



A Christmas to Remember

On December 25, 1976, I experienced the real meaning of Christmas in an unforgettable way. My then fiancée, Jeanie, and I left Langley early in the morning to spend Christmas with my parents in Williams Lake. At 6:30, in a forested area near Spuzzum, the engine of my car blew up, leaving us stranded on the side of the road. What to do? No cell phones in 1976!

There was a house some distance away with smoke coming out of the chimney and we dared to ring the doorbell. "Merry Christmas!" was the hearty greeting from the nightgown-clad couple who wouldn't let us say anything until we were comfortably seated in the kitchen with a hot cup of coffee. We finally explained our unfortunate plight and they called the Greyhound station in Hope to

arrange a pickup by the next bus, they towed our car off the highway where it would be safe, and fed us breakfast. They had an electric organ and, being musicians, we spent the next hours playing and singing Christmas carols together like old friends.

Giving, sharing and loving - isn't that the heart of Christmas? I hope that you can share that spirit this Christmas with friends and family and maybe even total strangers that ring your doorbell at 6:30 on Christmas morning.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all from the BCRTA Board of Directors!

Gerry Tiede
President

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Speak Up!

For Pension Security

**ACT BY
DEC 21**

The security of our pensions is of highest importance to BCRTA members and all retired persons in Canada. The Government of Canada has recently announced a consultation on enhancing retirement security.

Act fast - the government has set a deadline for submissions of December 21, 2018.

It is easy to participate. Here's how:

Click <https://bcрта.ca/pension-consultation/> and you will be directed to a government site with a feedback form. Enter your name, email and region. Then you may enter a short statement of what is important to you.

Here are a few starter ideas for comments that our Pension and Benefits Committee suggest you include - in your own language. Pick one or two and personalize them with your thoughts.

- Pension members should not live in fear that their defined benefit pension benefits might be surrendered, leaving them with a less secure form of pension.
- A person's pension is a contractual promise, paid for personally and by their deferred wages from their employer. Contracts must be honoured.
- Pensioners should not be the most vulnerable when a company goes bankrupt. The pension plan should have first claim on the company assets or there should be a national pension insurance program to protect the pensioner.

When you've personalized your feedback, hit the 'Submit' button and pat yourself on the back - you've exercised your democratic right!

A high participation rate sends a message that pension security is an important election issue!



Have a friend who is eligible to join the BCRTA?

- Retired Teachers
- Retired Support Staff
- Retired Post-Secondary Educators

Get all the benefits of membership and the first year is free!

[***bcрта.ca/join***](https://bcрта.ca/join)



TUNED-IN AND TECHED-UP

Being involved in many organizations, including my role as Rector's Warden at St. Stephen Anglican Church in Summerland, and as a director of the BC Retired Teachers' Association, I have been amazed at the remarkable adaptation of my peers to the computer and technological age. In my university days, computers ran Fortran with magnetic tape, were programmed with punch cards, and took up the whole basement of the Computer Science building. If you could program it to print your name you were considered a computer guru. The greatest ability required was to not drop the stack of three hundred punch cards because if you did then it was back to square one!

Computers have come a long way and so have my senior cohorts who can discuss coding, programming, hard-drive efficiency and memory capacities as if they were Primary teachers reading Dick and Jane books to their students. They keep in touch on Facebook and other communication platforms, text with dexterity, and are as attached to the latest model cell phone as any secondary school student. They know the latest types of laptops, notebooks, tablets and printers and are able to compete with the generations following us.

As for me, I have great difficulty programming the thermostat for the furnace at the spring and fall changeovers, I get frustrated trying to find the time or date on a computer screen, and I have fond memories of slaving away over a portable manual

typewriter to write a paper for university classes. Remember those lovely typewriter erasers that you licked with your tongue and then promptly tore a hole in the page you were working on?

I am one of those sad, time-frozen old timers that still likes the feel of an analogue watch on my wrist - you know - the ones that have a self-wind mechanism that makes a clicking noise when you move your wrist! When I want to know the date or day of the week I like to go to the freebie wall calendar with garish colour photos of scenes of Canada, received from a local business. I also like to jot down my appointments on the calendar and see if I can fill in every date box. I love my landline telephone. The answering machine means I have the option of not returning calls if I don't feel like it. I like to drive my car which does not require a university degree to decipher all the electronic gizmos. In my car, if you want heat, you slide a lever to the red mark, if you want to listen to the radio, you push a button, and if you want to back up you actually have to turn around and look out the back. (I have to admit that I am not particularly good at that of late, so watch out!!) I like to read a book that looks and feels like a book and I would rather read a Michael Connelly novel than emails and Facebook messages. I would rather take a walk or go for a sail than sit in front of a screen and a keypad.

But what is important for every retiree is to be engaged in activities that bring joy and fulfilment. Those who have become engaged in the wonders of technology are amazing people who demonstrate the value of continued learning, optimism for the future, and are taking advantage of improvements to their world. I am convinced that pretty soon we will be able to 3D print our own new organs for transplant as our originals wear out.

But for me there is still nothing better than a nice afternoon walk in the sunshine listening to my antiquated Sony Walkman MP3 with the music of the fifties, sixties, and seventies. I am locked in a time warp but I am happy!

*Terry Green
Chair Well-Being Committee*



Communications Committee Reports

SERVING OUR MEMBERS ONLINE AND IN PRINT

The Communications Committee is pleased by the direction in which PostScript, Connections and the website are moving: the interests and concerns of BCRTA members are of foremost importance to us and the print publications are becoming increasingly relevant to readers – we have made timeliness, significance, and interest our goals for the content in both print publications. The website also has been revitalized and the content is developed with a view to what is important, current and made easy to access. Overall, the aim is to communicate a consistent message through all our media. As Communications Committee members, we and our staff are moving toward the realization of these basic communications goals.

Tim Anderson, BCRTA's Executive Director, has extensive knowledge and experience in communications and provides the lead on Postscript, BCRTA Connections Newsletter and the website. The Committee members work with the Executive Director to provide content, and BCRTA Office Administrator Kristi Josephson handles the business end of the publications.

The sub-committee members come from across the province and bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the role. The members of the PostScript Sub-Committee are JoAnn Lauber, Lecky Reynolds, and Libby Thornton, led by Tim Anderson and supported by Terry Green. The Connections Sub-Committee members are Steve Bailey, Marion Hartley and Pat Thiesen, led by Tim Anderson and supported by Charan Gill. The IT/Website Sub-Committee members are Carol Baird-

Krul, Charlene Hodgson and Floyd Smith, led by Tim Anderson and supported by Sterling Campbell.

As we continue to refine our committee roles and publication processes, and strive to provide meaningful, interesting and important information, we encourage branch members to submit articles or suggestions for PostScript Magazine via email postscript@bcrt.ca. Letters to the Editor are also welcome. The deadline to receive articles for the next issue of PostScript is January 31.

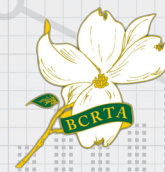
The content of BCRTA Connections highlights the current and immediate work of the BCRTA – Board decisions and pursuits, committee endeavours, and BCRTA projects. We invite members' ideas/suggestions/submissions for Connections, which is emailed to over 9,000 BCRTA members after each Board meeting - email us at connections@bcrt.ca.

The IT/Media subcommittee is working on two exciting projects: new video content to promote the advantages of membership in the BCRTA, and expert interviews. We also plan a "stand alone" issue of PostScript for active teachers, the aim of which is to promote the benefits of belonging to the BCRTA. Branch executives can contact Tim Anderson for help with developing a branch website.

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy 2019!

Charan Gill
Chair, Communications Committee

Special Report: Calculating Cost of Living Increases in the TPP



ARE BC RETIREES FALLING BEHIND? A DETAILED ANALYSIS.

The Pension and Benefits Committee was asked by delegates to the 2018 BCRTA AGM to examine the way the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) is calculated and applied to our pensions. The concern was that perhaps our pensions' purchasing power was falling behind because the BC Teachers' Plan Pension Board of Trustees uses the Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI), and that might not reflect the actual rising costs here in BC.

The committee has looked at various alternatives including using the BC Consumer Price Index, the Vancouver or Victoria CPI or an alternative calculation.

Thanks to the research by Al Cornes, there is a clear explanation of the history of how we first achieved cost of living adjustments, which is particularly interesting.

The key question we looked at was, "Would we have higher pensions if we moved to using an alternative CPI?" If you look only at the 2017 increase to our pensions the answer would be yes. In January 2018 our pensions increased by 1.6% which was the increase in the Canada Consumer Price Index, recorded in September, over the previous year. The BC CPI for the same period of time was 2%. This looks like the value of our pensions has fallen.

However, there is danger in looking at only a one year time frame and forming a conclusion. Quite a different picture emerges if you look at the data over a longer period of time. We discovered that using the Canada CPI rather than the BC CPI had the effect of increasing our pensions by almost 5%

in the past 10 years – a gain of .465% each year. And looking over an even longer 30 year period we found that using the Canada CPI gave us a very significant 10% increase in our pensions compared to using the BC CPI. This is because the rates of inflation in some provinces, Ontario and Alberta specifically, have been much higher than the rate in BC with the result of lifting the Canada CPI's average, to the benefit of our BC pensions.

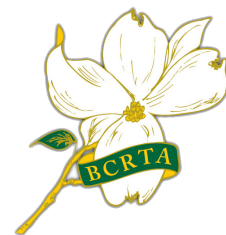
The committee did not feel it was appropriate for the Pension Trustees to use a particular city's CPI for several reasons. City-specific indices are more volatile and are not a reliable indicator of inflation for a larger area; they can be dependant on a specific economic condition such as the gain or loss of a large employer. Nevertheless, we found the same advantage; using the Canada CPI over the past 15 years increased our pensions by 3% over the Vancouver CPI and 7% over the Victoria CPI.

The committee did not find another inflation measuring instrument that met the test of independence, accuracy and a long history of use. These criteria are all met by the respected Canadian Consumer Price Index. Therefore, the Committee is recommending that we do not advocate for changes to the current practice.

The full report is presented on the following pages.

On behalf of the Pensions and Benefits Committee,

Gerry Tiede
President



Memo to: BCRTA Board of Directors
Date: November 14, 2018
From: Gerry Tiede, Chair, BCRTA Pension & Benefits Committee

Subject: Report & Recommendation on AGM Resolution on TPP Pension Indexation

RECOMMENDATION

M/S/C THAT the Pension and Benefits Committee recommend to the Board that, based on a review and analysis of the cost of living in the provinces with the four largest economies in the country as well as the cost of living of the country as a whole, it is the conclusion of the BCRTA Pension and Benefits Committee that the Canada Cost of Living Index (“Canada CPI”) represents a sophisticated, objective and rigorous reflection of the Canadian cost of living and its underlying economy and, therefore, would recommend that there be no changes in its use in the calculation of benefits within the BC Teachers’ Pension Plan.

INTRODUCTION

The 2018 Annual General Meeting of the BCRTA, held on September 22, carried the following resolution with respect to the Teachers’ Pension Plan:

Motion #11 Eagle/Pawlett

THAT the Pensions Committee examine the way in which the COLA is calculated with a view to having the calculation reflect accurately the actual increase in the cost of living to those in receipt of a pension from the BC Teachers’ Pension Plan.

Rationale: *(provided by movers of the resolution)*

A cost of living adjustment, calculated in September of each year, is an increase to a retired member’s Monthly pension payment. Cost of living adjustment are not a guaranteed benefit of the plan. Adjustments are currently made in January each year and are based on changes in the cost of living, as measured by the Canadian Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the financial health of the plan’s inflation adjustment account. Once a cost of living adjustment is granted, it becomes part of a member’s guaranteed basic lifetime pension. If there is deflation (i.e., the CPI declines from one year to the next), the pension amount remains the same-it does not decrease.

You will see that there was a 1.6% cost of living adjustment (COLA) to your pension effective January 1, 2018. The National Consumer Price Index (CPI) was unchanged at 1.5% in the 12 months to September 2017. The British Columbia Consumer Price Index at September 2017 was 2.0%, for Vancouver 2%, and for Victoria 2.0%.

Those in receipt of a BC Teachers’ pension received 80% of what is necessary to maintain their standard of living.

I. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX AND THE INDEXING OF BC TEACHERS’ PENSION

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is an indicator of changes in consumer prices experienced by Canadians. It is obtained by comparing, over time, the cost of a fixed basket of goods and services purchased by consumers. Since the basket contains goods and services of unchanging or equivalent quantity and quality, the index reflects only pure price change.

The CPI is widely used as an indicator of the change in the general level of consumer prices or the rate

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CPI continued

of inflation. Since the purchasing power of money is affected by changes in prices, the CPI is useful to virtually all Canadians. Consumers can compare movements in the CPI to changes in their personal income to monitor and evaluate changes in their financial situation.

It is used to escalate a given dollar value, over time, to preserve the purchasing power of that value. Thus, the CPI is widely used to adjust contracted payments, such as wages, rents, leases and child or spousal support allowances. Private and public pension programs (Old Age Security and the Canada Pension Plan), personal income tax deductions, and some government social payments are also escalated using the CPI.

It is also used in the BC Teachers' Pension Plan.

HOW DOES THE INDEX WORK? (SHORT ANSWER)

Price movements of the goods and services represented in the CPI are weighted according to the relative importance of goods and services in the total expenditures of consumers. Each good or service is considered to be an element in a basket representative of consumer spending, and price movements are assigned a basket share with the proportion of total consumption expenditure they account for. For example, Canadians as a whole spend a much larger share of their total expenditures on rent than on milk. As a result, a 10% price increase in rental rates will have a greater impact on the All-items CPI than a 10% increase in the price of milk. The CPI basket shares are updated at two year intervals; the data to specify them are obtained primarily from the Survey of Household Spending conducted by Statistics Canada.

See Statistics Canada <http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&Id=490783>

II. HOW IS THE INDEX USED IN THE TEACHERS' PENSION PLAN?

The Consumer Price Index ("CPI") is used as a reliable and appropriate indexing tool within the Teachers' Pension Plan rules for the determination of benefits before the granting of a pension. For example, CPI indexation is used to ensure that part time teachers are not penalized in the determination of the calculation of the highest 50 months of FTE salary in the case of part-time teachers where the salary is older than 50 months.

It is also used for those teachers who have been accepted on LTD, they continue to accumulate pensionable and contributory service in the pension plan as if they were still working, and their highest average salary, which is used to calculate their pension, will be indexed to keep pace with the cost of living. [Teachers' Plan Employer Instruction Manual April 3, 2018 page 6-6].

It is also used as a indexation tool in post-retirement pensions to ensure that there is no erosion of the purchasing power due to increases in the cost of living.

Indexation of teacher pension provisions, as they relate to retired in receipt of a TPP pension, are found in Part 8 of the Teachers' Pension Plan Rules [current to March 13, 2018 page 32] as follows:

RELEVANT RULES SECTIONS:

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73 (4) The amount of a cost of living benefit granted to a retired member on any January 1 must not exceed the amount obtained by multiplying

(a) the percentage increase in the consumer price index over the 12 months ending on the immediately preceding September 30 by

(b) the portion of the retired member's pension eligible for adjustment on that January 1.

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CPI continued

(4.1) In determining the percentage change in the value of the consumer price index for the purposes of subsection (4) (a), the value of the consumer price index on any September 30 is deemed to be the greater of (a) the actual value of the consumer price index on that date, or (b) the highest value of the consumer price index on any preceding September 30.

73 (6) The total capitalized value of all cost of living benefits granted on any January 1 under this section must not exceed the amount the plan administrative agent determines is in the inflation adjustment account on the preceding September 30.

Rule 73 is made operative through the application Rule 96 (page 44) which is found in Part 13-Definitions and Plan Interpretation and reads:

“consumer price index” means the Consumer Price Index for Canada, as published by Statistics Canada under the authority of the Statistics Act (Canada), used for calculating the amount of any benefit payable under this Plan and, if the Consumer Price Index for Canada is adjusted to reflect a new time basis or a new content basis, includes a corresponding percentage adjustment in the consumer price index;

III. HOW DOES IT WORK?

Looking backward and relying on Rule 73 (4), the Teachers Pension Plan always compares the Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the most recent September to the CPI from the previous September using CPI as determined by Statistics Canada and reported by the Bank of Canada at http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/price-indexes/cpi/?page_moved=1.

To illustrate, in September of 2017, the Canada CPI index was 130.8 and in September 2016, the CPI index was 128.8, thus the Cost of Living increase for the one year period in question was 1.6%.

As the Cost of Living adjustment is not guaranteed, the Pension Plan determined that the increase of 1.6% increase was affordable under the provisions of Rule 73(6) and, on that basis, the increase was applied to the January 2018 pension payment.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF INDEXATION (TPP)?

BC teachers’ pensions were not always indexed annually, in fact, for a good portion of our pension history, there was no indexation at all. Pensions were increased as a result of petitions, lobbying and, ultimately, a one-day provincial strike in 1971.

Starting on July 1, 1975 and thereafter pensions already adjusted and pensions granted on or after January 1, 1975 were adjusted upward each quarter based on the quarterly changes in the Canada CPI.

The quarterly indexing of pensions ceased and was replaced, effective January 1, 1981 by an annual increase based on the available funds in the Inflation Adjustment Account, with the increase not to exceed the annual increase in the Canada CPI.

Aside from the change from quarterly to annual adjustments, the major effect of this change was to remove the cost of living benefit from a “funded” or guaranteed status to a “conditional “ or what the fund can afford status.

Both the active members and the retirees lobbied and protested against the change to the indexing provision but the legislation was enacted.

It should be noted that despite the fact that the indexation benefit is conditional, the TPP has paid the full CPI amount every year since the introduction of the change in 1981.

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CPI continued

IV. “CANADA” CONSUMER PRICE INDEX OR NOT?

The Consumer Price index referred to in [Part 8] of the Plan rules, then, is the “Canada Consumer Price Index”.

In addition to the Canada CPI, Statistics Canada produces one for each of the provinces and territories. As well, Indexes are also produced for 14 Canadian cities.

The local resolution, approved by the AGM, invites consideration of other indices, either British Columbia or one of the 14 cities in the country that Statistics Canada produces indices. The two British Columbia cities that have indices are Vancouver and Victoria.

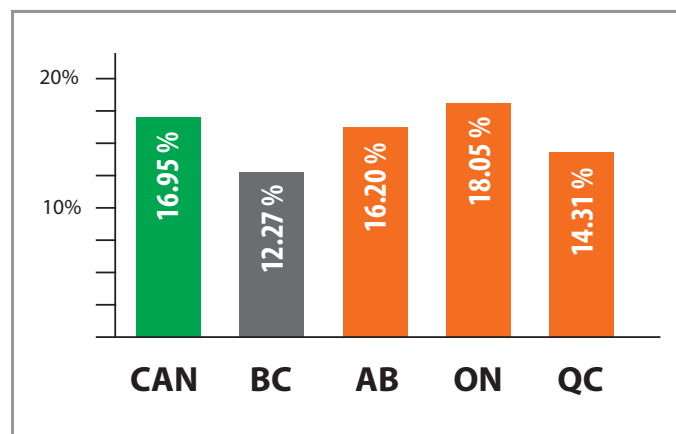
Would we have higher pensions if we moved to using the BC CPI?

As with many things in life there are no guarantees. It is difficult to forecast the future. We can only look at the past to inform us of both the short, medium and long-term patterns.

In addition, this review has gone a step farther and looked at Canada, BC, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec to allow us to better understand both the strengths and weaknesses of using provincial CPIs as compared to the Canada CPI.

The following figures and tables describe the impact of using the five indices over a 10 year, 20 year and 30 year period.

FIGURE A:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
10 Years 2007-2017



What would have happened to \$100 of your teachers' monthly pension depending on which index we used over the 10 year period?

Table 1:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
10 Years 2007-2017

Inflation 2007-2017	Canada CPI	BC CPI	Alberta CPI	Ontario CPI	Quebec CPI
Total Inflation	16.95%	12.27%	16.20%	18.05%	14.31%
Annual Inflation	1.58%	1.16%	1.51%	1.67%	1.35%
Starting Value	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Ending Value	\$116.95	\$112.27	\$116.20	\$118.05	\$114.31

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

Table 1B: Ranking: Highest to Lowest Inflation By Index
Jurisdiction 10 Years 2007-2017

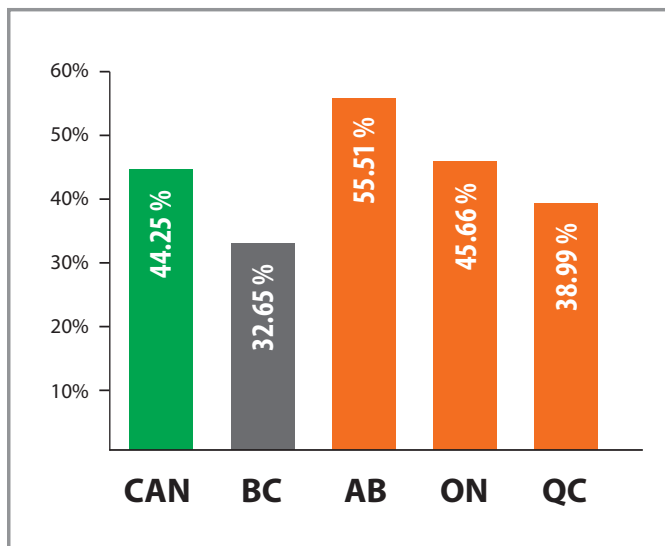
Ranking	Index Jurisdiction	% Inflation 10 yrs	Starting Value 2007	Value in 2017 after 10 yrs
#1	Ontario	18.05%	\$100	\$118.05
#2	Canada	16.95%	\$100	\$116.95
#3	Alberta	16.20%	\$100	\$116.20
#4	Quebec	14.41%	\$100	\$114.31
#5	BC	12.27%	\$100	\$112.27

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

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CPI continued

Figure B:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
20 Years 1997-2017



What would have happened to \$100 of your teachers' monthly pension depending on which index we used over the 20 year period?

Table 2:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
20 Years 1997-2017

Inflation 1997-2017	Canada CPI	BC CPI	Alberta CPI	Ontario CPI	Quebec CPI
Total Inflation	44.25%	32.65%	55.51%	45.66%	38.99%
Annual Inflation	1.85%	1.42%	2.23%	1.90%	1.66%
Starting Value	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Ending Value	\$144.25	\$132.60	\$155.51	\$145.66	\$138.99

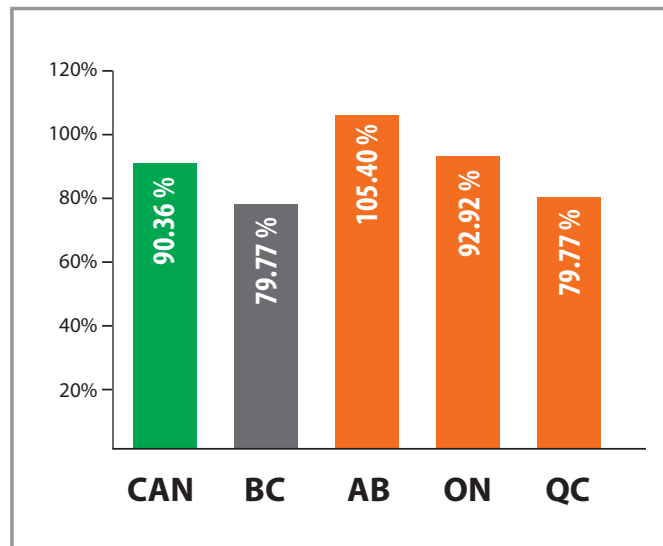
Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

Table 2B:
Ranking: Highest to Lowest Inflation
By Index Jurisdiction 20 Years 1997-2017

Ranking	Index Jurisdiction	% Inflation 10 yrs	Starting Value 1997	Value in 2017 after 20 yrs
#1	Alberta	55.51%	\$100	\$155.51
#2	Ontario	45.66%	\$100	\$145.66
#3	Canada	44.25%	\$100	\$144.25
#4	Quebec	38.99%	\$100	\$138.99
#5	BC	32.65%	\$100	\$132.60

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

Figure C:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
30 Years 1987-2017



What would have happened to \$100 of your teachers' monthly pension depending on which index we used over the 30 year period?

Table 3:
Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Other Provincial CPIs
30 years 1987-2017

Inflation 1987-2017	Canada CPI	BC CPI	Alberta CPI	Ontario CPI	Quebec CPI
Total Inflation	90.36%	79.77%	105.40%	92.92%	79.77%
Annual Inflation	2.17%	1.97%	2.43%	2.21%	1.97%
Starting Value	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Ending Value	\$190.36	\$179.77	\$205.40	\$192.92	\$179.77

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

Table 3B:
Highest to Lowest Amounts of Inflation
By Index Jurisdiction 30 Years 1987-2017

Ranking	Index Jurisdiction	% Inflation 30 yrs	Starting Value 1987	Value in 2017 after 30 yrs
#1	Alberta	105.40%	\$100	\$205.40
#2	Ontario	92.92%	\$100	\$192.92
#3	Canada	90.36%	\$100	\$190.36
#4	BC	79.77%	\$100	\$179.77
#4	Quebec	79.77%	\$100	\$179.77

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

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SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

Table 5:

Ranking British Columbia vs. Canada

Ranking Period	Dates	BC Rank	Canada Rank
10 years	2007-2017	#5	#2
20 years	1997-2017	#5	#3
30 years	1987-2017	#4	#3
15 years	2002-2017	#3	#1

Note: #1 rank has highest inflation, #5 has lowest.

CONSIDERATION OF VICTORIA OR VANCOUVER

Consideration of city-specific indices are not seen as reliable indicators of the overall provincial or national cost of living and are subject to greater volatility as a result of their greater dependence on specific economic sectors and industries.

Setting aside the reliability and appropriateness of utilizing a single city index to represent an entire province, a quick review of Canada, BC, Vancouver and Victoria, a 15 year profile looks something like this:

Table 4:

Canada CPI vs BC CPI vs Vancouver vs Victoria

Inflation rate 2002-2017	Canada CPI	BC CPI	Van CPI	Victoria CPI
Inflation rate 2002-2017	30.4%	25.0%	27.3%	23.0%
Average Annual Inflation Rate	2.0%	1.6%	1.8%	1.5%
Starting Value 2002	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Value 2017	\$130.40	\$125.00	\$127.30	\$123.00

Source: Statistics Canada Calculators (<http://www.inflationcalculator.ca>)

Table 4b:

Highest to Lowest Amounts of Inflation By Index Jurisdiction 15 Years 2002-2017

Canada vs. British Columbia vs. Vancouver vs. Victoria

Ranking	Index Jurisdiction	% Inflation 15 yrs	Starting Value 2002	Value in 2017 after 15 yrs
#1	Canada	30.4%	\$100	\$130.40
#2	Vancouver	27.3%	\$100	\$127.30
#3	British Columbia	25%	\$100	\$125.00
#4	Victoria	23%	\$100	\$123.00

Source: Statistics Canada Cansim Table 326-0021 Produced by BC Stats (Government of British Columbia, January 2018)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/economy/consumer-price-index>

1. Throughout the examination of the 30 year period 1987 to 2017, the cost of living for Canada was, in total, 10% higher than that of British Columbia;
2. Across the country, the regional economies of Alberta and Ontario experienced higher levels in the cost of living than British Columbia in the 10 year, 20 year and 30 year reviews;
3. British Columbia's cost of living ranked 5th, within the five groups referenced, in both the 10 year and 20 year comparisons and 4th in the 30 year comparison;
4. Alberta had the highest cost of living in both the 20 and 30 year comparisons and ranked #3 in the 10 year comparison;
5. Over the 15 year period between 2002-2017, Vancouver's cost of living was higher than that of either British Columbia or Victoria.
6. Examining the 10 year period from 2007 to 2017, indexing pensions by the Canada CPI provides an additional cushion of 0.468% per year to their pensions over applying the BC CPI.

CONCLUSION

Based on a review and analysis of the cost of living in provinces with the four largest economies in the country as well as the cost of living of the country as a whole, it is the conclusion of the BCRTA Pensions and Benefits Committee that the Canada CPI represents a sophisticated, objective and rigorous reflection of the Canadian cost of living and its underlying economy and, therefore, would recommend that there be no changes in its use in the calculation of benefits within the BC Teachers' Pension Plan.

News

FROM AROUND THE BCRTA

HERITAGE GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Heritage Committee has nearly \$4,000 in grant money for branch projects. Grant Criteria and Application Forms are available on the BCRTA website. Under 'About Us' on the homepage click on Committees, then Heritage to find the forms. The next awards will be made in the spring, with a May 1 deadline for applications. Remember to pass a motion of support for your project at a branch meeting. Some past projects have paid for archival storage materials, digitization, printing, and salary for a summer student to do research.

FINANCE

The Finance Committee made two significant decisions at its November meeting.

First, because our computer equipment has gone off warranty and our backup system is close to the end of its usefulness, we have authorized the Executive Director to purchase new equipment. This is a capital expenditure.

Secondly, in an effort to meet the needs of our members and outside organizations that do business with the BCRTA, we are implementing the use of payment processing equipment. This will allow members and organizations to make payments using their credit cards in person, by phone or online.

Last year the BCRTA made a contribution to COSCO to help them increase locations for the *Drive-Able* workshop. BCRTA members have given positive reviews. COSCO presented a preliminary written report to the Finance Committee showing a good turnout by teachers and other seniors.



EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION GRANTS PROVIDE LASTING EFFECTS

We have just learned that a 2016 Excellence Award winner (*Paula Curtis* and her Health Science 12 students at *H.J. Cambie Secondary*) has been able to use one of our awards to help facilitate and put into motion the '*Music and Memories*' Project at *Pinegrove Place Care Home*.

Partnering with the Therapeutic Recreation Department at Pinegrove Place Care Home the students worked on setting up personalized music playlists for the residents, which were recently delivered on iPods and other digital devices purchased with Excellence grant funds.

The students created a personalized playlist for each resident. It's about the intimacy of residents listening to THEIR individual playlist music (that they have intimate connections with) on IPODS and headphones.

Extensive neuroscience research suggests that these musical favourites can tap deep memories not yet lost to dementia, as well as, improved cognition, communication, and quality of life for older persons with Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia.

Katie Hrudehy of Pinegrove thanked the teachers, students and the BCRTA Excellence program for their help in creating this inter-generational project. "With generous people like yourselves," she wrote, "we are able to provide these wonderful and unforgettable experience for our residents."



COSCO SENIORS' HEALTH & WELLNESS INSTITUTE

The Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC (COSCO) thanks the BCRTA for support and funding for the *Staying on the Road* workshops which were presented in 20 communities this year. This program in conjunction with ICBC, helps senior drivers learn about the requirements once you reach the age of 80. Hopefully further workshops will continue and 12 communities have already requested dates in 2019. Contact: Sheila Pither at pither470@shaw.ca

The Seniors Health and Wellness Institute has now reached some milestones: over 2,000 workshops have been given since it began in 2007 and over 40,000 participants have attended the facilitated discussions! We are looking for more facilitators and will do the training with the powerpoint presentations.

There are over 40 workshops available - see the website: www.seniorshelpingseniors.ca or contact coordinator Floyd ws_coord@coscoworkshops.org or chair Barb Mikulec mikulec@telus.net

BCRTA ADVANTAGE PROGRAM OFFERS SHOPPING VALUES

BCRTA members are encouraged to view potential savings from our Advantage Partners. Our Advantage Partners offer significant savings on items you use every day, and gifts, too.

Here is one example: join BCRTA Partner *Perkopolis* and get 20% off movie tickets for the movie lovers in your family.

Here is how to do it:

1. Visit the BCRTA website for instructions on how to join Perkopolis and to get the BCRTA discount code. You will need to know your BCRTA membership number. [Click this link to load the instructions as a PDF.](#)
2. Now that you are set up, point your browser to <https://www.perkopolis.com/movies> and start thinking about the adventures that await!



*Any changes to your e-mail address or home address?
It is important to notify the BCRTA Office of any changes.*

Thank you for keeping in touch!

**Contact Laurie Boyd at the BCRTA Office
at laurie@bcrt.ca or 604-871-2260**



📍 Bény-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery.

D-DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

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