

# Professional Reliance in BC

Presented to the

Standing Committee on Finance  
and Government Services

June 10, 2019

**P|E|A**

BC's Union for Professionals

# Who is the PEA?

The PEA is a labour union. We were certified in 1974 to represent licensed professionals working in the BC Public Service. Our members working for the BC Public Service are:

- Agrologists
- Engineers
- Registered Professional Foresters
- Geologists
- Pharmacists
- Veterinarians

The PEA also represents 9 other bargaining units of professionals across BC

# What was Professional Reliance?

- Early 2000's BC Liberal Government set goals:
  - 1/3 reduction in government regulations and size of the public service
- Government revised legislation for self-governing professions (e.g. foresters and engineers) so that "professional accountability" is maintained through codes of ethics and the disciplinary processes of professional associations (e.g. EGBC and ABCFP), rather than through the approval of plans, permits and licences by government agencies

# Impacts of Professional Reliance

- “Alarms repeatedly sounded” by agencies designed to keep BC Government accountable for stewardship of public resources
  - Auditor General
    - MFLNRO Audit | 2012
    - Biodiversity in BC Audit | February 2013
    - Compliance and Enforcement of the Mining Sector Audit | May 2016
  - BC Ombudsperson
    - Striking a Balance Report | 2015
  - Forest Practice Board
    - Campbell River Forestry Audit | 2012
    - Haida Gwaii Visual Quality Objective | 2014

# Impacts of Professional Reliance

“We conclude that much of BC’s deregulation goes too far in handing over...matters of public interest to those employed by Industry”

- UVic Environmental Law Centre

# What is Professional Reliance?

- NDP and Green Coalition Government established a review of professional reliance as a priority
- 2018 Review lead to legislation intended to restore the public's trust in the way government manages our natural resources.
- The Professional Governance Act was introduced in fall of 2018
  - Clarified roles of non-government professionals and established Superintendent to focus on Governance of Licensing Bodies

# What is Professional Reliance?

- One key recommendation (R34) from the 2018 Professional Reliance Review was to: Identify opportunities to improve Ministry staffing levels and resources to enhance Government oversight.

Quote from review “In the course of the review it became very clear that staffing levels due to past cuts make it very difficult for some ministries, or some business areas in ministries to meet basic levels of oversight”

- 2016 survey of PEA members by Evidence for Democracy found that 68% disagreed their ministry had resources to fulfill its mandate

# Professional Reliance and the PEA



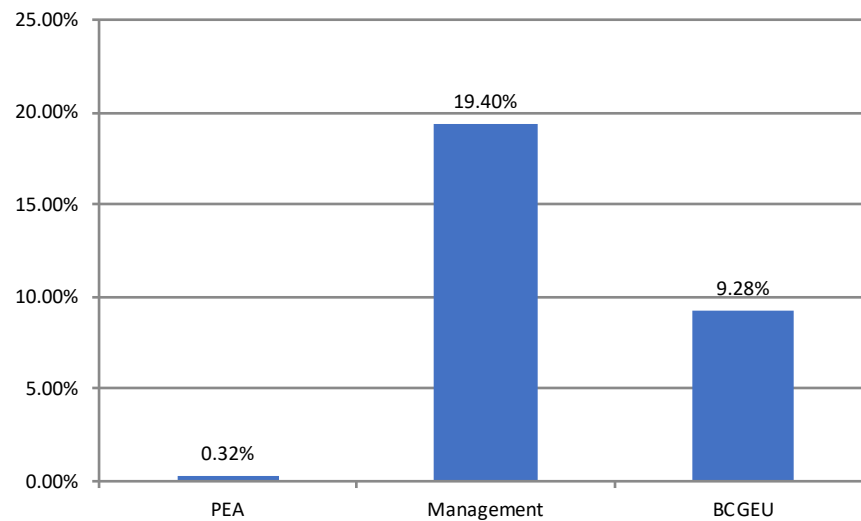


# Professional Reliance and the PEA

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019
Agrologist	149	143	139	138	137
Engineer	226	214	212	226	224
Forester	539	505	486	476	464
Geologist	30	35	35	38	40
LSO Other	134	142	185	187	239
Petroleum Geologist	9	9	8	8	7
Pharmacist	20	19	19	21	30
Psychologist	66	62	55	59	60
Veterinarian	11	12	13	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1184</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>1152</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>1214</b>

# Professional Reliance and the PEA

- Comparing Management, BCGEU and PEA positions from Jan 2012 to Feb 2019 shows the following % increases:



# Professional Reliance and the PEA

- Professionals are needed for professional oversight – we encourage the committee to prioritize funding more professionals – without those there will be less public confidence in natural resource management