

# NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association  
Friday, September 14, 2007

## **Civil Rights Group Set to Proceed with Judicial Review in Ian Bush Death Complaint Against the RCMP After Victory in Federal Court**

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association has won a first round victory in Federal Court against the Attorney General of Canada in its bid to have a decision of the RCMP to terminate the BCCLA's complaint against RCMP members involved in the Ian Bush death reversed by the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP (CPC). The Chair of the CPC, Paul Kennedy, had upheld the decision of the RCMP to terminate the BCCLA's complaint.

Murray Mollard, Executive Director of the BCCLA: "This is an important victory that will let us challenge Paul Kennedy's decision to let the RCMP off the hook. Our goal is to keep Mr. Kennedy and the CPC's feet to the fire in ensuring thorough and timely civilian oversight of police, especially in in-custody death cases."

The RCMP had terminated the BCCLA's complaint pointing to an ongoing criminal investigation and the availability of a Coroner's Inquest which was held earlier this year in Houston, B.C nearly 18 months after Mr. Bush's death. Evidence at the Coroner's Inquest raised a variety of troubling questions about the competence of the RCMP investigation into Mr. Bush's death. However, Coroner's inquests are legally prohibited from finding responsibility for a death.

The BCCLA recently lodged 4 new complaints against police in BC as a result of civilian deaths in August, three of which involved RCMP detachments in Tofino, Fort St. John and Penticton. The BCCLA launches complaints in any police related death to ensure that there is civilian oversight into the death.

Executive Director Mollard: "Police investigating police when there is civilian death undermines public confidence and trust in the police. It is time a civilian agency investigate these cases. The process must be beyond reproach. We will continue to work to change the system."

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