



NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association
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For immediate release

Public, police deserve independent investigation agency

Vancouver – The B.C. Civil Liberties Association says that the example of the three police officers arrested early Wednesday morning is further justification for reform of the police complaints system.

“The public has no confidence in the police investigating themselves in these serious incidents,” said David Eby, the acting Executive Director of the BCCLA. “Even if a perfect investigation were done exonerating each of these arrested officers, the public would not trust the result.”

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association is currently engaged in a continuing boycott of the police complaints process in British Columbia as it relates to “public trust” complaints, citing a lack of confidence in the quality of investigations done by internal investigators. The organization is pressing for a civilian investigation system similar to Ontario and Saskatchewan’s.

“The arrested officers, the public, and the police forces themselves deserve an investigation that is above reproach,” explained Eby. “Given recent high profile contradictions between video evidence and police chronologies, in particular in the Dziekanski case, the public is justified in being sceptical about the thoroughness of police internal investigations.”

In the Dziekanski case, the public waited almost a full year before hearing whether officers would be criminally charged for their conduct. In the Frank Paul case, Vancouver Police investigators told the inquiry about their obligation to provide “neutral” reports on police-involved incidents, different from investigations of the general public.

No charges have been announced against the three officers involved in Wednesday morning’s events. The provincial government has been considering revisions to the Police Act for years now without any apparent progress and with a process that the BCCLA has previously criticized as it requires participants to agree not to disclose publicly anything that is said in the consultation process. This process follows on Josiah Wood Q.C.’s February 2007 study on internal police investigations that reported there were major omissions in internal police investigation files for serious incidents involving police officers.

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