



MEDIA STATEMENT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

July 9, 2013

13-17

Update on Status of Bountiful Investigation

Victoria - On July 3, 2013 independent Special Prosecutor Peter Wilson, QC received an investigative report prepared by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (R.C.M.P.) in relation to a portion of their extensive investigation into individuals associated with the community of Bountiful. After consulting with the R.C.M.P. and Mr. Wilson, and in view of the ongoing public attention to matters relating to Bountiful, the Criminal Justice Branch has concluded that it is appropriate to issue a public statement in relation to this development.

Mr. Wilson was appointed as a Special Prosecutor by then Assistant Deputy Attorney General Robert W.G Gillen, QC on January 17, 2012.

Mr. Wilson's initial mandate included:

- Offering legal advice to the police in their continuing investigation;
- Independently reviewing any investigative report prepared by the police, as well as any materials assembled by the Criminal Justice Branch and any other information that the investigating officers might provide to him for his consideration;
- Making the charging decision he deems appropriate;
- As part of any charge assessment, considering, if the evidence supports it, the possible prosecution of sexual exploitation and other alleged offences against minors by individuals associated with the community of Bountiful, from the early 1980s to the present.

On January 31, 2012, Mr. Wilson's mandate as a Special Prosecutor was expanded by Mr. Gillen to include consideration of potential offences contrary to the polygamy provisions of the Criminal Code.

In accordance with his mandate, Mr. Wilson will now begin his charge assessment review based on the investigative report that has been submitted to him.

Branch Vision

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

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In the coming months the R.C.M.P. anticipate providing Mr. Wilson with further material relating to additional potential charges.

The investigative report which has been provided to Mr. Wilson includes a substantial volume of material. Mr. Wilson believes that it will be necessary to review both the current report and the additional investigative material prior to making a final charge assessment decision. It will therefore likely be a number of months before any charge assessment decision is announced, although it is not possible to provide a specific timeline for completion of this process.

Police and prosecutors exercise separate and independent functions. Although they work co-operatively within the criminal justice system in British Columbia, neither is subject to the supervision or direction of the other. While police have consulted the Special Prosecutor on issues that have arisen during this investigation, the police have exercised their investigative discretion independently.

Once police have submitted an investigative report for charge assessment, the prosecutor responsible conducts an independent review of the file to determine whether or not charges will be approved.

In conducting his review, Mr. Wilson will fairly, independently, and objectively examine the available evidence in order to determine:

1. whether there is a substantial likelihood of conviction; and, if so,
2. whether a prosecution is required in the public interest.

Given that Mr. Wilson will now be reviewing the initial investigative report, it would not be appropriate for him to comment on or discuss any aspects of the investigation at this time.

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