Government of Canada, of authorized vaccination and that sufficient time has passed after the final dose in the vaccine series
- no pre-departure test, quarantine requirement or day 7 test
- for surveillance purposes, PCR test on arrival at the border testing station (for land border crossing, a home-sampling kit may be used)

For travellers with proof of previously resolved infection (more than 14 days but less than 180 days before the travel day):

- acceptable proof, as defined by the Government of Canada, of infection within this time period



- PCR test on arrival at the border testing station or the quarantine location (for land border crossing, a home-sampling kit may be used)
- travellers with a negative PCR test taken on arrival to be permitted to leave quarantine and those with a positive result to continue to isolate according to public health guidance.

For all exempt travellers:

- voluntary arrival testing using lab-based PCR or rapid tests with sample collection completed away from the border (ideally implemented to allow for robust surveillance, to provide information on further potential recommendations for this group)