

INTEGRITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE:

MITIGATING THE RISKS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST, FRAUD & CORRUPTION

SUMMARY REPORT

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
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Executive Summary

On February 19, 2016, the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy organized and hosted a one-day professional development conference for local government related professionals on issues relating to conflict of interest, fraud and corruption. The conference was held at



UBC Robson Square

the UBC Robson Square Theatre and offered cost-effective attendance for remote participants through an online webinar feed. The recording of the webinar remains available for a fee and can be accessed via the events page on the ICCLR website, and directly through the link [here](#).

The conference discussed the legal standards and issues of conflict of interest, ethical behavior best practices, fraud detection methods for the public sector, techniques to mitigate the risks of fraud, tools and mechanisms to respond to these issues and how operations can be scaled for community growth and significant projects.

Presenters utilized anonymous polling to ask audience members sensitive questions regarding the presence of corruption and fraud in their own organizations, whether appropriate risk mitigation measures and policies exist within their respective organizations and their personal ethics in potential whistleblower positions. Participants were further encouraged to engage and network with speakers and one another through a question and answer period that concluded each session, and during networking breaks and lunch.

While presenters delivered their unique perspective to the issues of conflict of interest, fraud and corruption, they shared similar opinions and echoed each other's recommendations. Presenters agreed that corruption always starts small and innocently and snowballs into a large unethical issue. It is a normal human tendency for an individual to favour friends and the people whom they already trust, hence, it is essential to create safeguards within organizations such as an internal audit function to prevent these conflicts of interest from affecting public works.

Presenters emphasized the importance of leadership by example, and transparency within organizations to mitigate the risks of fraud and corruption. They highlighted that the law is merely the minimum standard and organizations must empower employees and protect whistleblowers to create a culture of mutual trust.

Welcoming Remarks

The **Honourable Anne Rowles**, Chair of the ICCLR Board, welcomed all participants and introduced Elder Larry Grant to acknowledge the traditional ancestral territory of the Musqueam people.



Elder Larry Grant and the Honourable Anne Rowles

Musqueam Welcome

Elder Larry Grant, Elder-in-Residence at the First Nations House of Learning, is a well-known teacher with respect to the Musqueam people, their language, history, culture and self-governance. Elder Grant welcomed all conference participants to the unceded land of the Musqueam people, and informed the audience that the Musqueam people have lived on the lands underlying UBC for approximately 4,000 years.

Keynote Address

Ms. Sonia Le Bel, Chief Prosecutor of the Charbonneau Commission, addressed the challenges faced by the Charbonneau Commission in dealing with collusion and corruption in the province of Quebec, and highlighted the recommendations most relevant for staff and officials working in local government. The Charbonneau Commission was a four-year long Commission that investigated corruption in Quebec's construction industry, and found links to organized crime's money laundering scheme, public service, engineering firms and political parties. Ms. Le Bel's keynote address provided attendees a unique opportunity to engage with the Charbonneau Commission's recommendations, as they are currently only available in French.

The goal of the Commission was to understand systems: to understand why and how these issues arose, and make recommendations on how to prevent them in the future. She explained that the Commission needed to move away from the standard definition of corruption in order to do so, and embrace a broader conception of corruption. However, this continued to pose difficulties in proving a direct link of evidence of corruption – an issue noted by Ms. Maegen Giltrow as also difficult to establish.

In 2015, Ms. Le Bel stated that the cost of public works in Montreal were 30-35% higher than in Toronto or Quebec City. When the Commission was physically present in Montreal, coincidentally, public works costs dropped 35%. The Commission discovered that a high proportion of public contracts in Montreal were being awarded to four cartels, and discovered links to the Mafia. These cartels were involved in a bid-rigging process, where they rotated which firms were awarded contracts. The Mafia assisted by keeping the market closed and therefore benefited from the contracts profits. In an insidious way, she explained, this collusion led to corruption.



Ms. Sonia Le Bel

Ms. Le Bel elaborated upon some of the challenges of the Commission such as understanding the context in which these schemes arose as they occurred 15 years ago, and the secondary damage the inquiries can cause to the reputations of individuals being investigated.

She highlighted the key lessons that were learned and noted that the culture of the organization is very important, and the establishment of good conduct within an organization is largely influenced by leaders. She used the *paperclip theory* to illustrate the snowball effect of corruption as it always starts with something small and innocent – an issue also noted by Mr. Jay Chalke during his presentation. She recommended organizations to raise awareness about the dangers inherent in these situations and reminded participants that the issue is never black and white.

Ms. Le Bel elaborated upon several issues pertaining to conflict of interest and the recommendations made by the Commission accordingly. These include the proximity of relationships, revolving doors between private and public actors, the length of service of public servants, and union officials serving as chairs of committee.

She concluded her presentation by highlighting the importance of protecting whistleblowers. The Charbonneau Commission encountered persistent problems in getting individuals to come forward. She recommended participants to help empower people to come forward and do everything possible to help, as corruption is a silent crime and without whistleblowers, remains silent.

Ms. Le Bel's presentation was followed by a lengthy question and answer period where participants asked engaging and thought provoking questions, that not only raised concerns in the context of Montreal, but their implications and local application.

Conflict of Interest: Legal Standards and Issues | Panel Discussion

Ms. Maegen Giltrow, Associate Counsel at Lidstone & Company, provided definitions and explanations of municipal corruption, breach of trust, and the criminal code. She explained the flexibility in terms of how strictly these legal standards are applied in small and Aboriginal communities, and highlighted the Courts' deference towards those who make decisions in good faith, and leave room for honest errors.



Ms. Maegen Giltrow

Ms. Giltrow explained that there is not always a legal remedy for every particular issue and encouraged participants to think about areas in which the law is not responding to a particular issue. She noted the conflict of interest provisions in the *Community Charter*, and highlighted the *Community Charter's* limited application to only elected officials and not local government staff. For them, the key legal source is the common law, and since employees owe a duty of fidelity and loyalty to their employer, conflicts of interests can provide complications for these employees.

Further, Ms. Giltrow utilized case law to emphasize the difficulties in demonstrating direct links to establish pecuniary interests that the law insists upon and reinstated Ms. Sonia Le Bel's similar

observations with the Charbonneau Commission. For example, in *King v Nanaimo*¹, it was established that prior campaign contributions do not constitute a conflict of interest.

Ms. Giltrow stated that through transparency, the government can avoid lawsuits and unnecessary delays. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of not relying on criminal law to root out systemic vulnerability and recommended local governments to look internally to reveal vulnerabilities and improve internal governance.

Ms. Nathalie Baker, Associate Counsel at Boughton Law, discussed tools at the public's disposal to ensure the government acts appropriately within its power. She noted the very short time limit for challenging local government decisions pursuant to municipal legislations; however these time limits do not apply to challenges brought under the *Judicial Review Procedures Act* (JRPA).

Throughout her presentation, Ms. Baker detailed some of the grounds on which a given action or decision can be challenged. The first, jurisdiction, where the key question is whether the decision maker has the power to do what they purport to have done and the standard is one of correctness. Second, the public can challenge the reasonableness of the decision, where the rationale is that local municipalities



Ms. Nathalie Baker

do not have unfettered discretion and cannot be permitted to make unreasonable decisions. She continued to explain the difficulties in pursuing these grounds, particularly when the subject matter is a bylaw. Third, a decision may be set aside if all the necessary procedural requirements have not been satisfied, and lastly, if the decision maker breached its duty of fairness.

Ms. Baker highlighted that in terms of risk management, the most simple and fundamental tool is transparency – echoing Ms. Giltrow's earlier comments. Through different case rulings, she outlined that when Council acts in secrecy, or doesn't allow the public full access to the documents used by the Council in making its decisions; it undermines the legitimacy of the Council, its decisions and raises unnecessary risks that can easily be avoided.

Ethical Behaviour from a Practitioner's Perspective | Presentation

Mr. Jerry Berry, Principal Advisor of Jerry Berry Consultants Inc., drew from his 35 years of experience in local government as a management consultant and his tenure as a City Manager of the City of Nanaimo to argue that traditional tools and policies may no longer be sufficient to prevent corruption. He emphasized the importance of the prevention process beginning at the local level, especially because if the public loses trust and faith in their local government, they will eventually lose faith in democracy.

¹ *King v Nanaimo (City)*, 2001 BCCA 610

He elaborated upon the problematic issues with the current system of shared and collective accountability of local government including, the lack of training for public servants on ethics, the use of confidentiality agreements which can preclude staff members from speaking in a transparent manner about potential problems, insufficient whistleblower protections, the onus on an individual to determine whether a conflict of interest exists, the centralization of media, and the lack of distinction between council members' public and private lives, especially in the sphere of social media.



Mr. Jerry Berry

Mr. Berry offered suggestions to improve the current system through the creation of an independent body that can assist with navigating issues involving potential conflicts, the creation of a provincial code of conduct for local government officials to provide guidance, the promotion of political neutrality through a model similar to Britain's where a three-tiered system provides guidance on which public positions can be involved in electioneering, and the need for meaningful consequences for misconduct if and when they occur. He concluded by reminding participants that the law is merely the minimum standard, and the need to lead by example.

Fraud Detection Methods for the Public Sector | Presentation

Ms. Jacklyn Davies, BC Leader of Investigative and Forensic Services at MNP LLP, began her presentation by stating that an ethical environment is the number one fraud prevention mechanism. It is not enough for organizations to simply have policies, procedures and other appropriate controls in place, but they must ensure that people are using them and that these controls are applied in a fair and equitable manner.

Throughout her presentation, Ms. Davies elaborated upon different fraud schemes, the controls that can prevent them from occurring and the red flags that can detect fraud when it is occurring. For procurement fraud, she noted red flags such as bid tailoring to preselect the vendor, unusually close relationships with vendors, suspiciously close bid amounts, usage of same vendors for an excessive timeframe, and variances in budget and actual contract awarded.

To control performance fraud, she recommended local governments to assign someone to monitor and provide oversight to ensure that a contract is being executed according to the terms of its agreement. Red flags can include, unusually high incidences of product failure, an employee acting outside their scope of duties, questionable documentation or if a contractor is slow or fails to provide adequate support.

To detect ghost vendors, Ms. Davies recommended examining the vendor list closely and ensuring a segregation of duties between the person organizing the vendors and the person processing the payments. Red flags include invoices produced from off-the-counter accounting programs, lack of detail for goods or services on the invoices, vague contact information and an address located in a residential area or a post office box.



Ms. Jacklyn Davies

She explained that red flags for program, grant or benefit fraud include incomplete information supporting the expenditures, supporting documents that do not conform to expectations and large unexplained variances when monies identified for a specific purpose are used for a different purpose.

Common red flags of payroll-related fraud noted by Ms. Davies include a lack of a valid email account and visible work product or performance, and the inability to contact an employee. Lastly, for expense claim fraud red flags can include copies of receipts rather than originals, duplicate receipts, a credit card statement and not the transaction receipts, an unusual amount of adjustments to expense claims and a mismatched expense claim to calendar.

Ms. Davies concluded her presentation by outlining her top three fraud detection methods: management review, internal audits and tips from employees or third parties. She emphasized the importance of educated and empowered employees to identify conflicts, and an organizations role to encourage and protects these employees.

Mitigating the Risks of Fraud: Due Diligence Requirements | Interactive Presentation

Mr. Yvon Dandurand, Fellow and Senior Associate of the ICCLR and Associate Professor at the School of Criminology at the University of the Fraser Valley, presented a risk mitigation approach to fraud and corruption. Through anonymous polling, Mr. Dandurand invited participants to assess their own organization's risk mitigation approach, including the organization's ability to protect whistleblowers, as well as their own willingness to report suspected incidents of corruption and fraud. The responses indicated a general lack of preparedness among the organizations represented by the participants.



Mr. Yvon Dandurand

Mr. Dandurand briefly presented the main elements of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and noted the importance of using such international conventions to encourage governments to adopt corruption risk mitigation and crime prevention they would otherwise not be inclined to adopt. Such international instruments are also important to help countries cooperate more effectively in addressing these issues at the international level. Finally, reference to UNCAC and other similar international instruments can encourage political leaders and elected officials to live up to a higher standard of integrity.

Mr. Dandurand emphasized the importance of an integrated organization-wide approach to manage the risks of fraud and corruption as part of a broader risk management strategy. A good risk mitigation strategy is typically built on a careful assessment of an organization's vulnerability, risks and exposure to these risks. For example, one apparent risk to municipal governments that might be specific to them comes to the fact that they often manage a grant program, or that their responsibilities extend to funding and managing the police function. The risk mitigation strategy must then be implemented consistently and without political interference, and monitored and tested regularly.

Mr. Dandurand also introduced briefly several corruption and fraud prevention methods that can be implemented at the local level, including a visible commitment from leaders and managers to corruption prevention, proactive means of detecting corruption through data analytics and internal audits, proofing of all regulations and policies to test whether they are creating opportunities for corruption or fraud, and ensuring that measures exist to encourage whistleblowing and protect whistleblowers. He stressed the importance of monitoring compliance and conducting integrity testing of the various components of an organization risk mitigation strategy.

Tools and Mechanisms for Responding to Conflict of Interest, Fraud & Corruption | Panel Discussion

Mr. Jay Chalke, Ombudsperson of British Columbia, began the panel discussion by reminding participants that although there is a tendency to think of fraud and corruption as something grand and sinister, it is more of an ordinary occurrence and is simply, “giving or accepting some kind of advantage that is inconsistent with a public duty.”

He explained that the Office of the Ombudsperson is focused on the remedial aspect of corruption and has considerable persuasive power to bring about positive organizational improvements. The Office aims to prevent future incidents of fraud and corruption by building better systems. Mr. Chalke explained that the approach is generally the same when the Office deals with conflicts of interest and other questionable positions. Mr. Chalke concluded by informing participants that in March 2016 the Office will be releasing a report providing guidance on local government bylaw enforcement including practices to avoid conflict of interest.

Inspector Trevor Dusterhoft, Officer in Charge of Investigative Standards and Practices, detailed the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s (RCMP) anti-fraud strategy and the issues they have encountered. Inspector Dusterhoft noted that it is rare for complainants to come forward and that prospective complainants often fear losing their job. He explained the difficulties of proving allegations of fraud such as proving a marked departure from a poor judgement call compared to a wrongful conduct and that there is limited internal expertise within the RCMP for fraud and corruption cases.

Inspector Dusterhoft detailed the information the RCMP considers before taking an investigation. For example, there are no thresholds, such as monetary thresholds that must be met before the RCMP undergoes an investigation, but witnesses must be willing to provide information.

Mr. Mark Tatchell, Chief Administrative Officer of the Village of Tahsis, and a former Deputy Auditor



From left to right: Mr. Jay Chalke, Inspector Trevor Dusterhoft, Mr. Mark Tatchell, Mayor Richard Walton

General for Local Government, discussed the significance of the *Auditor General for Local Government Act (AGLG Act)* and the risks that can be endemic to small municipal governments. The AGLG Act, which was enacted in 2012, provides for performance audits of local governments, makes those audits public, and

allows for the sharing of potential evidence of a provincial offence uncovered during the performance audit. As it can be particularly challenging for small local governments to meet demands to develop and implement robust policies and procedures, the Act allows for local governments to proactively request the AGLG to perform audits. Mr. Tatchell noted that in 2017 the Minister will be reviewing the Act, which is an important opportunity to assess whether the AGLG Act is fulfilling its potential and to determine how it can improve.

Mayor Richard Walton, of the District of North Vancouver, elaborated on the importance of a good and robust control system as a way of protecting employees. For this an internal audit function is important as is ensuring that employees know who to approach with whistleblower information and to ensure that conflict of interest and other policies apply to everyone in the organization. Furthermore, he emphasized that the best prevention against fraud or corruption is for those in public office to ensure that an organization's culture is based on trust.

The panel concluded with discussion from audience and webinar participants. On the potential role of provincial leadership on codes of conduct, panelists agreed that a framework is beneficial; however, a mechanism is also needed to encourage people to come forward with any concerns and it is uncertain whether a conduct can truly be enforced to shape human behavior. Regardless, such a code of conduct would require civil discourse and consultation from both sides.

Scaling Operations for Community Growth and Significant Projects | Panel Discussion

Ms. Mindy Smith, General Manager of Corporate Services for the City of Fort St. John, began the panel discussion by explaining that the local government's role is to deliver essential and necessary services that promote community well-being with the end goal of achieving a certain quality of life. Ms. Smith explained the suite of legislative requirements for municipalities that exist to ensure public interest, consistent application of procedures and approvals free from political influence.



Ms. Mindy Smith

With the expansion of budgets for infrastructure, particularly due to the broadening availability of the "Build Canada" fund, she explained the new risks municipalities are exposed to, such as undergoing larger projects without the capacity to properly handle them. She continued to outline the different kinds of municipal developments, the challenges each pose from developers, risk mitigation techniques and best practices for each.

Ms. Heather Avison, Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Terrace continued this conversation by highlighting Terrace's astronomical growth in recent years with the mention of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). Ms. Avison identified evolving risks for potential abuse of power and conflicts of interest for the City of Terrace by explaining additional challenges currently faced by the City such as land speculation, external pressures and added workloads; and expanded upon risk mitigation techniques for each. Through Terrace's challenging temptation to use the land for low-value use, such as pipelines, instead of

high-value use, she highlighted critical issues such as the need for internal expertise and transparency within the municipality to ensure that short-term interests do not prevail over long-term interests.

Ms. Dianne Hunter, City Manager of Fort St. John, spoke from the experience of responding to fraud and corruption at both the staff and council level, and explained the powerful external pressures that the City is subject to.

Ms. Hunter explained that the only way municipalities can get to the bargaining table is to try to build relationships however, this is precarious as proximity in relationships can lead to problems and questions such as ‘who is influencing whom?’ Due to the lack of clear guidance as to when one crosses the line, she emphasized the need for all municipalities to have ongoing and robust discussions about ethics at all levels, and echoed the beliefs of earlier presenters of the importance of organizational culture, and transparency.



From left to right: Ms. Dianne Hunter, Ms. Mindy Smith, Ms. Heather Avison

Mr. Ken Bjorgaard, Principal of K&E Associates, drawing from his 24 years of local government experience in senior management roles, presented the roles of Council to include: considering the impact of large projects, and dealing with public pressures by essentially hearing both sides of the story. He detailed the key concerns when considering development, the complexities in managing projects and provided participants with risk mitigation techniques such as solid agreements to explicitly define relationships and to keep projects on track.

During the question and answer period, panelists agreed with a participant that public interest is indeed a problematic concept as there are as many public interests as stakeholders. Panelists reassured participants that as long as the process is open and transparent, the end decision will be perceived legitimate, regardless of whether or not one agrees with the substantive outcome.

Closing Remarks

The **Honourable Anne Rowles** concluded the conference by thanking the presenters for bringing their different perspective on the issues discussed, and thanking the Planning Committee and volunteers for their hard work.

*The webinar is now available for on-demand viewing for a \$125 fee.
To learn more about how the on-demand video works [please click here](#) or visit icclr.law.ubc.ca and click “EVENTS.” To register and immediately receive access to the webinar [please click here](#).*

APPENDIX I: Speaker Biographies



Heather Avison; Chief Administrative Officer, City of Terrace

Heather Avison has 28 years of service with the City of Terrace in various capacities. Historically a robust, forestry-based community, Terrace has been experiencing an economic downturn for the past fifteen plus years. The economy of Terrace turned around in 2011 with the mention of three little letters “LNG” ... Liquefied Natural Gas. Since that time Heather has had the challenge of managing growth in the community to a degree that has never been seen before, still with a small operating budget and a meager industrial tax base, putting the bulk of the burden on commercial and residential taxpayers.



Nathalie Baker; Associate Counsel, Boughton Law

Nathalie Baker is a litigator practicing primarily in the areas of municipal and administrative law. She has appeared before all levels of court in British Columbia, representing landowners, developers, citizens groups and business owners on a wide range of land use and other regulatory matters arising under the Local Government Act, the Community Charter and the Vancouver Charter. She also represents clients before administrative tribunals, including the Board of Variance.



Jerry Berry; Principal Advisor, Jerry Berry Consultants Inc.

Jerry is a well-known management consultant and educator specializing in local government issues and practices; with an emphasis on governance. During Jerry’s tenure as City Manager, the City of Nanaimo received significant recognition and won numerous awards; particularly in strategic planning, environmental protection, community participation and innovative use of technology. Jerry has been a faculty member in Capilano University’s Local Government School of Public Administration for the past 12 years. Currently he lectures on, “Ethics and the Responsible Local Government Professional” (PADM 307) at venues throughout B.C.



Ken Bjorgaard; Principal, K& E Business Services Inc.

Having worked in local government for the past 24 years in a variety of senior management roles, including many years as a Director of Finance and Chief Administrative Officer, Ken is now applying his background and experience as a local government consultant. During his tenure in local government, he worked for a number of communities, large and small, in bringing about rapid change and progress in terms of both governance and operations. As an independent consultant, he is now focused on improving service delivery and accountability in the public sector, especially in communities where there is a lack of capacity to lead change.



Jay Chalke; Ombudsperson, British Columbia

From 2011 to 2015 Jay led the Justice Services Branch of the Ministry of Justice and was responsible for delivering reforms to justice services and fostering dialogue and collaboration across the justice system. Prior to his appointment with the Ministry of Justice, Jay was the Public Guardian and Trustee from 2000 to 2011. During this time, he was instrumental in implementing legislative reforms as well as changes to modernize service delivery, improve collaboration and enhance public accountability. Earlier in his career, Jay held a variety of public sector positions in British Columbia, Ontario and New Brunswick.



Yvon Dandurand; Associate Professor, School of Criminology, University of Fraser Valley / Fellow and Senior Associate, ICCLR

Yvon recently served as a Member of the BC Blue Ribbon Panel on Crime Reduction and serves as Member of the Abbotsford Police Board. Yvon has been involved in numerous projects in Canada and abroad, including several projects and studies in the areas of organized crime, human trafficking, witness protection, corruption, crime prevention, policing, and corrections. His work includes several studies and projects relating to the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and to practical means of mitigating the risk of corruption within and outside the criminal justice system. He developed the UNODC Corruption Prevention Checklist for the Organization of a Major Public Event.



Jacklyn Davies; BC Leader, Investigative & Forensic Services, MNP LLP

Jacklyn has more than 26 years of experience in public practice, including 17 years as a forensic investigator. She has conducted significant forensic investigations into allegations of employee misconduct, kickbacks, misappropriation of funds, asset tracing in Canada and in foreign jurisdictions, look-back examinations for money laundering and false reporting of financial information. Jacklyn is also proficient in conducting fraud vulnerability reviews where an organization's exposure to fraud and misconduct are identified. A respected leader in her field, Jacklyn has also been qualified as an expert in BC Supreme Court.



Inspector Trevor Dusterhoft; in charge of Office of Investigative Standards and Practices, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

Inspector Trevor Dusterhoft has over 28 years of experience with the RCMP, all in the Vancouver area. In 1995 he transferred to Commercial Crime at Vancouver HQ and worked fraud cases until 2005. In 2005 he transferred to the Integrated Gang Task Force. Then in 2006 he transferred back to Commercial Crime where he was the Team Leader on the Integrated Counterfeit Enforcement team. From 2007 to 2009 he was the Team leader of Project Emptor, investigating cross-border frauds. In 2009 he was promoted to S/Sgt in charge of sensitive political investigations and frauds on government. In January 2016 he was promoted to in charge of OISP.



Elder Larry Grant; Elder-in-Residence, First Nations House of Learning

Elder Larry Grant is from the Musqueam First Nation in Vancouver, BC. He plays a key role in educating others about the First Peoples that live in this area. He is also an Adjunct Professor in the UBC First Nations Languages Program, and the Language and Culture Consultant for Musqueam First Nation. He is well-known and much appreciated for welcoming students, faculty, staff, and guests to the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Musqueam, hən'q'əmin'əm'-speaking people.



Maegen Giltrow; Associate Counsel, Lidstone & Company

Maegen advises and represents local governments and First Nations on a range of issues with a particular focus on governance and environmental matters. The scope of her litigation practice includes judicial review, bylaw prosecution, the enforcement of aboriginal treaty rights, conflict of interest and fiduciary duty claims, and representation of local governments before administrative tribunals regarding major resource development projects. She has also helped to develop inaugural laws for self-governance under treaty, including the establishment of one of the first indigenous dispute resolution tribunals in B.C.



Dianne Hunter; City Manager, Fort St. John

Dianne started her career in local government in 1978 and over the span of 36 years has gained experience in two provinces, five municipalities and one regional district. Throughout her career, she has held various positions in planning, human resources and administration. Her last two positions have been as the CAO in northern resource based communities which have presented her with challenges and opportunities that are unique to these types of communities. Dianne has also held the position of President for both the West Kootenay and North Central Municipal Officers' Associations and served for five years at the Provincial level as an Executive Member on the Board of the BC Municipal Officers' Association. Dianne is an active member of the International Institute of City Management Association as well as the Local Government Management Association of BC.



Sonia Le Bel; Chief Prosecutor, Charbonneau Commission

Ms. Sonia Le Bel has been a lawyer since 1991 and upon joining the Commission, practiced for over 20 years in what is now the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions. Ms. LeBel has acted in several areas of criminal law, but has specialized mainly in offenses related to drugs and organized crime. She has extensive experience as a litigator before all levels, including the Supreme Court. Since 2009, Ms. LeBel has been a part of the team of the Montreal office, where she deals with murder cases. She is president of the Bar of Montreal infractions committee and a member of the committee for ten years.



Honourable Anne Rowles; Chair of the Board, ICCLR

Anne Rowles was appointed to the County Court of Vancouver in 1983, to the Supreme Court of BC in 1986 and to the Court of Appeal in 1991. She has served on the Executive of the Vancouver Bar Association, on the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Society, the BC Courthouse Library Society, and the Justice Education Society and was a Bencher of the BC Law Society. At the time of her retirement from the BC Court of Appeal in January 2012, Ms. Rowles had served on the bench for 28 years. Since 2008, she has been the representative of the BC Attorney- General on the Board of the ICCLR and since 2012 has been the Chair of the Board.



Mindy Smith; General Manager of Corporate Services, Fort St. John

Mindy is a municipal leader with 17 years of progressive experience. In her career, Mindy has advised Councils, Boards, CAO's and senior staff in the areas of internal, external and performance audits; financial management; corporate stewardship and has led development of high performance teams and corporate strategic plans. Mindy has trained BC municipalities on financial sustainability and asset management; has identified and implemented process improvements; and has strengthened municipal finances. She has developed police services, fire services and information technology services plans in preparation of future expansion in a resource community. She has also worked to improve planning processes and has developed policies and procedures for sound governance.



Mark Tatchell; Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Tahsis

Prior to his short-lived retirement in 2015, Mark was the Deputy Auditor General for Local Government where he led the planning, execution and reporting of the first performance audits of BC local governments. During his 28 year career with the BC government, Mark held executive director positions in several ministries including Attorney General, Public Safety and Solicitor General, Community, Sport and Cultural Development, and Citizens' Services and Open Government. An open government project he led received the 2010 Institute of Public Administration of Canada/ Deloitte Silver Medal Award.



Mayor Richard Walton; District of North Vancouver

Richard Walton is serving his fourth term as Mayor of North Vancouver District, and is in his 21st year of elected public service. Mayor Walton is a Chartered Accountant and in 2012 was honoured with the designation of FCA for lifetime achievement. He has taught and administered within the public school system, worked as an international tour guide in Scandinavia and Russia, and also served in senior management positions in the retail, construction and manufacturing sectors. In 2011 Mayor Walton received, on behalf of North Vancouver District, the United Nations Sasakawa Award for World Leadership in the area of Planning for and Responding to Natural Disasters. He served as chair of Translink Mayors' Council from 2010 to 2014 and Vice-Chair of Metro Vancouver from 2009 – 2012.