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18-05

Appointment of Special Prosecutor

Victoria - The BC Prosecution Service (BCPS) announced today that Leonard Doust QC has been appointed Special Prosecutor in relation to an investigation which resulted in charges being laid against the former mayor of Burns Lake.

On February 3, 2018 the accused was arrested by the Burns Lake RCMP and charged with a number of sex related offences. The accused is the former mayor of Burns Lake and has served on a number of committees with the BC Liberal party. He was released on conditions and is scheduled to appear next on April 6, 2018 in Burns Lake Provincial Court on information # 9330-1. A Report to Crown Counsel (RCC) has been forwarded to Crown for charge assessment.

On March 6, 2018, the Assistant Deputy Attorney General Peter Juk QC (ADAG) appointed Mr. Doust Special Prosecutor under s. 7 of the *Crown Counsel Act* because he considered it in the public interest to do so. The appointment of a Special Prosecutor is intended to avoid any potential for real or perceived improper influence in the administration of justice in light of the nature of the allegations and the identity of the accused as a former elected municipal official with significant connections to the BC Liberal party.

Mr. Doust QC is a senior Vancouver lawyer in private practice. His mandate includes;

- Conducting an independent assessment of the current charges based on the RCC submitted by the investigative agency, and making the charging decision he deems appropriate in the exercise of his independent discretion.
- Providing a written report to the ADAG, with the results of his assessment and the reasons for his decision; and,
- Conducting the prosecution and any subsequent appeal if he determines in the exercise of his discretion that a prosecution is warranted.

As this matter is now under charge assessment, neither the BCPS nor the Special Prosecutor will be making any further comment.

The BCPS policy on Special Prosecutors and a related Information Sheet can be found at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/prosecution-service/crown-counsel-policy-manual/spe-1.pdf>

[Role of Special Prosecutors](#)

The Charge Assessment Guidelines that are applied by the BCPS and Special Prosecutors in reviewing all RCCs are established in Branch policy and are available at:

www.gov.bc.ca/charge-assessment-guidelines

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