

## **VANCOUVER CONVENTION CENTRE EXPANSION PROJECT (the PROJECT)**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Pursuant to section 17 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* S.B.C. 2002, c. 43, the Executive Director of the Environmental Assessment Office (the EAO) provides the following recommendations and reasons relating to the Project. In preparing this document, the following documentation has been considered:

- Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion Project Ltd.'s (the Proponent) application for an environmental assessment certificate (the Application) (Volumes 1 and 2);
- All subsequent Project review documentation identified in Schedule A to the proposed Environmental Assessment Certificate (the Certificate); and
- The Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion Project Assessment Report.

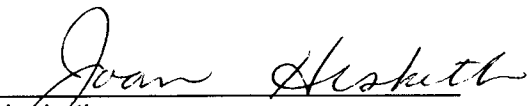
The Executive Director recommends that a Certificate for the Project be issued to the Proponent, for the following reasons:

1. The environmental assessment was carried out in accordance with the scope, procedures and methods identified in the section 11 Order, issued on May 20, 2003.
2. The environmental assessment (EA) of the Project addressed the effects identified in the Application Terms of Reference issued for the Project on July 14, 2003, including the potential effects on, and implications for:
  - Water quality and contaminated sites;
  - Fisheries and aquatic resources;
  - Foundation design and natural hazards;
  - Transportation and traffic;
  - Socio-economic and community setting;
  - Air quality;
  - Noise levels and public health;
  - First Nations interests in the vicinity of the Project, including archaeological and heritage resources; and
  - The potential for accidents and malfunctions and cumulative effects associated with the Project.
3. Measures relating to the distribution of information about the Project to the public have been carried out by the Proponent in accordance with the section 11 Order, including the holding of open houses and meetings with community groups and other stakeholders.

4. The project falls into the asserted traditional territories of four First Nations: the Musqueam Indian Band, the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Sto:Lo First Nations. Measures relating to the distribution of information about the Project to First Nations have been carried out by the Proponent in accordance with the section 11 Order, including providing Project documentation at various points in the review process, and sufficient efforts were made to consult and address concerns identified by First Nations.
5. All four First Nations were invited to participate in the work of a Review Team set up by the EAO to advise on the Project, although only the Tsleil-Waututh Nation did so at the early phase of the Project's review. All First Nations were provided with information on the Project by the EAO, including the Proponent's Application, all EA review documentation and drafts of the Project Assessment Report. None of the four First Nations provided any input to the formulation of proposed certification conditions, as developed for the Assessment Report, or to the various drafts of the Assessment Report. However, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation concluded an economics benefits agreement with the Proponent that provides access to jobs, training, contracting opportunities and other benefits.

Opportunities were provided for First Nations to provide input on potential impacts on asserted aboriginal rights or title. The Musqueam Indian Band and Sto:Lo and Squamish Nations did not identify any concerns or potential impacts and did not provide any input on the measures proposed to avoid potential impacts through the formulation of proposed certification conditions. The Tsleil-Waututh Nation engaged in consultations and pursuant to their request, concluded an economics benefits agreement with the Proponent that provides access to jobs, training, contracting opportunities and other benefits.

6. Issues identified by the public, local governments, and provincial and federal government agencies that fall within the purview of the EA review of the Project have been considered, and the Assessment Report identifies and discusses the key issues, which included:
  - Water quality and impacts on fish habitat in Coal Harbour;
  - Facility foundations and structural integrity and sustainability; and
  - Air quality/public health, noise, aesthetic and traffic impacts on adjacent residential, commercial and other land uses.
7. All potential significant adverse environmental, economic, social, heritage and health effects identified by the public, local governments, and provincial and federal government agencies that fall within the purview of the environmental assessment of the Project, are considered to be manageable to an acceptable level through:
  - The implementation of the Proponent's commitments to mitigation and, where appropriate, compensation measures, as identified in the Application and in the *Owner's Commitments and Assurances*;
  - Compliance with the conditions of the Certificate; and
  - Compliance with subsequent statutory permits, licenses, approvals and other authorization requirements.

  
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Joan Hesketh  
Executive Director and Deputy Minister  
Environmental Assessment Office

Dated: July 19, 2004