



BC STATS

Infoline

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

The Economy

- **Manufacturers' prices in Canada rose 0.9% in July 2001 from July 2000 levels.** The Industrial Product Price Index for BC softwood lumber jumped 12.2%, due to a large increase (+14.9%) in the price of softwood lumber from BC's interior. Frozen salmon prices were up (+6.2%) from July 2000. The price of petroleum and coal products across Canada dropped 6.8% from prices for the same month in 2000. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Agriculture

- **Farmers' receipts were up 11.7% in the second quarter of 2001, compared to the same period last year.** Crop receipts rose 17.6%, while livestock receipts grew 5.7%. The value of vegetables sold increased the most (+51.8%) while sales from tree fruits other than apples dropped 46.4%.

Canada-wide, second quarter receipts increased by 8.4% compared to the same quarter of last year, with the largest gain made in Manitoba (+19.9%). Quebec was the only province where receipts fell (-7.4%). The dry weather conditions that are currently causing havoc on farms in the prairies have not affected second quarter receipts. The effect of the drought will be more apparent in the second half of 2001, when the crops have been harvested and the extent of the problem is known. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wheat production in Canada was estimated to have dropped to its lowest level since 1988 in July.** Expected production was 21.5 million tonnes of wheat, down 20% from July 2000.

Source: Statistics Canada

International Travel Payments

- **Canadians are continuing to spend less money outside the country.** In the second quarter of 2001, Canada's international travel deficit reached a two-year low of \$440 million (seasonally adjusted); \$4.6 billion was spent by Canadian residents outside the country, while foreigners spent \$4.2 billion while travelling in Canada. A year ago, the travel deficit sat at \$628 million, with receipts at \$3.9 billion and payments at \$4.5 billion. *Source: Statistics Canada*

University Tuition Fees

- **Undergraduate arts students in BC (on average) will pay the second lowest tuition fees in the country this fall.** Tuition fees for the upcoming year will average \$2,465 for an undergraduate arts student, down 2.2% from last year.

Nationally, fees for the 2001/2002-school term have increased 2.0% on average to \$3,453. Across the country, undergraduate arts students will pay the least amount of tuition in Quebec (\$1,912 for Quebec residents) and the most in Nova Scotia (\$4,732). The average tuition was up in every province except Newfoundland and BC. Over the past decade, tuition fees have more than doubled in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia. The lowest growth in fees was seen in BC (+29.0%) over the past ten years. On average, tuition fees for undergraduate arts students have climbed 101% across Canada over the past ten years. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Report

Tourism: Special focus on the Cariboo

Did you know...

Over one-third of households in BC, and almost one half (46%) of households in Vancouver, had a cellular phone at the end of 1999.

BC Ferries

- **The average passenger on BC Ferries spent \$16.91 on tolls, catering and other purchases in the 2000/2001 fiscal year.** This is up from \$14.69 in 1997/1998. However, the number of passengers riding the ferries fell to 21.4 million from 22.3 million five years ago. Despite the decline in passenger numbers, the percentage of operating and net expenses recovered from tolls, catering and other income jumped to 92% in the 2000/2001 fiscal year from 81% in the previous year. Revenues from tolls, catering and other income sources grew 1.5%.

Source: BC Ferry Corporation

Hotel Occupancy and Room Rates

- **Hotel occupancy rates fell by 2.3 percentage points, compared to June 2000, to reach 67.4% in June.** Of the cities surveyed, Greater Victoria posted the highest occupancy rate (80.1%) and Whistler the lowest (44.2%).

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster

- **The average price for a hotel room was \$126.10 in June, compared to \$124.04 in June 2000.** The highest priced rooms were found in Downtown Vancouver (\$168.74) whereas the least expensive rooms were in Abbotsford/Chilliwack (\$62.91). *Source: Pannell Kerr Forster*

Biotechnology

- **In 1999, there were 71 biotechnology firms in BC, making up 20% of the Canadian total.** These firms had total revenue of \$138 million. Research and development spending used up 95% of the total revenue for the industry in BC. Nationally, there were 358 biotechnology firms which raised \$1.9 billion in revenue. Spending on research and development topped \$827 million.

Pets

- **In 1999, the average household in BC spent \$344 on pet related expenses.** 54% of households sampled in BC spent money on pets and pet supplies. Across the country, only the Yukon (\$422) and Northwest Territories (\$438) spent more money than BC on average on pet expenses. Nova Scotia posted the highest percent

(62.9%) of households who spent money on pet related purchases. *Source: SC 62-202-XPE*

The Nation

- **Canada's economy continued to slow in the second quarter of 2001.** Real gross domestic product made marginal gains of 0.1% (seasonally adjusted), down from 0.5% in the first quarter of the year. This was the slowest growth reported since the third quarter of 1995.

Real consumer spending across Canada rose 0.3% (seasonally adjusted) in the second quarter of 2001. Personal expenditure on durable goods (+0.5%) and semi-durable goods (1.4%) grew. Spending on non-durables fell (-0.3%). Expenditures on services increased by 0.3%.

In the second quarter of 2001, business investment in machinery and equipment increased 1.2% and investment in non-residential structures rose 0.5%. Residential investment remained almost flat (+0.1%).

Growth in final domestic demand slowed to 0.4% in the second quarter, down from 0.6% in the first quarter of the year. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Real gross domestic product at factor cost dropped 0.2% (seasonally adjusted) in June, the largest fall in over a year.** The cause of this was a fall in goods-producing industries (-0.7%) where activity in mining (-2.6%) and manufacturing (-1.0%) declined. GDP in service producing industries remained flat. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- **After three-quarters of declines, corporate operating profits increased 0.6% in the second quarter of 2001.** Operating profits of firms manufacturing computers and other electronics sank into negative numbers in the second quarter (-\$0.2 billion) Profits in the oil and gas industry also suffered, dropping 22.3%. Corporate operating profits grew in utilities (+46.0%), funds and other financial vehicles (+10.1%) and depository credit intermediaries (+69.9%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

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Tourism: Special Focus on the Cariboo

Introduction

The Cariboo region is located in the interior of British Columbia. Cariboo is made up of two regional districts, the Cariboo Regional District and the Fraser-Fort George Regional District. Prince George, Quesnel and Williams Lake are among the urban centres in the region.

The Cariboo offers visitors a chance to explore the outdoors. The region is filled with many lakes and wilderness areas. The lakes offer summer visitors the opportunity to fish, canoe and swim. Ranching, hiking and river rafting are also popular tourist attractions. In the winter, Cariboo is an ideal place for cross-country skiing.

Room Revenue

Room revenue in the Cariboo region had a slow start to 2001 with first quarter revenues down 5.6% (seasonally adjusted) from the last quarter of 2000. A large decline (-14.8%) in January was the cause of this, dominating growth in February (+8.0%) and in March (+1.7%). In April, revenues once again fell (-1.9%).

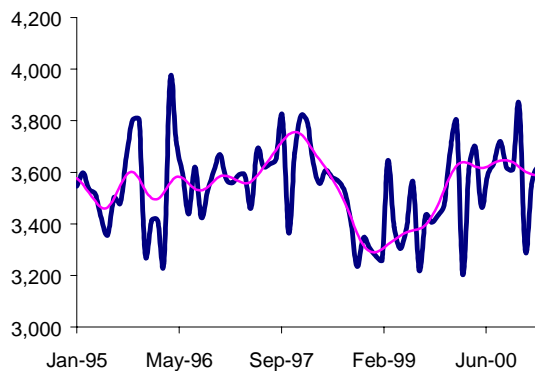
2000 was a good year for accommodation providers in the Cariboo. Month-over-month growth rates of seasonally adjusted revenue were positive for eight of the twelve months. April was the top-performing month, with growth of 13.0%. In total room revenues increased 6.7% in 2000 from 1999 values.

Over the past five years, room revenues in the area have been volatile. Revenues grew in 1996 and 1997 but annual totals declined over the next two years. 1999 was a particularly bad year with revenues falling 3.8%. These declines coincided with increases in the unemployment rate for the region and an economic downturn for the province. During this time, the forest industry (a vital part of the Cariboo economy) was hit particularly hard. The year 2000 saw a recovery in revenues, reporting numbers higher than the past five years.

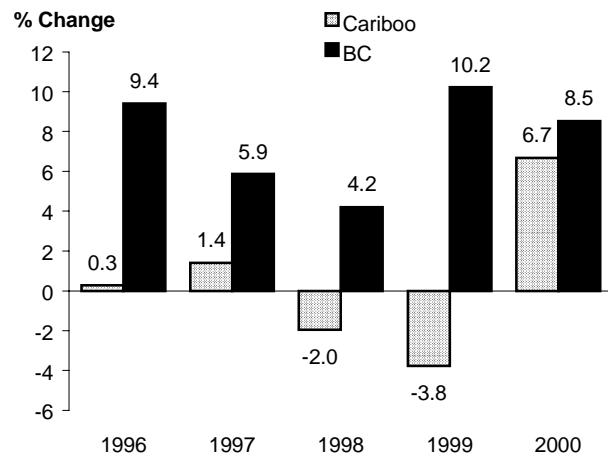
Room revenue growth in the Cariboo lagged behind that of the province from 1995-2000. This was particularly apparent in 1999 when room revenues dropped 3.8% in the Cariboo yet rose 10.2% in BC. However, the year 2000 saw the gap narrow to 1.8 percentage points.

Cariboo room revenues up in 2000

Seasonally Adjusted Room Revenues (\$thousands)

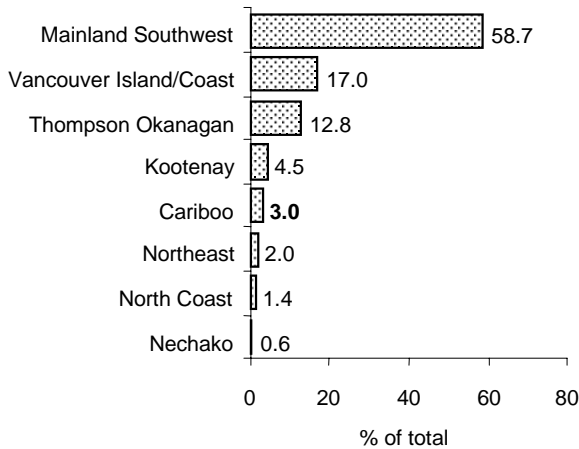


Growth lags behind rest of province



The Cariboo development region ranked fifth for room revenue contributions in the province. The area was responsible for 3.0% of room revenues in 2000. This was down from 4.2% in 1995.

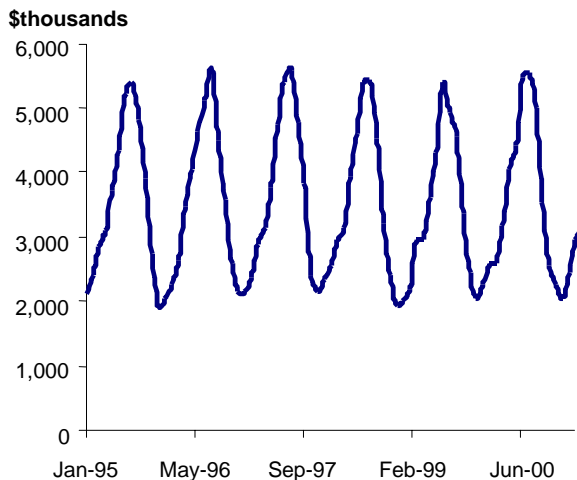
Cariboo contributed 3.0% in 2000



Seasonality

Room revenues show strong seasonal fluctuations in the Cariboo. Starting in January, revenues tend to rise for eight months, peaking in August and then plunge for the last four months of the year, to a low in December.

Revenues are highly seasonal

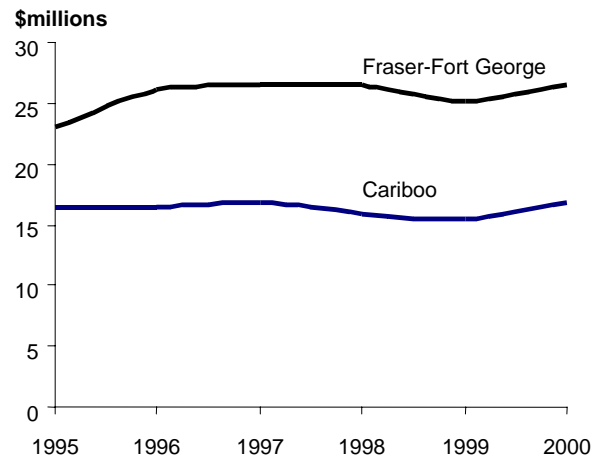


Regional Districts

The regional district of Fraser-Fort George was responsible for 61% of the Cariboo's room revenue in 2000. The other 39% was attributed to the Cariboo Regional District.

Growth in room revenues has followed similar paths in both regions for the past five years.

Regional Districts follow similar path



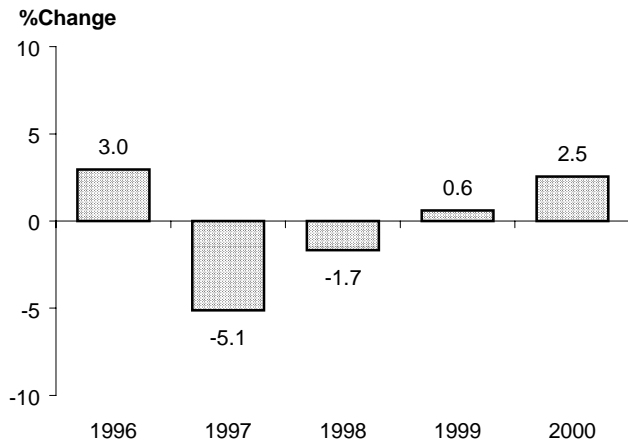
Urban Centres


Prince George made up almost half (47%) of room revenues for the Cariboo in 2000. Quesnel contributed 10% and Williams Lake added 12%. Room revenues in Quesnel saw the biggest jump in 2000, growing 30.7%. Prince George also saw increases (+4.6%) and Williams Lake remained constant (+0.1%).


Accommodation

Room numbers have followed a similar growth pattern as room revenues. After rising in 1996, they fell in 1997, and 1998. Recovery of 1996 levels has not yet been achieved.

Room numbers begin to recover



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BC at a glance . . .		
POPULATION (thousands)		
	Apr 1/01	% change on one year ago
BC	4,087.2	0.8
Canada	30,949.9	0.9
GDP and INCOME		
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>	1999	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	118,783	4.2
GDP (\$ 1992 millions)	104,323	2.1
GDP (\$ 1992 per Capita)	25,899	1.3
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1992 per Capita)	16,700	0.0
TRADE (\$ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Jun	2,902	-8.7
Merchandise Exports (raw) Jun	2,771	-3.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Jun	3,178	6.6
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>	Jul '01	% change on one year ago
BC	116.3	1.8
Canada	117.1	2.6
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>	Jul '01	% change on one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,108	1.2
Employed - BC	1,955	1.2
Unemployed - BC	152	1.3
		Jul '00
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.2	7.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.0	6.8
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Aug 29/01	Aug 30/00
Prime Business Rate	5.75	7.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.20	7.90
- 5 year	7.60	8.25
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Aug 29/01	Aug 30/00
<i>(avg. noon spot rate)</i> Cdn \$	1.5460	1.4795
US \$ <i>(reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.6471	0.6770
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>	Jul '01	% change on one year ago
BC	638.50	0.4
Canada	631.21	2.9
SOURCES:		
Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade,	} Statistics	
Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate		} Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics		
For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm		

Socio-Economic Profiles

Free on our website!

The profiles consist of charts and tables for the 27 Regional Districts and 78 Local Health Areas within the Province of British Columbia. Each region contains the following information:

1. Maps
2. Demographic profile
3. Economic hardship
4. Labour market structure
5. Education concerns
6. Crime
7. Health problems
8. Children at risk
9. Youth at risk

Released this week by BC STATS

- Business Indicators, August 2001

Next week

- Current Statistics, August 2001
- Tourism Sector Monitor, August 2001
- Immigration Highlights, Second Quarter 2001