



MEDIA STATEMENT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

Thursday, 10 January 2008

08-02

SPECIAL PROSECUTOR APPROVES CHARGES

Victoria – The Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General today announced that an independent Special Prosecutor has approved charges against an individual following a police investigation into allegations of criminal harassment and threatening.

An Information charging Rebecca Christenson with one count of criminal harassment contrary to s. 264(2) (b) and one count of uttering threats contrary to s. 264(2) (d) of the *Criminal Code of Canada* was sworn and filed in BC Provincial Court in Victoria on January 7, 2008.

The complainant who was allegedly harassed and threatened is the former spouse of Ms. Christenson, and is currently employed in a senior position with the BC Public Service. In the past he has held a number of senior positions with government, including a position with the Criminal Justice Branch, where he sat as an acting member of the Senior Management Committee. In light of this history, the Assistant Deputy Attorney General for the Criminal Justice Branch, Robert W.G. Gillen Q.C., determined it was necessary to appoint an independent Special Prosecutor.

The decision to charge Ms. Christenson was made by independent Special Prosecutor Peter Wilson, Q.C., who was appointed by Mr. Gillen on October 10, 2007.

Special Prosecutors are appointed under the *Crown Counsel Act* when there is a significant potential for real or perceived improper influence in the independent exercise of prosecutorial responsibilities, including the charge assessment process. The decisions of Special Prosecutors are final subject only to receiving written instructions from the Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General or the Assistant Deputy Attorney General for the Criminal Justice Branch. In such an event, those directions must be made public by publishing them in the BC Gazette.

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Ms. Christenson is currently scheduled to make her first appearance in Victoria Provincial Court on February 20, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

As this matter is before the court, it would not be appropriate to comment any further at this time.

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