

### **MAP Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, January 25, 2020 - 9:30AM - 12:00 PM

Attendees: Jenny Lam (Options), Richard Belcham (inasmuch), Azadeh Tamjeedi (UNHCR), Barry Growe (JHC), Glenn Matsui (IRB), Katherine Treloar (City of Abbotsford), Teresa Fuller (JHC), Andrew Bauman MCC), Gerardo Munarriz (MCC), Kevin Barkowsky (MCC Food Bank), Priscilla Clais (La Boussole), Mahak Mahmoodi (Red Cross), Savleen Kaur (Options), Iris Solorzano (Options), Saleem Spindari (MOSAIC), Jackie Sarvini (MOSAIC), Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC), Laura Mannix (DIVERSEcity), Maria Cervino (Kiwassa), Paige Levirs (MSDPR), Valentina Stanciu (MSDPR), Mohammed Zaqout (Kinbrace), Michelle Murray-Schlitt (inasmuch), Tammy Johnson (inasmuch), Roberta Bower (inasmuch), Peter Prediger (inasmuch), Raminder Kang (PICS). Aleks Dughman-Manzur (Rainbow Refugee), Nazanin Moghadashi (Rainbow Refugee), Bahar Taheri (BC Refugee Hub), Joni Rose (MUNI), Alex Kang (MUNI), Sylvie Viger (MUNI), Robyn Uhl (MUNI), Derek Chu (Kinbrace), Fran Gallo, Sophia Underhill (Ready Tour), Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA), Malaz Sebai (JumpStart Refugee Talent), Ann Barnard Ball (New Hope CS), Mindy Kozlhoff (New Hope CS), Mahi Khalef (SOS-ISSofBC), Julia Wu (bc211), Rawan Moon (VAST), Paige Slight (VAST), Diana Barry (Vancity), Louisa Brett (Covenant House), Kathleen Cashin (Covenant House), Sireen El-Nashar (Zaytuna), James Grunau (JHC), Brad Kinnie (JHC), Vanessa Roth (JHC), Yulia Khamzina (JHC), Patricia Mahecha (JHC), Doug Peat (JHC), Imran Daniel (JHC), Dustin Lupick (HSABC), Amos Kambere (UMOJA), Patricia Mahecha (JHC), Naiely Cabrera (PIRS), Valerie Lai (PIRS), Mainu Ahmed (Muslim Food Bank), Ali Mustafa (Muslim Food Bank), Nico Disini (John Howard Society), Alan Huang (SND Division), Richard Soo (ECC), Yola Vargas (Independent), Kanta Naik (SWIS – Abbotsford SD), Jenny Moss (MAP)

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Welcome from Co-Chair: Richard Belcham

**Richard acknowledged and thanked** the Sto:lo peoples from whose traditional unceded territories he was speaking. As well as other traditional territories where our members are situated, and where we do much of our work.

Richard also acknowledged the generous funding from Ministry of Municipal Affairs (formerly MJEDC) that makes MAP's work possible.

Richard welcomed participants from **40 MAP member agencies**. *First time introductions:* 

- Robyn Uhl (MUNI) Senior Policy Analyst at Immigration Policy & Integration Unit at MUNI working with Lily Grewal, Alex Kang, Joni Rose, Sylvie Viger and others known to MAP.
- Malai Sebai new Executive Director at Jumpstart Refugee Talent
- Aleks Dughman Mazur new co-director at Rainbow Refugee and VP at Canadian Council for Refugees
- Katherine Treloar General Manager, Innovation, Strategy and Intergovernmental Relations City of Abbotsford.

- Mainu Ahmed Executive Director of Aspire & Muslim Food Bank. Works with Ali Mustafa.
- Priscilla Clais La Boussole francophone agency serving French speaking newcomers including refugee claimants.
- Alan Huang physician support with Surrey & North Delta Division of Doctors (includes Roots Clinic)
- Kevin Barkowsky Director of MCC Foodbank and Minister at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church,
   Vancouver
- Valerie Lai new Programs Coordinator at PIRS
- Imran Daniel new at Journey Home Community as Volunteer and Event Supervisor
- Teresa Fuller she is now Settlement Worker at Journey Home and Tenth Church's Refugee Support Program
- Roberta Bower new host at Inasmuch CS
- Amos Kambere President at UMOJA in Surrey

The **Agenda** was outlined including some notes about the topic. Although alarming it was noted that planning for any possible increase in asylum claims does not mean that a surge is inevitable or known. It just makes sense to plan ahead 'just in case' so we are not scrambling under difficult circumstances.

The Agenda was approved

The **February 18, 2020 meeting Minutes** were approved

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

### 1. CBSA Updates: Jenny Lam (MAP Co-chair)

CBSA regularly provides MAP with a quarterly update focusing on the Alternatives to Detention (ATD) program and developments at the IHC (Immigration Holding Center). However, a CBSA Consultative Meeting was held Monday March 8<sup>th</sup> to update on the Alternatives to Detention (ATD) Program which many MAP members attended. So we have agreed to circulate the presentation slides from that meeting instead. They will go out with the Minutes OR you can find them now in the Member's section of the MAP website. Join it today to get full use of the website: it's a simple free procedure. Go to: <a href="https://mapbc.org/login/">https://mapbc.org/login/</a> to register and you will be approved quickly and then you can access MAP documentation, schedules as well as the member directory.

A CBSA update on the Immigration Holding Center (IHC) will be provided in April with news about the NGO services program soon to be launched for detainees, thanks to several MAP member agencies.

### 2. World Refugee Day - Richard Belcham

Sunday June 20 – MAP will host multiple events!

- 1) First in partnership with VPL Thursday June 17 City Proclamation and literary event
- 2) Storytelling lunchtime on Friday June 18
- 3) Creative writing workshop for refugee claimants on Saturday June 19
- 4) Sunday June 20 World Refugee Day itself a Concert of music, song and poetry

Information Working Group needs more volunteers for this big occasion! Especially in these areas: -

- event logistics and design
- speaker support
- videography
- social media promotions

This is always a fun committee and you are guaranteed to learn lots about creativity, marketing, planning and collaboration. Please contact the IWG via Jenny Moss at info@mapbc.org to attend the next meeting!

#### 3. IN FOCUS 2:

# 'Canadian Refugee Law - Who does it Protect?'

A presentation by Dr Efrat Arbel, UBC Peter Allard School of Law of particular interest to MAP

Dr. Arbel will discuss how various border policies restrict access to refugee protection in Canada and erode the protections that would otherwise be available to refugee claimants under Canadian law. Dr. Arbel will also discuss how access to refugee protection has been further restricted with the onset of COVID-19, and what we may expect when as pandemic measures begin to ease and the Canadian border re-opens.

Thursday April 15 at 7:00 pm

Registration: <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpc-Gupz8qE9N5ubRWgi0LMpvO">https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpc-Gupz8qE9N5ubRWgi0LMpvO</a> qhlV5kA

Presentation: Part 1 of a 2-part series – Richard Belcham 'Preparing for a possible increase in refugee claimant arrivals to BC'

#### NOTE:

- This is not a stand-alone meeting it is part of a process that will take time.
- It might feel overwhelming but we will get there and solve issues together.
- We can't foresee what's going to happen with claimant numbers, so we are not working publicly.
- Everyone at this meeting has experience and the attitude to make planning possible.
- Don't think you have to solve everything think about wider community resources you can bring in.
- Easier to edit than create so think big and wide.

Starting with a global perspective:

Global trends during COVID-19: Azadeh Tamjeedi – UNHCR

Richard Introduced Azadeh Tamjeedi, Acting Senior Legal Officer at UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in Canada. Azadeh has worked with UNHCR since 2017 and is currently based in Ottawa. During her time with UNHCR she also worked at the office in Vancouver for two years. In 2018, Azadeh completed an emergency deployment to Boa Vista, Brazil to assist with the large number of Venezuelans arriving in the country. Prior to working with UNHCR, Azadeh worked as a lawyer at the Centre Francophone de Toronto where she represented asylum-seekers before the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) and the Federal Court of Canada. As a law student, she specialized in social justice issues and gained valuable advocacy experience at the Parkdale Community Legal Clinic in the area of poverty law. She holds a

bachelor's degree in Honours History and Political Science from McGill University and a *Juris Doctorate* degree from Osgoode Hall Law School, York University. Azadeh was called to the Ontario bar in 2011.

PLEASE SEE SLIDES FROM AZADEH TAMJEEDI: UNHCR attached.

### Will there be a surge?

Azadeh thinks borders will open incrementally with procedures in line with vaccinations – 'soon' means end of this year or beginning of next and she does not expect lots of claimants because of difficulty in travel and getting visas. It will take a couple of years to get back to normal claimant arrival levels New Biden govt. looks like a positive reform – people may try US first.

Southern border is inundated – Spanish speakers will probably stay in US where Spanish is common, and they are setting up a temporary protective status (for Venezuelans for example).

But mapping and planning is always useful – UNHCR updates their plans annually.

### **QUESTIONS:**

Q: Do you expect an increase in unaccompanied minors?

NO – because Canada so far away for a minor to reach. And it's almost impossible for them to board a flight. But again, good to plan for this population – Canada doesn't have a uniform system to respond – age definitions vary by province so important to plan locally using local regulations.

Q: Do you believe the story that there's a possibility that those sent to northern US States under Pres Biden's direction might cross our border?

Response: No, I don't believe so – the decision by US Immigration is a processing efficiency only. Those folks will want to claim in US.

#### **Added Resources:**

link to track border controls for asylum seekers: <a href="https://data2.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/127?sv=44&geo=0">https://data2.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/127?sv=44&geo=0</a>
Here is our portal for all things related to COVID updates internationally: <a href="https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/covid-19">https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/covid-19</a>

### STATEMENT PROVIDED BY ALEX KANG (MUNI) FROM IRCC

(This is a very recent statement by IRCC helpful to this conversation.)

Timing for final decision on the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) appeal anticipated to be between April and September 2021. IRCC recognizes that if the appeal is denied and the current Orders in Council (OIC) restricting travel are removed (i.e., borders are opened), there is potential for an influx of asylum seekers at a land border.

In response to this possibility, preparations are underway to ensure that the Government of Canada is prepared on all levels for the potential influx of asylum claimants at the Canada-U.S. border to ensure orderly processing of potential asylum seekers at the land border ports of entry.

With respect to Covid-19 quarantine accommodations – all asylum seekers who do not have a suitable plan to meet quarantine requirements will be provided with facilities by IRCC for 14 days (as required by 14-day quarantine period). As of April 1<sup>st,</sup> there are 9 contracted hotels across Canada including 1 in Surrey. IRCC plans to increase this capacity to approximately 1,600 hotel rooms by July 2021 in preparation. IRCC will engage with provincial government counterparts to create a smooth transition to provincial authorities and settlement agencies.66y6

MUNI NOTE: This planning/preparation work is not meant to suggest there will be an influx of asylum seekers, but instead to be prepared in case an influx occurs.

# PRESENTATION: Preparing for a possible increase in refugee claimants to BC

Barry Growe / MAP member former Canadian Red Cross Disaster Management, Consultant to Journey Home Community with Richard Belcham / MAP Co-chair and ED Inasmuch Community Society

Barry worked in Red Cross Disaster Services for 20 years, and for the past 15 years has been a social housing advocate.

At Red Cross, he was responsible for planning for and responding to disasters throughout Canada and in the United States. He also recruited and debriefed Greater Vancouver responders to the Kosovo refugee arrivals in 1999, the September 11 terrorist attack in New York, hurricanes in Florida, Louisiana, and Hawaii; and tornadoes in Alberta.

As an advocate for social housing, Barry has worked on Little Mountain Housing and Heather Place projects, and with MAP and Journey Home Community. (See slides attached)

Why do we need a plan and why it's important?

### 1. Barry:

- Planning helps us identify human and material resources needed.
- Also gets us into a state of mind that the 'not usual' scenario is something we can adapt to so we can respond if the situation arises in a positive way.
  - An example is 'thinking big' imagining how much you need big plans/big expenses.
  - We may plan for too much but that is not a problem because we will be prepared.
- No-one will come to our rescue (as we know from past experiences)
- Don't take rumours literally and always point out difference between truth / fiction.
- Need to respond fast we like precision but in a response we need to respond with broad strokes and rapidly – and we can, because we have a plan and the skills and knowledge to do so.

We will contemplate various scenarios that we could encounter and plan as this will help us unearth the solutions if we do it together.

2. Richard: a plan will help us clarify our goal, identify resources, opportunities and gaps and we will look at scenarios so that we can plan for an increase (always knowing the situation may stay same for a while) Finally we can produce a plan and a proposal that we can share with government for funding.

### 7 steps in the plan:

- Service Goal
- Determine how many claimants will be served by each agency.
- MAP Resources and gaps Housing/shelter
- MAP Resources and gaps Service resources and gaps

- Coordination and communication
- Understand and plan at local level.
- Response plan created funding submissions.

#### 1. DETERMINING THE SERVICE GOAL

### A cautiously pessimistic scenario:

In 2019 we had 3,000 claimants in BC

May be there will be this number + those left behind in US during COVID, and new ones Not the worst-case scenario – but on the extreme end as it's easier to scale back, not easy to scale up. Specific numbers are needed to make the plan – can build up and down from that.

### **SCENARIO ASSUMPTION:**

## (Planning purposes only)

What if 6000 claimants come to BC over 12 months (doubling) And 4000 arrive in first 6 months.

### 2. DETERMINE HOW MANY WILL BE SERVED BY EACH AGENCY

From the service goal we can extrapolate how many each agency will need to serve. There will need to be lots of conversations between agencies to help one another if the number expected is beyond an agency's capacity.

### 3. Map Resources and Identify Gaps - SHELTER/HOUSING

So we need to IDENTIFY our resources and the gaps

- Some possible considerations:
- Housing in large numbers together is normally the best/cost-effective solution but what about COVID? And will municipalities cooperate with our plan when we ask to use a large space?
- May need to go to Emergency Planners in each municipality to open up resources and create stable partnerships of people with expertise.
- May need to place people into individual homes often disregarded if the numbers are high, but if organized in advance this plan may help.

MAP HWG can help with finding these resources.

### 4. Map Resources and Identify Gaps: SERVICES:

**Listed:** Settlement and orientation, Financial aid, ESL Language services, Food provision, Legal support, Translation, Employment support, Education support, Psycho-social/trauma counselling Huge area of need but the one great benefit is that people often rise to the occasion to help – (as well as the nay-sayers)

Maybe some who have never helped refugees before might offer help – even private companies or different agencies. (e.g., from Syrian refugees – private developer provided a temporary building)

**Richard:** traditionally private companies, govt bodies, municipalities will step up as they have before.

**Barry:** How do we assure standards are maintained if we are using services beyond our normal scope? We will need to supervise and assure quality so this will be part of the planning to train outside help beforehand and maintain communication and coordination.

Basically, we need to map these potential allies, and how to communicate among a bigger framework.

#### 5. COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION

If MAP is to lead the coordination of a response to a refugee increase, who will coordinate it?

#### Important to work together:

Barry's example: **media communications:** this would be too onerous for each agency to handle reporters' general questions – (e.g., how are you processing these people?) With agency agreement this would be better organized by a **central media function** at MAP: for efficiency and consistent messaging.

**Communication with government** – needs to be one MAP function too to cover requests to government and reporting.

**Supplies** – can also be organized centrally – to avoid duplication, share and distribute smoothly. Needs can be communicated to central MAP function.

**BC211** is a key player here – have been critical all along and we can learn from them and see how they could expand with a surge.

**Richard:** AND new technology is helpful – e.g., BC CHARMS referral system will be key. In addition, the Provincial government has had a 'rehearsal' with the pandemic – will have learned a lot about roll-out and communication.

#### 6. UNDERSTAND AND PLAN AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL.

Local level is where the action really happens – centralization is in support of the local. You will see what gaps you have in local relationships that will help get the planning done, so you can grow necessary relationships by community engagement and expansion of networks. This will be the place of the agencies and their expertise – 1/3 of work will be at this level.

**Richard:** vital to involve everyone on the team at our agencies – involve everybody and learn their ideas.

Also – think creatively – look at other responses and see if we can borrow from others.

### 7. RESPONSE PLAN CREATED – FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

Culmination of previous steps: the cycle is that once we have all the resources and gaps identified, and we have discussed them at MAP, then within our agencies, we come back to discuss them together again.

Always bring the 'unsolvable' back to the group – others will have ideas.

Make time for planning meetings, problems that need solutions, and see what funding is needed. Can't stint on this or you may receive far less funding than is needed.

Planning process must assume we are fully-funded (from government and others)

**If you don't,** the planning process is very frustrating – a sudden increase in refugee claims is a crisis that needs to be responded to in full.

We want people coming to Canada to have a soft and welcoming arrival – it won't happen if we don't plan well – and request adequate and proper funding.

**NEXT STEPS: Planning Exercise:** capacity/resources/gaps mapping exercise.

Next steps: Execute a mapping Exercise

**MAP Housing Working Group** will do a review of housing – problems, solutions, unearth creative emergency housing possibilities with their contacts

MAP Information Working Group – will look at media communications

MAP Executive – will look at coordination and communication

MAP wide electronic survey issued, and the responses will populate resource spreadsheet.

### Will discuss all of this at the April MAP Meeting

**Task force** – invitation to join will emerge after the survey if you are interested please contact Richard.

**Survey** will cover \*many issues to consider. And as a basis we will need:

- 1 response per agency decide who will be your representative but please discuss thoroughly together
- Must have designated person for planning purposes
- Information received will enable us to see the resources available, gaps, and suggestions.
- MAP Executive will bring back survey results to April meeting.
- Transport
- Technology
- Housing
- Settlement and Orientation Services
- Financial Aid
- Legal Support
- Food

- ESL Learning Support
- Translation / Interpretation
- Employment
- Education
- General Health
- Mental Health
- Anything else

Survey will go out as a specific email after the Easter weekend.

#### **Questions & Answers / Comments:**

### When will the survey need to be back?

Response: it will go out on April 6<sup>th</sup> and back on April 13<sup>th</sup> please.

### Alex Kang (MUNI)

Really happy to see this work is being undertaken – also being done at provincial and national level. Encourage all to respond to the survey – will be useful for future steps like funding. Nobody knows whether there will be a surge – but even if it feels like a lot of work it is still useful in context of being prepared.

### Mainu (Muslim Food Bank)

Scope of the exercise does seem overwhelming – but so good to know we are doing this early on. We were not ready for Syrian GARS and so the arrival of claimants will be much smoother with this work done early.

**Diana Barry (Vancity)** – is this exercise also for those of us who meet refugee claimants farther down the line? Looking at income security in our case and the processing delays that prevent us from helping our clients.

**Response:** The survey is aimed at the point of arrival until placed in permanent housing. It will look at all the roadblocks like eligibility processing, delays in this and claims etc. and the need in such a surge to challenge federal government so we can avoid backlogs on a much bigger scale.

**Mahi (SOS)** We have done similar exercise at SOS with the whole team in reflection for a day and started a plan to respond to an increase.

Challenge of dealing with backlogs in the process creates greatest concern.

# (Note to pass to IRCC):

Work permits are taking ages to acquire because eligibility has been so delayed – this will get exacerbated if there's an influx.

**Iris (Options):** would be interested to see first point of contact: Options is very close to the border (10 minutes away) so we see lots of people crossing who come to our office soon after arrival and we are then first point of contact for material, legal help etc.

It would be interesting to see through the survey want resources would be needed at first point.

**Response**: Please bring this to the survey discussion as it is critical.

Robyn Uhl (MUNI): great meeting well facilitated.

Our question is around the 6,000 projection – is that at all points of entry and inland – or just land borders? **Richard:** it is a doubling of 2019 numbers – so may come from all sources – surge includes pent up as well. Note: purely for planning purposes – as we have no concrete facts to base this on.

Joni Rose (MUNI): very productive meeting – will survey cover role of MAP?

Will you ask the sector about that?

**Response:** Not during survey – but it will be part of the decision making around coordination. During later conversations it will become clear where roles will fall as MAP will need more capacity.

## (Comments from the CHAT:

Alan Huang (SND Div. Family Practice) As I am more involved in the primary care setting, it is important to recognize the increased demands for local resources (or need to create new ones), including healthcare access/needs. One question I will bring back to my team is: How do we leverage primary care network and get physicians prepared wile involving the community partners?

**Azadeh Tamjeedi (UNHCR)** to Richard's point about communications with the public about a surge, it is extremely important. We have seen how a public backlash can lead to policy change that is not so positive. Here are some resources that might help with that planning:

https://medium.com/unhcr-innovation-service/can-storytelling-catalyze-culture-change-22dc1965cdfc https://www.unhcr.org/see/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2019/02/Reporting-on-Migration-and-Refugees ENG-print.pdf

Richard thanked Barry for his expertise and help in this important exercise.

And thanks to MAP members which enables us to be a little ahead of the country on this.

Quantitative and qualitative update on Refugee Claimants in the Lower Mainland Presenter: Bahar Taheri: Project consultant with BC Refugee Hub (ISSofBC) <a href="https://www.bcrefugeehub.ca">www.bcrefugeehub.ca</a>

• Recently released 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of statistics from IRB and settlement agencies: ISSofBC-SOS and MOSAIC + sub-contractors reports. Snapshot of refugee claimant arrivals in 2020.

- One pager on pathways to permanent residence came out of consultations with service providers at previous meetings and their suggestions.
- Last week webinar on storytelling 90 attended. Webinar will be uploaded on the hub and an email sent out including resources.
- All past webinar training is to be found online under Training.
- We put out a feedback survey on what service providers would like to see on the Hub and the results are coming out soon and will inform our programming this fiscal year.
- Don't forget to subscribe to mailing list by scrolling to bottom of the first page of the Hub to apply.

# Update on BC CHARMS - Housing Referral & Data Management System

## Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC)

Reintroduced herself for new members – Marzieh is Project Coordinator for BC CHARMS is a MAP project funded by Provincial Government and MOSAIC is the lead agency. Goal is to provide a centralized referral system for housing provision for claimants all over BC.

Lots happened since last meeting re: database:

- New Tech consultant hired to develop the Systems Requirements Document that describes how the database will be designed and what functions it can perform. They will also be an intermediary between project team and the future vendor during the design and testing phase.
- **Privacy consultant hired** to ensure that all privacy and security measures are covered in the document and subsequently in the design.
- **Systems document** helps us decide whether to build our own data system or **customize** an existing package. We are leaning towards customization of an existing system and we are working with province to come up with a sustainability plan to see how costs can be managed.
- Also working on the **Report** many stories from refugee claimants about the challenges of housing and what they would expect from a centralized system.

Agency Updates - PLEASE SEE MANY ADDITIONAL UPDATES IN THE CHAT NOTES ATTACHED

### Aleks Dughman-Manzur (Rainbow Refugee)

<u>Update from Canadian Council for Refugees where Aleks is VP.</u>

With Dorota Blumczynska (President of CCR), and Janet Dench (ED) met with **Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino** on March 18.

Covered 4 issues:

- Regularization for all including inland and other persons, including those undocumented persons.
- Border and travel ban asked minister how IRCC will move forward to open borders and reinstate resettlement.
- Discussed Section 91 of IRPA governs information that can be provided to RC's and private sponsors about what is considered: legal advice. CCR has asked for a legal opinion and has asked to then discuss this in depth with Minister and groups like OCASI and AMSSA.

• Family reunification – asked the Minister to support a standard of max 6 months processing time. | Minister was engaged and will follow up – then Aleks can provide MAP with an update.

Richard thanked Aleks for bringing CCR update and for his work with Rainbow Refugee.

### James Grunau (Journey Home Community)

JHC started some succession planning over a year ago and recently decided that James will leave JHC as ED in June - and go into refugee work at a more global level – has been a constant interest for some time. Announced that **Brad Kinnie** will step into his role, and officially - June 1<sup>st</sup>

Excited about future plans at JHC and in the sector – thanks you for supporting Brad and JHC.

**Richard** congratulated Brad on behalf of MAP, and thanked James tremendously for all his help to MAP over many, many years. Many in the chat extended congratulations to Brad and thanks to James also.

### Glenn Matsui (IRB - RPD)

Currently at the IRB we have approximately 1600 claims for BC pending (top countries being India, Iran and Mexico). As you are all aware referrals to IRB are very low due to pandemic, border closures and limited international travel. As a result of the evolving public health conditions and consistent with prioritizing the health and safety of IRB employees and those appearing before the Board, the IRB is adopting a remoteonly hearings model, (using MS Teams) with only urgent and particularly sensitive cases considered for inperson hearings on a case by case basis.

IRB moving to remote-only hearings as of January 18, 2021 - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Poll launched: 97% posted that they were extremely pleased with the Meeting – contents and format. Adjourned 12:00 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday April 22, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm - Planning for a Possible Refugee Claimant Increase Part 2 – results of the survey and structured discussion on a plan.

MAP gratefully acknowledges the funding provided by Ministry of Municipal Affairs, without whom our work would not be possible.