



NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association
September 16, 2009

For immediate release

“Trust us” not good enough, BCCLA tells VANOC

Vancouver, B.C. – A recent press release from the Vancouver Olympic Organizing committee attempting to stem a growing tide of concern over free speech rights and the Olympics isn't good enough says the BCCLA.

The release, dated September 16, defends VANOC and the International Olympic Committee's clampdowns on free speech as “entirely consistent with international sporting event norms” and in a spirit of “respect for freedom of expression in balance with the celebration of sport.”

“VANOC has signed contracts that incorporate many alarming anti-free speech provisions and mailed anti-free speech guides to municipalities on the torch run,” said BCCLA Vice-President Jason Gratl. “The words ‘respect for freedom of expression’ don't come to mind when considering their track record to date.”

The BCCLA today announced their partnership with Pivot Legal Society in introducing legal observers who will monitor potential rights violations during the Olympic Games, along with a package of documents obtained through Freedom of Information requests authored by or signed by VANOC that purport to limit free speech in and around Olympic venues.

“We're not packing our bags simply because VANOC says ‘trust us,’” said Gratl. “When their press release that says they respect free speech defends telling spectators what messages they can wear on their clothing, protest pens ‘facilitated by police’, and the suggestion that anti-free speech activities to protect Olympic sponsors is ‘in the public's best interest,’ we know we still have work to do.”

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Backgrounder – The text of the VANOC Press Release

From: Jennifer Young <Jennifer_Young@vancouver2010.com>

Date: September 16, 2009 10:16:02 AM PDT (CA)

To: Jennifer Young <Jennifer_Young@vancouver2010.com>

Subject: Free speech, athletes competing at their best and spectator enjoyment at the 2010 Winter Games

Good morning.

Please find attached a press release for your immediate use. This will also be posted to the wire and our website shortly in both French and English.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Jennifer

COPY:

September 16, 2009

A BALANCE OF INTERESTS: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN PUBLIC SPACES, ATHLETES COMPETING AT THEIR BEST AND SPECTATOR ENJOYMENT AT THE 2010 GAMES

Vancouver, BC - The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) is working closely with its partners to provide a reasonable balance of interests at the 2010 Winter Games including freedom of expression in public spaces; the protection of Olympic marks and Games sponsors against commercial infringement and ambush marketing; and venues where athletes can compete at their very best before spectators who can fully enjoy the events.

The following outlines VANOC's position and intentions on freedom of expression in public areas, commercial rights management and the terms and conditions of attendance at Games venues, which are entirely consistent with international sporting event norms:

I. Respect for Freedom of Expression in Balance with the Celebration of Sport

- VANOC and its partners respect every citizen's right to freedom of expression as protected by Canadian law.
- VANOC also recognizes the need to find the balance for all; including respecting and protecting the rights of athletes, spectators and sponsors, as agreed to when Canada won the right to host the 2010 Winter Games.

II. Outside Ticketed Games Venues

A) Demonstrations

- For those who wish to use the 2010 Winter Games to draw attention to areas of their interest, our security partners will ensure peaceful, lawful and safe public demonstrations can occur outside of the venues in plain sight of the media and the public.
- Safe assembly areas for this purpose are being proposed by Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit (VISU) and they will be facilitated by the police of jurisdiction outside a ticketed Games venue.

B) Safe Assembly Areas

- Safe assembly areas are being developed under three guiding principles: safety, proximity and visibility.

- Safe assembly areas for demonstrations are options for demonstrators to ensure they have a safe space reserved for them which is in plain view of the public and the media accessing the venues.
- Demonstrators are not required to use safe assembly areas, but they will be made available to ensure a clear space is maintained for demonstrations in the busy environment around each venue.
- The location and size of the safe assembly areas will be announced closer to Games time, as planning for the venues continues.

C) Commercial Activity

- VANOC has an obligation to protect to the Games sponsors and that it is in the public's best interest to protect the almost \$1 billion investment by these sponsors.
- Outside the venues volunteers monitoring commercial activities will only identify commercial infringement and ambush marketing, and due process with the appropriate authorities will be followed on a case by case basis.

III. Inside Ticketed Games Venues

A) Athlete Performance and Spirit of Celebration

- The 2010 Winter Games will be a celebration of sport, culture and sustainability; inside the venues this must be the priority above all commercial, political, religious or other statements.
- Athletes and other Games participants have earned the right to focus entirely on the competition at hand.
- The Olympic Charter states that no demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda of any kind is permitted inside any venue for the Olympic or Paralympic Games. This includes limiting any advertising by our Games sponsors in the field of play. This is to ensure that the Games remain focused on celebrating sport and Olympic values.

B) Ticket Terms and Conditions

- The Ticket Terms and Conditions for Olympic events are consistent with those that already exist for previous Olympic Games and for other major international sporting celebrations such as World Cups and Commonwealth Games.
- Ticket Bearers agree to the full terms and conditions of their tickets including that admission shall not be used to engage in political, commercial, advertising or other promotional activities.

Further information on:

- **Advertising and commercial activities as part of VANOC's commercial rights management program** can be found at <http://www.vancouver2010.com/en/about-vanoc/the-vancouver-2010-brand/protecting-the-brand/-/32798/1i3nwix/index.html>
- The full **terms and conditions accepted by tickets bearers for 2010 Games events** can be found at <https://images.vancouver2010.com/images/tms/TicketLicenseAgreement.html>
- **VISU's organization of safe assembly areas at the 2010 Games** can be found at <http://v2010isu.com/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=516&languageId=1&contentId=6821#faq-sp-venues>
- **City of Vancouver temporary bylaws** during the 2010 Games can be found at <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/bylaw1.htm>

- The sections in the **Olympic Charter** that govern the staging of the Olympic Games in the areas outlined above can be found in Rule 51 on page 98 of the Olympic Charter at http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_122.pdf

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