

June 8, 2020

Ms. Louise Kim
Senior Manager, Policy, Regulation and Research Division
WorkSafeBC
P.O. Box 5350 Station Terminal
Vancouver, BC V6B 5L5
Delivered by email: policy@worksafebc.com

Dear Ms. Kim,

Re: Adding Diseases Caused by Communicable Viral Pathogens, including COVID-19, to Schedule 1 of the Workers Compensation Act

The Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA) is the largest regional construction association in British Columbia with a rich history spanning more than 90 years. It serves more than 700 general and trade contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and professional service providers such as architects, engineers, lawyers, accountants and insurance providers who operate as both union and open-shop employers in the industrial, commercial, institutional and high-rise residential construction industry.

VRCA is a member of the Council of Construction Associations and the Employers' Forum. We have read and endorse the Employers' Forum submission on the proposal to add COVID-19 to Schedule 1 of the Workers Compensation Act.

In addition to the comments made in the Employers' Forum submission, we would like to draw to your attention that from the earliest days of the pandemic, the construction industry has moved quickly to implement enhanced safety protocols to protect workers and operate safely. It is our industry's swift actions that have enabled contractors to remain open and for thousands of men and women to remain employed, subject to the guidance by the provincial health officer and WorkSafeBC.

We proudly note that, as at May 27, 2020, WorkSafeBC had accepted only one claim for COVID-19 from the construction industry while five had been disallowed, three required no adjudication and one remained pending. By adding COVID-19 to Schedule 1, WorkSafeBC will be dismissing the tremendous efforts made by everyone within the industry to operate safely as an essential service and position our province for economic recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the discussion paper.

Regards,



Fiona Famulak
President

cc. Dave Baspaly, Council of Construction Associations