



MEDIA STATEMENT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

November 25, 2015

15-27

Appointment of Special Prosecutor

Victoria – The Criminal Justice Branch (CJB), Ministry of Justice, announced today that Mark R. Jetté, an experienced lawyer in private practice in Vancouver, has been appointed as a Special Prosecutor to provide legal advice to the R.C.M.P. in relation to an investigation arising out of Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham’s recent report to government.

The appointment follows a formal request from the R.C.M.P. that the Assistant Deputy Attorney General for the Criminal Justice Branch, M. Joyce DeWitt-Van Oosten, QC (the ADAG), consider appointing a Special Prosecutor to provide police with legal advice during the course of an investigation arising out of information referred to police by the Information and Privacy Commissioner. This information related to a request for access to records that was made of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the alleged conduct of an individual who was employed as a Ministerial Assistant at the time of the request.

The ADAG has concluded that, based on the request and the information available to her about the alleged circumstances of the case, the appointment of a Special Prosecutor is in the public interest. This is the second appointment of a Special Prosecutor in this matter, as the lawyer who was first appointed withdrew.

The ADAG appointed Mr. Jetté as a Special Prosecutor on November 24, 2015. He has been given a mandate to:

- Offer such legal advice to the R.C.M.P. as may be necessary in the circumstances;
- Conduct an independent assessment of any Report to Crown Counsel (RTCC) that may be submitted and make the charging decision he deems appropriate in the exercise of his independent discretion, in accordance with Criminal Justice Branch Policies;
- Provide a written report to the ADAG, with the results of his assessment of any RTCC submitted and the reasons for any decisions; and,

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- Conduct the prosecution and any subsequent appeal, if he determines in the exercise of his discretion that a prosecution is warranted.

When providing legal advice to investigators, a Special Prosecutor does not control, supervise or direct the investigation. It is up to the investigators, once they have received any advice, to independently decide whether and how they should conduct the investigation, who they should investigate, and what evidence to gather.

Should the R.C.M.P., in the independent exercise of its discretion, decide to submit a Report to Crown Counsel for charge assessment and possible prosecution, the CJB anticipates that a Media Statement will be issued at an appropriate time announcing the results of Mr. Jetté's review.

As this matter is currently subject to an ongoing investigation neither the CJB nor Mr. Jetté will comment further or release any additional information at this time.

For general information, CJB's policy on Special Prosecutors and a related Information Sheet can be found at:

<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/prosecution-service/policy-man/pdf/CJB-SPE1-SpecialProsecutors.pdf>

<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/prosecution-service/pdf/Role-Special-Prosecutors.pdf>

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To learn more about B.C.'s criminal justice system visit the British Columbia Prosecution Service website at:

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