



MAP Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 26, 2019 9:30AM - 12:00PM

Location: ISS of BC, 2610 Victoria Dr, Vancouver, BC V5N 4L2, Vancouver

The meeting was held on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples including the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam nations.

Attendees: Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST); Claudia Buendia (MSDPR), Jenny Moss (MAP), Mélodie Honen-Delmar (MAP); Peter Prediger (inasmuch); Tammy Johnson (inasmuch); Richard Belcham (inasmuch), Nathan Wright (BC2II); Derek Chiu (Kinbrace); Sireen El-Nashar (Zaytuna); Fran Gallo (Kinbrace); Sara Lopez (VAST); James Grunau (Journey Home Community); Vanessa Roth (Journey Home Community); Dennis Juarez (MOSAIC); Julia Wu (bc2II); Bridget Bell (IRB); Ana-Maria Cerviño (Kiwassa N. H.), Aran Smith (Canadian Red Cross); Cloe Clayton (Canadian Red Cross); Mia Morin (Vancity); Mary Kam (SUCCESS); Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC); Katherine Ressettle (John Howard Society); Nico Disini (John Howard Society); Theodora Jean (IRCC); Bayron Figueroa (Purpose); Sara Ngo (IRCC); Frank Cohn (VAST); Lian Hodaly (IRCC); Cody Rowan (IRB); Sophia Abraham (IRCC); Kelly Gochems (VAST); Fiona Stevenson (DIVERSEcity); Theresa Tang (Mount Pleasant family Center Society); Julia Wu (BC211); Marc Konrad (IRCC); Theresa Fuller (Mennonite Center Community); Chris Friesen (ISS of BC); Thomas Reyes (Roots community health center); Imitiaz Popat (SOS); Emily Parsons Dickan (Kinbrace), Keith Mechner (CBSA), Damaris (CBSA)

By phone:

Katherine Griffin (MOSAIC), Sabine Lehr (Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria)

Co-Chair: **Mariana Martinez Vieyra, VAST**

- Mariana acknowledged the indigenous territory where we met, and thanks were expressed to Vancity and the Provincial Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology (MJTT), for the funding that supports MAP.

Welcome and Introductions, including those on the phone.

- **Outline of Agenda** and change in CBSA presenter acknowledged and approved.

- Review of **March Minutes** and postponed by IRB who wanted to review its numbers on refugee claimants.

Announcement: CCR early bird registration deadline: May 3rd. **Sabine Lehr** introduced the consultation theme: bridging between indigenous communities and new settlers.

9:45: Presentation 1: Immigration Matters Initiative: IRCC

By: *Theodora Jean, Communications Advisor - Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada*

- There has been an increasing negative attention of media about immigration. As a result of this increase, IRCC engaged in public opinion research to see how Canadians view immigration, and how to make a more positive impression.

- Tracking began in August 2016 – over Internet, phone and focus group. Positive views are decreasing, and the change was related to where respondents are living - and particularly to small towns: “Too many refugees coming to Canada” - a growing sense of anti-immigration sentiment increasing.
- IRCC launched the initiative “immigration matters”, which has the purpose of telling the stories of immigrants who have contributed to their community. Plus using supporting data can help Canadians listen more receptively to stories of immigrants who are having positive impacts in Canada.
- Three pillars of ‘immigration matters’: storytelling, collaborations, and community conversation. We want to amplify the facts, and IRCC has done a lot of work with an economics professor based on the east coast to identify the benefits to Canada of immigration.
- The storytelling is wide in subject matter and quite broad too in terms of the geographical landscape.
The videos were presented. (see: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/immigration-matters.html>)

As part of immigration matters, it is not enough to tell only successful immigrant stories, but also to tell it from the average perspective of multiple generation Canadians who have been benefiting from immigration; so, the stories become more relatable to those who have lived in Canada for multiple generations. We want to tell the story of immigrants who have created jobs for Canadians, and address concerns and provide a holistic picture.

- Media coverage about the video was quite big, Trudeau shared it and Mr. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration.
- Story promotion
- Collaboration was also important. Because people believe in the initiative, they were eager to share the video stories. It had a big impact because there are also other organizations that says immigration is important.
- We heard great feedback on toolkit to help promote campaign. Calgary launched a campaign with immigration matters stories too.
- We also made links to Canadian Citizenship. Citizenship ceremonies that were tied with diversity campaign, for instance sporting events with NHL and CHL. We had massive opportunities that were tapping into the shared pride of citizenship. Before the Ottawa Senator’s game started, 180 new Canadians were brought on the ice and *#immigrationmatters* was projected before the start of the game.
- Community conversations: to generate action items. Inspired by New Brunswick conversation town hall circles, and IRCC continues to encourage the community to host their conversations about immigration.
- Results from the campaign: the results of a study show the promotions were not Canada-centric. In mid-March, there were a lot of views with 190 social media post and 9.9 million impressions.
- Ottawa Senator’s game amplified the reach of our comment (one of the highest impacts). This campaign is evolving and we would like to have some feedback on the work we are doing.

Q&A.

Mia Morin (Vancity): what kinds of comments for the engagement?

Theodora Jean (IRCC): most comments were positive in nature, and others were not very negative in nature. But as always for government, there is always negative feedback.

Imitiaz Popat (SOS): I work for refugee housing, can we do something in that area to give them

housing too as part of their campaign?

Theodora Jean (IRCC): The aim of the campaign is to support how Canadians see immigrants, so this would defeat the purpose of the campaign. It is about those who are not just doing well but also giving back to community and economy.

Richard Belcham (Inasmuch): Is there any opportunity for collaboration with MAP? Few months ago we presented an event at Abbotsford that had a similar method of targeting Canadians.

Theodora Jean (IRCC): We are always looking for stories that are identified to us but keeping in mind we don't pay for advertisement and we don't pay organizations, the campaign is based on 'if we believe in it, let's work together'.

Claudia Buendia (MSDPR): It will be interesting to see the difference in public perceptions between the contributions of refugee claimants and investors. Would there be stories of success with refugees too?

Theodora Jean (IRCC): we do have story as refugees too but the way to present them is important. We do see that anti-immigration sentiment is not exclusive to multi-generational Canadians. It is all clumped together. Immigrants are the one who have the strongest negative feelings about immigration because they too went through the process, and work from the ground-up. When more refugees arrive, they feel that the refugees are getting help that they didn't get. But the human element is the element we need to focus on starting from an emotional element.

Claudia Buendia (MSDPR): how can you communicate this to normal citizens, not just the ones who are pro-immigration?

Theodora Jean (IRCC): yes, we are working on it; we are trying to speak to this group, and not preaching to the converted. The greatest impact is reaching people who may not think of immigration - like in the hockey game, on the transit system - that reach people of all backgrounds.

Richard Belcham (Inasmuch): where can we find the content to share?

Theodora Jean (IRCC): On the government Canada website with "–immigration matters"

Mariana expressed thanks to Theodora Jean and IRCC for the presentation.

10:30: BREAK

10:45: BC Refugee Hub update:

Chris Friesen (ISSofBC): On behalf of Bahar, I will share numbers concerning refugee claimants as seen by SOS. The refugee claimant bulletin is coming out in a week.

- Since the beginning of the year, February was the highest month for claimant arrivals.
- Number one source country is Iran.
- 75% walked across the border
- 62% were families.
- **Last three months:** there were 417 refugee claimants, 172 in February alone. New and returnee total individual and family clients is now over 1060. 42% of them live in Vancouver, 19% in Surrey, 15% in Burnaby, 14% in Coquitlam, and 9% in North Vancouver.
- Some of the trends are that we are seeing:
 - work permits used to take 2 weeks to acquire – now there's a 4 month wait.
 - There has been a tightening of the US border.
 - BC housing application takes longer.

- This all leads to an accelerated crisis on the frontline - and that's the situation.
- #Refugeesuccessstory is going to be launched with 3 videos of 3 successful refugee claimants. 2 have established their own businesses, and one works in the financial sector.
- A national war room is being established by different organizations and will be launched in early May for 6 months, specifically targeting migration-related issues and focusing on the federal election. The negative discourse around both immigrants and refugees will be targeted, and more information will be emerging.

Questions:

Claudia (MSDPR): are people going to social housing mostly?

Chris (ISSofBC): We are still doing the analysis on the housing piece, so I can't comment.

Jenny (MAP): There was a good workshop hosted by MAP / Journey Home where we learned more about the nuanced application process and tips for successful applications.

World Refugee Day update – Jenny and Katherine

Jenny Moss (MAP): Katherine and I are co-chairing the WRD committee. We have a lot of help from VPL and city of Vancouver in terms of the proclamation and we have come up with a variety of programs; here are the highlights:

- We will be repeating “**Take a Walk in my Shoes**” now: “**Walk with Me**” – participants experience the claimants' journey from border to hearing.
- ‘**Starting over**’ – TED-type talks from a number of refugee claimants about starting over in Canada.
- ‘**Information Marketplace**’ you can sign up for a table. I have already had requests and there are sign up sheets if you want a table - please sign in!

Fran (Kinbrace): we will have tables for refugee and refugee claimant artists to exhibit and hopefully sell their art. If you know any artists, please let me know as I am coordinating this activity.

Jenny (MAP): We will also have a concert of former refugee musicians. Please contact me if you know of anyone.

10: 50: Presentation 2: CBSA: Alternatives to Detention Program in the Pacific Region

Presenters: **Keith Mechner, enforcement officer and first committee liaison officer** – coordinating alternative detention framework

Damaris will contribute too. She is a new liaison officer
(the CBSA PowerPoint is attached to these Minutes)

- **National Immigration Detentions Framework** received a \$138 million budget in 2016 to be used over 5 years to create a better, fairer, immigration detention system making it a key priority for the agency. There is one in Quebec, Surrey (Pacific Region) and Toronto, which aims to enhance partnerships and programs. ATD is part of this framework.
- **ATD program overview:** CCMS (community case management system) and in-community support services for individuals' needs to mitigate any risk. Now there is a biometric voiceprint to confirm who they are, and expanded electronic supervision, e.g. the ankle bracelet pilot in greater Toronto area. This would allow automatic updating of the location of clients as a recording by phone generates a data location that is stored. The electronic monitoring is in limited use as some regions could pay for it, but most could not.
- **Expanded ATD programming in BC:** Low and medium intervention detainees are living on their own, but report to John Howard society. The high-risk detainees are living at the Salvation Army's Belkin House. We have contracts with Victoria and Kamloops. We can

only have 4 at the Salvation Army at one time.

- **Compliance program:** General assistance: relating to housing and families with children, is established as well as support for mental health and so on. In addiction cases, we would not be able to provide full services but more for a transitioning period so that when they are back to living on their own, they can adjust.
- **Voice reporting** is possible only with specific Canadian service providers. This service allowed CBSA to obtain location services with an acknowledgement so that location data can be recorded. It is only when individuals call in that we can get the location information. If they fail to report, then CBSA sends a message to respond in order to obtain the person's location; and remind them not to break the rules.
- Some people have to report multiple times a day for anti-fraud reasons. Now there is good voiceprint technology, it is monitored by Ottawa. Before, it had low voice print scores when the system doesn't quite match for some reasons but now the system has been improved.
- Two community liaison officers (CLO's) are linking with CCMS providers and coordinating with providers. Basically, when clients are arrested, there is a brief review to see if CCMS would apply. VR is fully operational and there is a possibility of expansion in March 2020. The only issue is that the phone used must be a Canadian phone. Usually, clients are not showing up with a Canadian phone. CCMS is built on reporting weekly by phone and monthly in person, that way we can try to reduce movement.
- - 111 people are enrolled in voice reporting system,
- only 4 people in John Howard in Vancouver
- 3 in the Salvation Army (there were 8 clients, but they violated their conditions.)
- **Minors:** there are currently 12 minors in detention, but detention for minors should be last resort. It dropped by 30% from 2017 to 2018 and CBSA continues to encounter families with children (under 18 years old)
- **CBSA then provided Case studies of medium risk and high-risk detainees who succeeded in ATD program.** (see PowerPoint)
- Keith reviews the cases and risk factors, there is no CCMS that can mitigate high risk. Essentially CCMS is not for everyone; there are risks, which we identify, that require detention.

Q&A:

Richard (inasmuch): Is there any opportunity for reporting electronically to CBSA from Abbotsford?

Answer: John Howard has said it might expand to Abbotsford and then changed to Surrey. But maybe they might serve Abbotsford in the future? They were hesitant to commit to Abbotsford because there was more demand in Surrey.

Claudia Buendia (MSDPR): some of our applicants comes from different stages but sometimes we don't get any information. How can we get information faster to see what's their real status?

Answer: longer terms requirement confirming status is hard and is one of our challenges. We don't provide confirmation of status, as it is IRCC information.

Claudia Buendia (MSDPR): We have one specific IRCC officer we are told to contact always. If there was one CBSA officer that we could reach directly, it would help us.

James Grunau (Journey Home): Do you have a firm date for the opening of the new detention center?

Answer: No, it keeps being pushed back, but I have heard June. You can also get a tour but not

everything is in stone.

(Jenny: MAP is on the list for a tour)

Emily Parsons Dickau (Kinbrace): Sometimes we are called by duty counsel and asked if we have housing space, and so we can't release it, they just need an address sometimes. Is it possible to make a referral?

Answer: Large community network could potentially help. We don't know if its common, but CCMS want an address. John Howard addresses that, and the more community contacts, the better.

Fran (Kinbrace): How many claimants are currently in detention?

Answer: I have no idea, but I can inquire.

Fran (Kinbrace): Its because we wanted to do a Ready Tour for refugee claimants in detention.

Answer: The bulk of our population is not with outstanding refugee claims.

Bridget Bell (IRB): It is rare to deport less than one a month, so it reflects the detention centers.

Answer: We were dealing with different ports of entry before 2017, but now ports of entry does the whole triage, so clients are not entering the detention stream. Therefore, there are a lot fewer detained refugee claimants. Identity questions result in either a quick or very long process.

Jenny (MAP): We appreciate the responsiveness of CBSA, and we seek to nurture the MAP-CBSA relationship along with IRCC and IRB. It is nice when there is more transparency to build trust, but it is also good to have regular dialogue.

Fran (Kinbrace): Can we get contact information for a CLO?

Answer: **Community Liaison Officer:** CBSAFPACDistCLO/ASFCFPACDistALC@cra-arc.gc.ca

Mariana thanked Keith and Damaris for their presentation.

11:35 Housing Working Group Announcement re: Report Submission to MJTT

Dereck Chu (Kinbrace): We submitted the report to MJTT on March 31 and we waiting to hear back on any future plans, and what we can make public. Meanwhile the Housing Working Group would like to thank everyone for their help with interviews etc. and we brought cupcakes for everyone to share.

11:40 Agency Updates

Nathan Wright (BC211): is resigning and his last day is May 17th. He will be going to New Brunswick. He shared his privilege to be here at MAP. The board is recruiting a permanent ED and meanwhile Julia will be attending MAP, and BC211 will continue to operate for claimants.

Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST) : thanked Nathan for his commitment to MAP and all the positive work done.

Emily Parsons Dickau (Kinbrace): Loren is on a sabbatical for 9 months from Kinbrace.

Thomas Reyes (Roots Community Health Center): has the position of supporting the Roots Community Health Center in Surrey and program support in distress. Working from the perspective of the health center and providing health services, as well as building partnerships to

support refugees in a more holistic way. They are in partnership with DIVERSEcity, Options and S.U.C.C.E.S.S., and are developing new ties with cultural brokers. The availability to meet with organizations that have cultural brokers is a challenge, and he is hoping to see more MAP members in this regard.

Fran Gallo (Ready Tours): There is availability due to cancellations for tomorrow (Friday 26/4)

Frank Cohn (VAST): VAST is also operating at the new Surrey hub, and the opening day is on May 2. We have a new counselling set up and partnership with Options in Surrey. We are also running GARS and refugee claimants' groups.

Bayron Figueroa (Purpose): We have a workshop on health for newcomers and we are looking after refugee claimants as it is mandatory to have a medical check for the IRCC. Some claimants are survivors of torture or abduction, and there is a lot of fear around the HIV test so we have counselling that we can provide. Those workshops can also help those claimants living in Burnaby (not just New Westminster)

Sara Lopez (VAST): Regarding VAST, we have a group with Options at 11 tomorrow for GAR group.

Bridget Bell (IRB): The stats for March for the whole region:

- 244 principal claims referred, and 396 people in total.
- 147 principal claims in Vancouver, and 238 in total.
- Top source country for Vancouver was Iran - 49
2nd - 11 from Mexico
3rd - 4 for China
For the region, we have Iran, India and Mexico
- In March 80% crossed the border irregularly and it is higher than we have seen. But the overall numbers have remained constant in our region.

Marc Konrad (IRCC): We had steady numbers in February to April, they are high but it they are plateauing. The demographics are the same as IRB reported.

Anybody who is in need of replacement immigration or refugee documents can visit the nearest IRCC office regardless of who first handed in their documents. (CBSA or IRCC). If they don't have any documents, they can bring two new photos (Canadian size passport photo).

We cannot guarantee to replace them immediately, but we will take contact information from client to advise them when the ID is ready. The turn around is a week and they can pick it up when they are able to. If you have anyone in need of a replacement document, you can refer them to our office. The time of the day is not that important, but for example at 3 pm there will be a lower chance of obtaining the document same day, because we close at 4:30. Please communicate this information to claimants.

Bridget Bell (IRB): Why has this not been publicised? And why can't claimants get theirs at the IRB?

Marc Konrad (IRCC): If documents need to be replaced (NOT new), then client needs to be referred to us. Regarding the publicity of the news, I do know why, that's why I want to let MAP members know here! But from a government department, the turnaround time is pretty good.

For the automatic work permit application, we are aware of the service standards and I will do my best to inquire, but they are processed in Edmonton, so I don't have a direct contact. I can communicate upward but I know they were having a technical glitch, which has led to this delay,

and I will reinforce your messages. If you have concerns that are case specific, I can handle those.

Tammy Johnson (Inasmuch): With expiring ID documents, if they have had a hearing, do they need to renew it?

Marc Konrad (IRCC): No, only if they haven't had their hearing.

Nico Disini (John Howard Society) : For CCMS program ID is needed, so what should we do?

Marc Konrad (IRCC): Bring whatever they have; we will have a photo of them on file. The applicant does need to come in person because we need to verify them with their photo. If there is no id for a replacement, we still can do something.

Peter Prediger (Inasmuch): shared the story of Inasmuch and thanked Kinbrace, Journey Home and Mosaic for their mentorship. Last night, Richard Belcham became new Executive Director and we have a new settlement worker. Now I will go on retirement!

Congratulations to Richard and Peter & Dawn were shared throughout MAP

James Grunau (Journey Home): We have a fundraising opportunity if you are registered charities. Ride for Refugees is getting organized. You can see me if you want to get involved.

Jenny (MAP): MAP has a table at the CCR consultation; if you are not able to attend the CCR consultation, bring your literature to the next MAP meeting and we will display it at CCR.

Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST) : there is a CCR virtual meeting on Monday at 12. If you are a CCR member, you should have received an email.

Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC): We are sharing the promotional information for CCR and the early bird registration is May 3rd.

MOSAIC has been working with partners such as Inasmuch, Ready Tours and Abbotsford Community Services. The highest number of claimants received were from Columbia and then Iran.

Katherine Griffin (MOSAIC): we are continuing conversation circles from 15-20 people every Tuesday evening at 6 pm, until May 21. If you have any clients, you can send them to MOSAIC on Boundary Road.

Adjournment: Feedback forms and adjournment Next Meeting: May 23, 2019 at MOSAIC

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