



NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association
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For immediate release

BCCLA demands clarification of VPD policy on seizing cameras

The BC Civil Liberties Association filed a complaint today with the Vancouver Police Board, asking them to clarify VPD policy on seizing cameras. The BCCLA says that Sunday's allegation by a Vancouver Province photographer brings to three the number of high-profile allegations against the VPD concerning the seizure of cameras in recent memory.

"Now a citizen and two media outlets have made high profile and serious allegations against the VPD concerning police interference in their right to videotape events in the public domain," said David Eby, Executive Director of the BCCLA. "This is a troubling pattern that the Police Board should move to address proactively."

- In December of 2007, a Channel M videographer alleged that he was detained for several hours and had his camera seized after he filmed police activity after a police shooting in Vancouver;
- In March of 2009, Adam Smolcic, a citizen of Vancouver, alleged that a Vancouver police officer took his cellphone and erased video he had taken of the police shooting of Michael Hubbard;
- In April of 2009, a Vancouver Province photographer alleged he was threatened with a criminal charge and assaulted when he refused to turn his camera over to police after taking pictures following a police shooting.

"All of these allegations involved taking pictures of Vancouver Police officers either using lethal force or investigating another officer who had used lethal force," said Eby. "These incidents are not a time for reduced accountability. We need Police Board clarity on when the police may, and may not, seize someone's camera, and of course we need the police to stop investigating themselves when they use lethal force."

[BCCLA complaint >>](#)

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