



## ***EBTC INFORMATION BULLETIN***

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***DATE: January 24, 2008***

***SUBJECT: Enhanced Drivers' Licences Available in B.C.***

***SOURCE: Public Safety Canada***

Canada's first enhanced driver's licences (EDLs) will be available in British Columbia for use by eligible B.C. residents driving to the United States, Premier Gordon Campbell and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day announced today. EDLs are proposed as an alternative to the passport that will be required to enter the United States at its land and water borders no earlier than June 2009.

"The enhanced driver's licence is a new, voluntary option for drivers that allows for more convenient travel to the United States," said Premier Campbell. "Since 2006, British Columbia has worked with the Government of Canada and Washington state to develop an enhanced driver's licence that will meet the new U.S. requirements at the border. This new licence will encourage closer social ties with our U.S. neighbours and support economic growth on both sides of the border. I congratulate Washington Governor Chris Gregoire for her persistent and hard work with me in reaching this step."

"We have worked hard with the U.S. government to ensure that legitimate trade and travel across our borders are not disrupted as a result of the U.S. Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)," said Minister Day. "We are encouraged to see that our efforts are leading to recognition that enhanced driver's licences can serve as an acceptable alternative to passports to enter the United States at its land and sea borders."

"We have strong social and economic ties with British Columbia; it is our number one trading partner," Washington Governor Chris Gregoire said. "We wanted to find a way to boost security at our border without hampering trade and tourism. This is particularly important with both the 2009 World Police and Fire Games and the 2010 Winter Olympics in British Columbia fast approaching. I commend Premier Gordon Campbell and Minister Stockwell Day for collaborating with us in Washington to ensure we maintain our strong relations."

The B.C. EDL program will begin as an initial phase, in which 500 EDLs will be offered at the designated Driver Services Centre in Richmond and Cloverdale. Eligible

participants must be Canadian citizens, born in British Columbia and hold a valid B.C. birth certificate and a valid B.C. driver's licence.

This initial phase will allow the governments of Canada and British Columbia to test the effectiveness of the program, and based on the results, the program could be extended to all Canadian citizens residing in British Columbia.

The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia is now accepting volunteers. For information about eligibility, the B.C. EDL Participant Guide is available online at [www.icbc.com](http://www.icbc.com), or by calling 1-866-296-6054. Appointments must be booked in advance.

The WHTI is a U.S. law, now in effect for air travel, which will eventually require all travellers, including U.S. and Canadian citizens, to present a valid passport or other secure document when travelling to the United States from within the western hemisphere. Alternate documents to a passport include NEXUS and FAST cards.

More information about the U.S. WHTI is available at [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca).