

**From:** Kunkel, Sabina  
**Sent:** December-20-12 4:09 PM  
**To:** TransLink - MET II; CMBC All; BCRTC ALL USERS; West Coast Express  
**Subject:** Emails & FOI

In response to recent queries from staff about emails and FOI, I'm pleased to offer some general guidelines:

- Any emails you've sent or stored, that have been kept in relation to a business matter, an employee or a third party, is subject to release under FOI if it is responsive to an access request. This applies to emails held on your system as well as those you may have sent that are now in others' custody.
- Comments you have made in your email about a third party or employee, or about a matter in relation to a third party or employee, BELONG TO THAT INDIVIDUAL.

*(This is important to remember when you're tempted to inject a personal opinion or unsolicited comment, about an individual or situation, into an email string. If, for example, as a manager or supervisor, you have provided email feedback about an employee's performance, your comments are releasable to that employee under FOI. If, as an employee, you have complained by email about a coworker's behaviour or performance, your comments may be releasable to that coworker under FOI.)*

- You should write your emails as you would any other business correspondence, keeping the tone professional and the content factual.
- Official email records should be appropriately classified with retention periods applied. Emails of a transitory nature should not be retained. For assistance in differentiating between official & transitory records, please contact Noella Bordian, Corporate Records Manager, at (604) 453-4538.
- While public bodies should document their business decisions, there are legitimate times when a phone call or face-to-face dialogue may be more appropriate. Always use your judgement.
- Keep in mind that, once you've sent your email to others, you've lost control over who sees it (or how long the item is retained). Even items marked "confidential" may inadvertently be misdirected, and the fact that something has been classified as confidential does not preclude its release under FOI. Always review your email before sending to be certain you're comfortable with the content. Remember – too – that, while you may have deleted your transitory emails, other parties may still have their copies.
- While it's natural for people to want their emails to reflect their personality, there are ways to communicate less formally without compromising professionalism. It is NEVER appropriate to be "cute" or "funny" when the subject is serious (e.g. it pertains to an accident, complaint, disciplinary or medical issue), or to make editorial comments about our customers, stakeholders, employees or contractors.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at (604) 453-4516.

Thanks,

Sabina Kunkel  
Manager, Information Access  
TRANSLINK