

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN**  
**MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL (the “Ministry”)**  
**AND**  
**PROVINCIAL COURT JUDICIARY**  
**as represented by the Chief Judge (the “Judiciary”)**

WHEREAS:

- A. The Ministry and the Judiciary must work together to fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities for the administration of justice in British Columbia;
- B. The Ministry must operate under certain financial constraints;
- C. It is important to maintain a reasonable and adequate level of access to the Provincial Court within those financial constraints;
- D. The closure of courthouses in some locations may result in access being impaired by reason of geography, distance, the absence of viable alternative facilities or means of appearing in court, and other local factors.

IT IS AGREED THAT:

- 1. The Ministry and Judiciary will work together toward maintaining reasonable and adequate levels of access in locations where closures will impair access, on a priority basis, through the implementation of circuit courts or other measures.
- 2. The Ministry and Judiciary will consider whether implementing circuit courts or closures in any locations other than closing locations may result in cost reductions, without impairing reasonable and adequate access to court.
- 3. The Ministry and Judiciary have identified pending statutory changes and potential procedural changes that will impact upon personal appearances by criminal defendants and/or witnesses, and may achieve cost reductions and improvements in access.
- 4. The Ministry and Judiciary will make efforts to expand the use of video technology for pre-trial appearances by in-custody defendants on criminal matters, from which further cost reductions may be achieved.

5. Savings identified through the above-noted measures and changes will be directed toward maintaining and improving access to the Provincial Court.
6. In the event that it is proposed that alternative facilities be utilized in closing locations for court sittings, those facilities must be first approved by the Judiciary.
7. The Ministry and the Judiciary will enter into a Protocol regarding a process for consultation on matters of administration affecting the Provincial Court.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Attorney General

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

*(original document signed April 19, 2002)*