



BACKGROUND – EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS PROCESS

October 25, 2010

Evidentiary Hearings

- Starting on October 25, 2010, the commission is conducting evidentiary hearings regarding the issues that the commission is mandated to investigate. While the schedule of hearings is subject to change, hearings are currently scheduled to run Mondays through Thursdays and are from 10 am to 12:30 pm and 2 pm to 4 pm each day. The commission will conduct these hearings at the Federal Court, 801-701 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC. The hearing schedule is available on the commission's [website](#).
- Members of the media and the public are welcome, but are expected to conduct themselves in the hearing as they would in a court proceeding.
- No signs, banners or other postings are permitted in the courtroom, the hallways or other parts of the building, other than those permitted by the Commissioner.
- No food or beverages are permitted in the hearing room.
- No cell phones or cameras are to be used in the hearing room.

Witnesses

Depending on the issue under consideration at that point in the hearings, the commission may adopt a variety of formats for witnesses presenting information, including:

- An individual witness, including an expert, may testify under oath or on affirmation, and then be subject to cross-examination by counsel for participants.
- A group of witnesses, including experts, may give evidence as members of a panel. If a panel is called, the courtroom may be re-arranged to accommodate multiple witnesses.
- Technical and scientific witnesses may present evidence in panel discussions and forums at which they can exchange views and challenge one another's findings and conclusions in an open, collaborative and exploratory setting.

Evidence

- In order to create a 'paperless' courtroom, the commission will make all exhibits available to the public on the commission's [website](#). The commission will also be projecting exhibits in the courtroom so the public may view the exhibit as its being delivered.
- Subject to the consent of participants, a summary of a person's interview may be filed as an exhibit without that person testifying.
- Transcripts of each day's hearings will be posted on the commission's [website](#), likely within 10-14 days.

Media

- A media room (room 806) will be set up next door to the courtroom as a basic workspace for media throughout the course of the hearings. No cameras or recording devices are to be operated in the hallways or other parts of the building, but interviews may be conducted in the media room.
- An audio feed will be supplied in the hearing room.
- No still cameras will be permitted in the courtroom.
- The Commissioner will permit a single video camera and operator to be positioned at the "audience right" side of the courtroom to record the hearings proceedings. A single line feed will be permitted and members of the media are expected to supply any equipment necessary and manage such a pool feed to ensure access to all interested members of the media.
- All media enquiries should be directed to Carla Shore, Director of Communications for the Cohen Commission, at 604-658-3646 or 604-329-0975, or carla.shore@cohencommission.ca.