



## NEWS RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Civil liberties Group files complaints over SkyTrain Police Taser use**

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association today filed a complaint with the Police Complaints Commissioner for B.C. over the use of the Conducted Energy Weapon (Taser) by SkyTrain Police. Incident reports recently made public show officers are using the Taser to gain compliance from nonviolent and nonthreatening individuals.

BCCLA President Rob Holmes: "The fact that Tasers are being used in situations that border on debt collection by the government is outrageous. The public has every right to be concerned that there is a lack of proper control over the use and application of these devices. A full investigation is required."

The complaint contends that fleeing the scene, evading a transit fare, refusing to let go of a railing and ignoring verbal commands are situations that do not necessitate the degree of force that was used. According to policy, the Taser is justified for use only in situations that "demand control," implying a level of threat and urgency that does not seem to be present in each of the four cases. The complaint also alleges that this policy remains inadequate and asks for it to be reviewed by the TransLink Police Board and the Police Complaints Commissioner. Even though the policy appears to condemn the use of the Taser on nonviolent and nonthreatening individuals, 'non-compliance' is listed as justification for use.

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association has previously called on the Solicitor General of British Columbia to issue a moratorium on the use of the Taser gun in British Columbia until such time as uniform standards for training, use and accountability are enshrined and enforced in law, and research confirms that the Taser does not pose an unreasonable risk to the safety of the public.

The complaint to the Police Complaints Commissioner for B.C. and the TransLink Police Use of Force policy and incident reports can be found at [www.bccla.org](http://www.bccla.org).

Letter to the Police Complaints Commissioner for B.C.: <http://www.bccla.org/othercontent/08SkyTrain.pdf>

Use of Force policy and Incident reports: <http://www.bccla.org/othercontent/08ForcePolicy.pdf>

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Rob Holmes  
604-681-1310

Murray Mollard  
604-630-9752