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BC Prosecution Service releases revised Crown Counsel Policy Manual

Victoria –Effective March 1, 2018, the BC Prosecution Service (BCPS) implemented a revised Crown Counsel Policy Manual. The 59 policies in the Manual, along with the accompanying Introduction, assist Crown Counsel in carrying out their responsibilities under the *Crown Counsel Act*.

The policy review project has been a stated goal of our Strategic Plan for several years. Over that time, our policy committee, resource counsel, subject matter experts, and the Prosecution Service Management Committee have undertaken a comprehensive review, examining each policy for consistency, relevancy, usefulness, and conformity with the current statute and case law, as well as for alignment with current legal practice and procedures. A number of redundant policies were eliminated through the review.

The BCPS will continue to make the Crown Counsel Policy Manual available to the public via the internet, with a view to promoting increased understanding of prosecutorial responsibilities and guidelines that inform the exercise of discretion by Crown Counsel. We will also continue to review the policies on an ongoing basis to ensure they accurately reflect developments in Canadian criminal law, respond appropriately to emerging issues or community needs, including scientific developments, and reasonably balance individual rights with societal interests.

As part of our continued efforts to be responsive to the communities we serve, and to increase the ease of access to services, we have translated the *Introduction*, and certain of the specific policies, including *Charge Assessment Guidelines* (CHA 1), *Intimate Partner Violence* (IPV 1), and several others into eight languages in addition to English and French.

The revised policies and their translations are available at:

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bc-prosecution-service/crown-counsel-policy-manual

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