



MEDIA STATEMENT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

March 11, 2016

16-04

Charges Approved by Special Prosecutor

Victoria - The Criminal Justice Branch (CJB), Ministry of Justice, announced today that Special Prosecutor Mark Jetté has approved charges against George Steven Gretes under the province's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA).

Mr. Gretes is a former Ministerial Assistant in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. He is charged with two counts of willfully making false statements to mislead, or attempt to mislead, the Information and Privacy Commissioner (or another person), in performance of the duties, powers and functions of the Commissioner.

These charges follow an investigation by the RCMP that arose after the Privacy Commissioner's release of her report: "Access Denied: Record Retention and Disposal Practices of the Government of British Columbia" (October 2015). The Privacy Commissioner referred her report to the RCMP for investigative consideration. At the request of the RCMP, a Special Prosecutor was appointed by the Assistant Deputy Attorney General for the Criminal Justice Branch on November 24, 2015, with a mandate to provide legal advice to the RCMP during the course of its investigation, and to conduct a charge assessment in response to any Report to Crown Counsel brought to the Special Prosecutor for his consideration. Special Prosecutors make their decisions on Reports to Crown Counsel and any ensuing prosecutions independent of government and the Criminal Justice Branch.

In this case the police investigation focused on the conduct of Mr. Gretes, who was interviewed under oath during the Commissioner's investigation.

An Information charging Mr. Gretes with two offences under section 74(2) of FOIPPA was sworn March 11, 2016 under file number 168673-1 in British Columbia Provincial Court in Victoria. An appearance in the case has been scheduled for April 20, 2016 in Victoria.

The Charge Assessment Guidelines applied by Special Prosecutors in reviewing all Reports to Crown Counsel are established in Criminal Justice Branch policy and are available online at:

http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/prosecution-service/policy-man/pdf/CHA1_ChargeAssessmentGuidelines.pdf

Branch Vision

Courageous, Fair and Efficient – A Prosecution Service that has the Confidence of the Public.

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This Media Statement was prepared in consultation with the Special Prosecutor. As this matter is now before the Court, neither the Criminal Justice Branch nor the Special Prosecutor will release additional information or comment further at this time.

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<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/prosecution-service/>