WESTAC

Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction
Institut de Prévention des Sinistres Catastrophiques

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Expert Forum: Addressing Climate Risks for Coastal Transportation Infrastructure

Climate change is projected to increase the frequency and intensity of weather conditions negatively impacting Canada's coastlines. Sea level will rise and amplify storm surges in coastal areas, and precipitation will be more intense. The impacts on supply chain reliability, capacity and cost may be extreme - not just at the coast but across land-based, air and marine transportation systems. How should transportation stakeholders manage these risks? Can supply chains build, adapt and prepare for them? The expert forum on coastal transportation infrastructure to address these issues is built around three core questions:

Can the lower mainland transportation infrastructure handle current extreme weather?

BC's lower mainland is home to Canada's largest port. The terminals, warehouses, railways, roadways and other supporting infrastructure keep Canada's economy moving. However, the nature of supply chains means damage to one link will have cascading impacts. In particular, recent global experience shows extensive economic disruption and losses as a result of coastal disasters. Business leaders and public officials must take action to reduce the risk of damage to transportation infrastructure from current climate hazards.

How should we manage the current transportation risks for remote and island communities?

Coastal communities outside of the Lower Mainland, including Vancouver Island, are particularly vulnerable to disruption due to a greater dependence on ferries and a primary access road. Where transportation alternatives are few, service is infrequent, and distances are long, it is essential that coastal transportation systems do not fail or can be restored quickly.

What should be done to better prepare for future climates and rising sea levels?

Climate change is already impacting BC's transportation infrastructure. Higher temperatures, more extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and higher storm surges put our coastal transportation systems at risk. Moreover, these challenges are expected to increase over time. Taking action now to design and adapt infrastructure and services to future climates and sea level rise will build our resiliency to the effects of climate change and reduce the risk of loss, damage and disruption.

The Expert Forum will discuss the current state of knowledge about these issues and explore possible actions by private industry, governments and others to reduce the risk of loss and damage from disruption of coastal transportation infrastructure. In particular, the science community seeks direction about research that would support the current and longer-term needs of decision makers addressing coastal transportation infrastructure issues.

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Draft Agenda

May 16th, 2018	
8:45 am	Welcome Address
Theme 1: Current Risks in the Lower Mainland	
9:00 am	Panel Discussion
10:30 am	Networking Break
11:00 am	Moderated Audience Discussion
12:00 pm	Lunch & Keynote Speaker
Theme 2: Remote & Island Communities	
1:30 pm	Panel Discussion
3:00 pm	Networking Break
3:30 pm	Moderated Audience Discussion
4:30 pm	Wrap-up
May 17th, 2018	
8:45 am	Meeting Kick-off
Theme 3: Sea Level Rise & Climate Change Impacts	
9:00 am	Panel Discussion
10:15 am	Networking Break
10:45 am	Moderated Audience Discussion
11:45 am	Closing Thoughts & Next Steps

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