



THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

November 18, 2002 – For immediate release

Carol Baird Ellan, Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia, today announced that all stipendiary justices of the peace in the province will no longer be assigned to justice of the peace duties. The duties formerly performed by them will now be performed by judges and judicial justices of the peace.

Stipendiary justices of the peace work part time on a call-out basis, holding a variety of occupations in addition to their responsibilities for the Court. They receive monthly stipends, determined by relative workload. Their primary services to the Court and their communities are to preside over after-hours bail hearings and issue search warrants.

The decision to revoke the assignments of stipendiary justices was made in light of two factors. Firstly, case law has raised some legal issues regarding whether the duties of bail and search warrants can continue to be assigned to stipendiary justices of the peace. Secondly, the decision is in keeping with a previous decision to provide a central model of justice delivery through the operation of a 24-hour Justice Centre, to issue search warrants and conduct bail hearings by FAX and telephone.

The Justice Centre has now been in operation since April 2001. As stipendiary justices of the peace resign or retire, their duties have been assigned to the Justice Centre. There have been no new appointments of stipendiary justices of the peace since 1998.

More information about the BC Provincial Court and justices of the peace may be found on the Court's website, at www.provincialcourt.bc.ca.

Office of the Chief Judge
501 – 700 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V7Y 1E8
Tel: (604) 660-2864

Contact: Gene Jamieson, Legal Officer