

Hon. Premier Dennis King
Hon. Darlene Compton
Hon. Matthew MacKay
Hon. Bloyce Thompson

June 15, 2020

Premier King & Ministers,

On May 21st 2020, The Canadian Association of Exposition Management (CAEM) wrote to you on behalf of the multi-billion-dollar Canadian exhibition industry, and our collective request, to work with the Province, to lay the groundwork for the safe and responsible reopening of the exhibition sector.

CAEM has now developed a set of recommended 'Safe Reopening Guidelines' - informed by a committee of industry leaders from all areas of our business, and with professional oversight from public health experts at Infection, Prevention and Control Canada. **CAEM's complete Safe Reopening Guidelines can be reviewed [HERE](#).**

Exhibitions Drive Economies

Business events, including exhibitions, are a significant economic driver in Canada. In 2018, business events generated \$33 Billion in direct spend, sustained 229,000 direct jobs and contributed over \$19 Billion of direct GDP. Exhibitions play a key part in safely getting people back to work and relaunching the Island economy.

The adoption of CAEM's Safe Reopening Guidelines would pave the way for crucial business activities in the sector to resume, curtailing further financial losses for the Province – already significant after the cancellation of hundreds of spring and summer exhibitions. A prolonged shutdown of exhibitions past Labour Day would have a devastating impact, cascading into further job losses and putting thousands of companies, their employees and entire industries at risk of bankruptcy.

Distinguishing Exhibitions from Mass Gatherings

- Exhibitions are business events, promoting trade and commerce within a given industry, where products and services are displayed and information is disseminated.
- Exhibitions are not discretionary in nature like festivals, civic events, concerts or sporting events. Entire industries rely on exhibitions to drive commercial activity between buyers and sellers.
- Exhibitions have significant layout flexibility to accommodate and manage physical distancing.
- Exhibitions can limit the number of participants in the venue to enable physical distancing.
- Exhibitions take place in a controlled venue environment and should not be compared or subject to the same constraints as festivals, civic events, concerts or sporting events.

As Prince Edward Island moves into Phase Three of its Renew PEI Together plan - and similar businesses like shopping centres, malls and markets begin to reopen - exhibitions should also be able to resume business activities, in a phased and structured approach, by adopting CAEM's Safe Reopening Guidelines.

Venues and organizers require several months of lead time to execute exhibitions. This operational requirement necessitates receiving advance notice from government and public health to prepare adequately for a fall reopening.



CAEM is asking your Government to recognize the clear distinction between exhibitions and mass gatherings, and to review our industry's Safe Reopening Guidelines. We are ready to engage in meaningful dialogue on how we can work together toward reopening exhibitions in the fall, as part of Prince Edward Island's Restart Plan.

Respectfully,

Catherine MacNutt, President CAEM

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