



Supreme Court of British Columbia

Annual Report 2004

The Supreme Court of British Columbia
800 Smithe Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2E1
www.courts.gov.bc.ca

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JURISDICTION OF THE COURT

The Supreme Court of British Columbia is the province's superior trial court. It is a court of general and inherent jurisdiction and hears both civil and criminal cases as well as appeals from Provincial Court. The Supreme Court is a circuit court in which all the judges and masters travel throughout the province to preside over cases. The Supreme Court sits in eight judicial districts and has resident judges in the following locations: Vancouver, Chilliwack, Cranbrook, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Nelson, New Westminster, Prince George, Prince Rupert and Victoria. The Supreme Court also sits in the following additional locations where there is no resident judge or master: Campbell River, Courtenay, Dawson Creek, Duncan, Fort Nelson, Fort St. John, Golden, Penticton, Port Alberni, Powell River, Quesnel, Revelstoke, Rossland, Salmon Arm, Smithers, Terrace, Vernon and Williams Lake.

The Supreme Court currently consists of the Chief Justice, Associate Chief Justice, 82 full-time and 16 supernumerary judges. Full-time judges are required to sit 32 weeks a year, with 20 non-sitting weeks. Judges who have obtained the age of 65 and have 15 years of service, or who have obtained the age of 70 and have 10 years of service, may elect to continue in office as a supernumerary judge until mandatory retirement at age 75. Supernumerary judges are required to sit for 16 weeks per year. New judges are appointed upon the retirement of a full-time judge or when a full-time judge elects supernumerary status. Appointments are made by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Federal Minister of Justice. The Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs oversees the appointment process on behalf of the Minister of Justice.

The Supreme Court also has 14 masters. Masters are judicial officers appointed by Provincial Order-in-Council on the recommendation of the Attorney General after consultation with the Chief Justice. Masters preside in civil chambers and registrar hearings and decide on pre-trial motions and procedural orders.

Members of the Supreme Court of British Columbia

<p>The Honourable Chief Justice Brenner The Honourable Associate Chief Justice Dohm The Honourable Mr. Justice Bouck* The Honourable Mr. Justice Paris* The Honourable Mr. Justice Lander* The Honourable Mr. Justice Cohen The Honourable Mr. Justice Shaw* The Honourable Mr. Justice Maczko* The Honourable Mr. Justice Stewart The Honourable Mr. Justice Hood* The Honourable Mr. Justice Fraser* The Honourable Mr. Justice R.R. Holmes* The Honourable Mr. Justice Parrett The Honourable Mr. Justice Melvin* The Honourable Mr. Justice Wong The Honourable Mr. Justice Lamperson* The Honourable Mr. Justice Drost* The Honourable Mr. Justice McKinnon The Honourable Madam Justice Boyd The Honourable Mr. Justice Curtis The Honourable Mr. Justice Singh* The Honourable Mr. Justice Owen-Flood* The Honourable Mr. Justice Melnick The Honourable Mr. Justice Preston* The Honourable Mr. Justice Scarth* The Honourable Madam Justice Allan The Honourable Madam Justice Sinclair-Prowse The Honourable Mr. Justice Josephson The Honourable Madam Justice Gill The Honourable Mr. Justice Warren The Honourable Mr. Justice Meiklem The Honourable Madam Justice Dorgan The Honourable Mr. Justice Vickers* The Honourable Mr. Justice Blair The Honourable Mr. Justice Tysoe The Honourable Mr. Justice Shabbits The Honourable Madam Justice Kirkpatrick The Honourable Madam Justice Koenigsberg The Honourable Mr. Justice Edwards The Honourable Madam Justice Baker The Honourable Mr. Justice R.D. Wilson The Honourable Mr. Justice Sigurdson The Honourable Mr. Justice Williamson The Honourable Madam Justice Humphries The Honourable Madam Justice Dillon The Honourable Mr. Justice A.F. Wilson The Honourable Mr. Justice Romilly The Honourable Mr. Justice Taylor The Honourable Mr. Justice Davies The Honourable Madam Justice Satanove The Honourable Madam Justice Stromberg-Stein The Honourable Mr. Justice Cole</p>	<p>The Honourable Madam Justice MacKenzie The Honourable Mr. Justice Grist The Honourable Mr. Justice Bauman The Honourable Madam Justice Morrison The Honourable Mr. Justice McEwan The Honourable Madam Justice Beames The Honourable Madam Justice Loo The Honourable Mr. Justice Burnyeat The Honourable Madam Justice D. Smith The Honourable Mr. Justice Pitfield The Honourable Mr. Justice Macaulay The Honourable Mr. Justice Ralph The Honourable Madam Justice Bennett The Honourable Mr. Justice Chamberlist The Honourable Madam Justice Martinson The Honourable Madam Justice L. Smith The Honourable Mr. Justice Halfyard The Honourable Madam Justice Neilson The Honourable Mr. Justice Powers The Honourable Mr. Justice Metzger The Honourable Mr. Justice Brooke The Honourable Mr. Justice Cullen The Honourable Madam Justice Garson The Honourable Madam Justice H. Holmes The Honourable Madam Justice Ross The Honourable Mr. Justice Slade The Honourable Mr. Justice Joyce The Honourable Madam Justice Wedge The Honourable Mr. Justice Crawford The Honourable Mr. Justice Goepel The Honourable Madam Justice Gray The Honourable Mr. Justice Barrow The Honourable Mr. Justice Rogers The Honourable Mr. Justice Groberman The Honourable Madam Justice Brown The Honourable Mr. Justice Truscott The Honourable Madam Justice Gerow The Honourable Mr. Justice Williams The Honourable Mr. Justice Masuhara The Honourable Madam Justice Ballance The Honourable Mr. Justice Rice The Honourable Mr. Justice Bernard The Honourable Mr. Justice Kelleher The Honourable Mr. Justice Ehrcke The Honourable Mr. Justice Johnston The Honourable Mr. Justice Brine The Honourable Mr. Justice Silverman The Honourable Madam Justice Fisher The Honourable Madam Justice Arnold-Bailey The Honourable Madam Justice Gropper The Honourable Madam Justice Russell * <i>Indicates Supernumerary</i></p>
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MASTERS OF THE SUPREME COURT

<p>Master Donaldson Master McCallum Master Patterson Master Bolton</p>	<p>Master Barber Master Tokarek Master Bishop Master Nitikman</p>	<p>Master Baker Master Groves Master Scarth Master Brine</p>	<p>Master Hyslop Master Keighley Master Caldwell</p>
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Judicial Staff Of British Columbia Supreme Court 2004

Office of the Chief Justice and Associate Chief Justice

Linda Larson
Lois McLean
Judith Hoffman

Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice
Executive Assistant to the Associate Chief Justice
Law Officer

Judicial Administration

Alix Campbell
Margaret Neuhaus
Colin Sharwood
Tammy McCullough
Yvonne Samek
Michelle Sam

Director
Manager of Support Services
Manager of Information Technology and Finance
Secretary
Secretary
Secretary

Registrars

William McCallum
Carolyn Bouck
Murray Blok
Kathryn Sainty
Dawn Levert

Master and Registrar of the Supreme Court
District Registrar (Victoria)
District Registrar (Vancouver)
District Registrar (New Westminster)
Deputy District Registrar/Manager,
Provincial Registrar's Program

Information Analyst & Statistician

Dr. Shihong Mu

Judicial Administrative Assistants

Vancouver

Diane Berry, Monelle Clements, Joanne Ivans
Sharon Dunn, Iolanda Organ, Adrien Amadeo, Linda Peter, Linda Mann,
Evelyn Mathesius, Tannes Gentner, Felipa Ibarrola, Wanda Lam, Beverlee
Lea, Samantha Servis, Brenda Vawda, Wanda Wilk, Mary Williams
Gail Woods, Rita Wikkerink, Pat Lloyd, Maeghan Kenney

Chilliwack
Cranbrook
Kamloops
Kelowna
Nanaimo
Nelson
New Westminster

Laura Burgess
Jeanne Brock
Jane Raggatt, Pamela Ranger
Lana Pardue, Sharon LeBlanc
Pat McKeeman, Patricia Robison
Kathie Pereverzoff
Margaret Henderson, Stella Phillip, Sylvia Wilson,
Kimberley Jensen, Debbie Soroka
Susan Johns, Kelly Parmar
Norma Heke

Prince George
Prince Rupert
Victoria

Karen Gurney, Sandra Smith, Cherry Luscombe,
Victoria Osborne-Hughes

Trial Coordination

Cindy Friesen
Shera Lee
Stefanie Wyer

Manager, Trial Coordination
Reserve Judgment Clerk
Assistant to Manager, Trial Coordination

Vancouver - Civil

Sue Smolen
Brenda McPhee
Christine Hutton
Carmen Pascuzzi
Anna Stokes
Kathy Moir
Kim Gunn
Julia Ross

Trial Coordinator
Assistant Deputy Trial Coordinator
Case Management Clerk
Family Clerk
Pre-trial Conference Clerk
Registrar's Office Booking Clerk
Secretary/Typist
Acting Data Entry Clerk

Vancouver – Criminal

Mary Ellen Pearce
Lisa Wrinch
Irene McLeod

Trial Coordinator
Assistant Trial Coordinator
Assistant Trial Coordinator

Chilliwack

Margaret Fisher

Trial Coordinator

Campbell River

Diane Utendale

Trial Coordinator

Kamloops

Dave McCoy

Trial Coordinator

Kelowna

Sandy Sanderson
Barb Turik

Trial Coordinator
Assistant Trial Coordinator

Nanaimo

Cheryl Turner

Trial Coordinator

New Westminster

Laura Weninger
Tanya Andres
Allison Donnelly

Trial Coordinator
Trial Coordinator
Assistant Trial Coordinator

Prince George

Pamela Wallin

Trial Coordinator

Victoria

Judy MacFarlane
Tania Linkes

Trial Coordinator
Assistant Trial Coordinator

Judgment Database Office

Heidi Hoefner

Management Consultant

Alix Campbell

Judges Library

Diane Lemieux
Carmen De Olazaval (Annotator)
Angela Allwood

Supreme Court Ushers

Gerry Cumming, David O'Brien,
Jamie Sanford, Donna Cox, Marlene DeBoer

IT Consultant

Steve Blanchard

CHANGES IN THE COURT'S COMPLEMENT IN 2004

Changes in the Court's Complement in 2004

In 2004, three members of the court retired from the bench:

- The Honourable Mr. Justice Harvey
- The Honourable Mr. Justice Hutchison
- Master Rochelle (Shelley) C. Nitikman

Madam Justice Georgina Quijano died on January 17, 2005.

The Honourable Madam Justice Quijano was born in California in 1942. She earned a degree in anthropology from San Francisco State College in 1968. Soon after her graduation she relocated to Canada. She entered Osgoode Law School and graduated in 1975. She began practice at the Vancouver firm of Shrum, Little & Heberton where she practiced both family and civil litigation. She was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1992. Throughout her career she was an active member of the legal community. She was a member of the board of directors of the Handicapped Industries Guild and the Legal Education and Action Fund as well as a member of the Law Society's Subcommittee on gender bias. She was a frequent contributor to Continuing Legal Education courses and lectured for the Bar Admission Course and later, the Professional Legal Training Course.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Hutchison was born in Victoria in 1931. He attended the University of Washington graduating in 1953 with a degree in economics. During his youth, he was an impressive athlete and represented Canada in track at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics. In 1953, he entered the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia receiving his degree in 1956. He practiced in Victoria and was a partner in Crease & Co. During his time at the bar he was active with the Victoria Bar Association and served as Director of the Legal Aid Society. He was appointed to the County Court in December 1982. He was elevated to the Supreme Court on July 1, 1990. Mr. Justice Hutchison retired on December 31, 2004.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Harvey was born in 1931 in Vancouver. He took his undergraduate and law training at the University of British Columbia receiving a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1953. He practiced primarily with the firm of Russell & DuMoulin but took a leave to join the Vancouver City Prosecutors' Office on Main Street from 1956 to 1959. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1982. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he served as chairman of the British Columbia Racing Commission. He also served on the Supreme Court Rules Revision Committee and lectured for the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia. Mr. Justice Harvey was appointed to the Supreme Court on October 3, 1989. Mr. Justice Harvey retired on October 4, 2004.

Master Nitikman received her law degree from the University of Manitoba in 1974. She articulated with the firm of Shrum, Little and Heberton and thereafter joined the Legal Aid Society as a staff lawyer. She went on to develop a private family law practice and then became in-house counsel with the Vancouver Provincial Family Court from 1978 to 1980. In

1980 she was appointed as a Vice-Chair of the Workers' Compensation Board of Review. In 1986, she returned to school to obtain her Masters in Law from Dalhousie University. Thereafter, she became the Vice-Chair of the Industrial Relations Council. In March of 1993, she returned to family law practice as a lawyer with the Legal Services Society. She was appointed as Master of the Supreme Court on December 4, 1996. Master Nitikman retired on April 12, 2004.

In 2004, four new judges and one master were welcomed to the bench:

The Honourable Mr. Justice Robert Johnston was appointed to the Supreme Court at Vancouver on November 26, 2004. Mr. Justice Johnston received a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Western Ontario in 1971, and was admitted to the British Columbia Bar in 1972. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1986. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Justice Johnston was a partner with the firm of Cox Taylor in Victoria, where he practised both civil and criminal litigation. In the past, Mr. Justice Johnston served as Treasurer of the Law Society of British Columbia and on the Executive of the Victoria Bar Association. He also served as Director and Chair of the Legal Services Society of British Columbia, and as an elected member of the British Columbia Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. In addition, he was a member of the Victoria Legal Aid Committee.

The Honourable Mr. Justice David Brine was appointed to the Supreme Court in New Westminster on November 26, 2004. Mr. Justice Brine received a Bachelor of Laws from the University of British Columbia in 1973 and a Masters in Law from King's College at the University of London in 1974. He was admitted to the British Columbia Bar in 1975, and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2000. In 2001, Mr. Justice Brine was appointed as a Master of the Supreme Court in New Westminster. Prior to this appointment, he was a partner in the firm of McQuarrie Hunter, where he practised primarily in the area of civil litigation. Mr. Justice Brine has served as President of the New Westminster Bar Association and Chair of the Board of Governors of the Law Foundation of British Columbia. In addition, he was a member of the Executive of the British Columbia Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. He has also been an instructor for the Professional Legal Training Course.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Arne Silverman was appointed to the Supreme Court at Vancouver on November 26, 2004. Mr. Justice Silverman received a Bachelor of Laws from the University of British Columbia in 1973, and a Masters of Law from the London School of Economics in 1974. He was admitted to the British Columbia Bar in 1975, and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2002. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Justice Silverman was a sole practitioner and concentrated primarily in the areas of criminal and immigration law. In the past, he has been a volunteer lawyer at the Carnegie Center Pro Bono Clinic as well as an instructor with Continuing Legal Education. He has also been an instructor for the Professional Legal Training Program.

The Honourable Madam Justice Barbara Fisher was appointed to the Supreme Court in New Westminster on November 26, 2004. Madam Justice Fisher received a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Victoria in 1981 and was admitted to the British Columbia Bar in 1983. At the time of her appointment, she was with the firm of Blake, Cassels & Graydon, where she practiced primarily in the areas of administrative and aboriginal law, as well as litigation, mediation and negotiation. Prior to that, she served as British Columbia Treaty Commissioner, General Counsel with the Ombudsman for British Columbia, as well General Counsel with the Information and Privacy Commissioner of British Columbia. In the past, Madam Justice Fisher was Chair of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Society of British Columbia, Chair of the Hospital Appeals Board, a member of the Forest Appeals Commission, as well as a member of the British Columbia Branch of the Canadian Bar Association. She has also been an instructor at the University of British Columbia Law School.

Master Peter Keighley was appointed master of the Supreme Court in New Westminster on March 8, 2004. Master Keighley earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Simon Fraser University in 1970. Thereafter, he entered the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia and obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1973. Prior to his appointment, he was a partner in the Abbotsford firm of Rosborough & Company. During his time at the bar, Master Keighley served as an elected member of the national and provincial councils of the Canadian Bar Association. He was also a bencher of the Law Society and at the time of his appointment was serving as second vice-president. He was also a director of the Valley Home Support Society and as director and past president of the Abbotsford Football Club.

Report of the Honourable Chief Justice Brenner

The Annual Report provides me with the opportunity to review the activities of the court in 2004. This past year has brought many important changes for the administration and work of the court. Many of these changes are in response to concerns that our court is becoming less accessible and relevant as the costs of bringing a dispute to this court for resolution rise beyond the point that makes sense for the parties involved. Our court is very concerned about the costs litigants face, particularly, the non-corporate litigant, or the non-insurance company litigant, when they come to our court.

In 2004, I continued to be actively involved in the Justice Review Task Force. This group, made up of representatives of key players in the justice system, meets on a regular basis to explore options for reform with the objective of making the justice system more responsive, accessible and cost-effective. The JRTF web site is found at www.bcjusticereview.org. Of particular interest to this court, is the Civil Justice Reform Working Group which was struck by the JRTF in September 2004 to examine ways in which the Supreme Court can become more responsive and cost-effective. I co-chair this group together with Deputy Attorney General Allan Seckel. Madam Justice Gerow and Master McCallum represent our court. The group also includes representatives of the Law Society of BC, the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association and the Provincial Court of BC. The work of the group is guided by the following principles:

Accessibility: dispute resolution processes, including trials, that are affordable, understandable and timely.

Proportionality: procedures that are proportional to the matters in issue.

Fairness: parties should have equal and adequate opportunities to assert or defend their rights.

Public confidence: parties should be confident that the civil justice system will meet their needs and is trustworthy and accountable.

Efficiency: ensuring the civil justice system uses public resources wisely and efficiently.

Justice: ensuring the truth, to the greatest extent possible, is ascertained and applied to produce a just resolution.

The group aims to report on its findings to the JRTF in December 2005.

Also of interest to this court is the work of the Family Justice Reform Working Group struck by the JRTF in 2003. Over the past year, this group has continued to explore options for fundamental change in the family law system that will better serve the parents and children who access it. It will also re-examine the concept of unified family court and will make recommendations on the delivery of family justice services outside of the court system, such as non-adversarial and settlement-oriented processes. Madam Justice Beames represents our court on the working group which is expected to release recommendations for changes to the family court system in BC in the spring of 2005.

Another initiative to respond to the increasing costs of litigation in our court is the development of new expedited procedures for claims under \$100,000. As set out in the Rules Committee report, Rule 68 will run as a two-year pilot project in four registries: Vancouver, Victoria, Prince George and Nelson. Rule 68 places limits on pre-trial procedures and draws upon the successful case conference model used in family law proceedings under Rule 60E by providing for case management conferences at which judges and masters may make orders to streamline and expedite the proceeding.

The Rule 60E family law pilot project which allows for Judicial Case Conferences in family law proceedings continued throughout 2004. During the past year, the Family Law Committee conducted an evaluation of the project in order to come up with a number of recommendations, including whether the pilot project should become a permanent feature of our rules. Members of the bar, litigants and members of the bench were surveyed regarding their experiences with Judicial Case Conferences. An evaluation report together with a number of preliminary conclusions has been released and will be considered by the court at an upcoming court meeting.

To ensure that our court is responsive to the needs of litigants, we continue to modernize our systems and take advantage of technology. In July, we launched the new Supreme Court Scheduling System (SCSS) which has significantly streamlined the assignment of judges and masters and scheduling of matters before the court. SCSS has been a great success as it allows all of the judges, masters, registrars and administrative staff to review current rota and case information. It is presently used to schedule matters in 12 (major centres) of the 29 locations where the Supreme Court sits. We are now working on rolling it out to the remaining court locations without SCSS, and are planning several enhancements.

In October 2004, Court Services launched the first phase of a new electronic service called Court Services Online which allows any member of the public to perform searches of court record information over the internet upon payment of a search fee. Access to our court has been significantly enhanced by this service which provides the public with 24 hour, 7 day a week access to court docket information. The second phase of Court Services Online is to allow for the electronic filing of court records which will allow lawyers and the public to file court documents. In 2004, work continued both on the development of the technical architecture to support e-filing and amendments to the *Rules of Court* to govern the electronic filing and service of court documents. The e-filing service will be piloted in the fall of 2005.

As I reported last year, while the move towards the provision of electronic court services greatly enhances the access to our court, these developments also raise challenges and issues which require a consideration of the proper balance between open access to courts and individual privacy. In the past, those who wished to obtain court record information had to come to the court house to perform a search. Thus, this public information was to some degree protected by what has been termed "practical obscurity." Now this search can be done from any computer with an internet connection and the question arises as to the proper balance between openness and privacy and what, if any, limits should be placed on remote access to court record information to maintain the proper balance. Courts across Canada are grappling with these questions and the Canadian Judicial Council has taken a leadership role in this area. In 2004, the Judges Technology Advisory Committee to the Canadian Judicial Council continued its work to develop a model policy for access to court records which will guide courts as they move forward to offer their services electronically.

In 2004, I have continued efforts to increase communication between our court and the media as the media performs an important role in informing the public regarding proceedings before the court. Our court has an interest in ensuring that the media has the necessary information to ensure that their reports of court proceedings are both accurate and timely. In recent years, there have been calls from the members of the media for greater access to information about publication bans ordered by our court. In the fall of 2004, I struck a working group to consider how to use technology to implement an electronic notification system to notify the media when applications are made for publication bans. The group is now working on a pilot project for Vancouver to provide both for notification when an application is made for a discretionary publication ban and for a listing of publication bans in ongoing matters that would be accessible on the court's website.

Our court continues to deal with an increase in the number of self-represented litigants which appear before our court. In response, our court continued to support the efforts of a collaborative effort of a number of justice system stakeholders to open a Self-Help Information Centre in the Vancouver courthouse to provide information support and assistance to those who appear in our court without representation. The centre, which recently opened, will be a useful resource by providing a place where litigants can access information on court process and procedures.

In closing, I wish to express gratitude to my colleagues, the judges and masters of this court, who have continued to provide with their generous support, as well as their time and effort, to assist in the administration of the court. I also wish to thank the staff employed by Judicial Administration and Court Services as without their support and dedication, the work of our court would not be possible.

Donald I. Brenner,
Chief Justice

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

The charts in this section provide statistical information regarding the filings in the Supreme Court both with respect to both new proceedings and chambers applications.

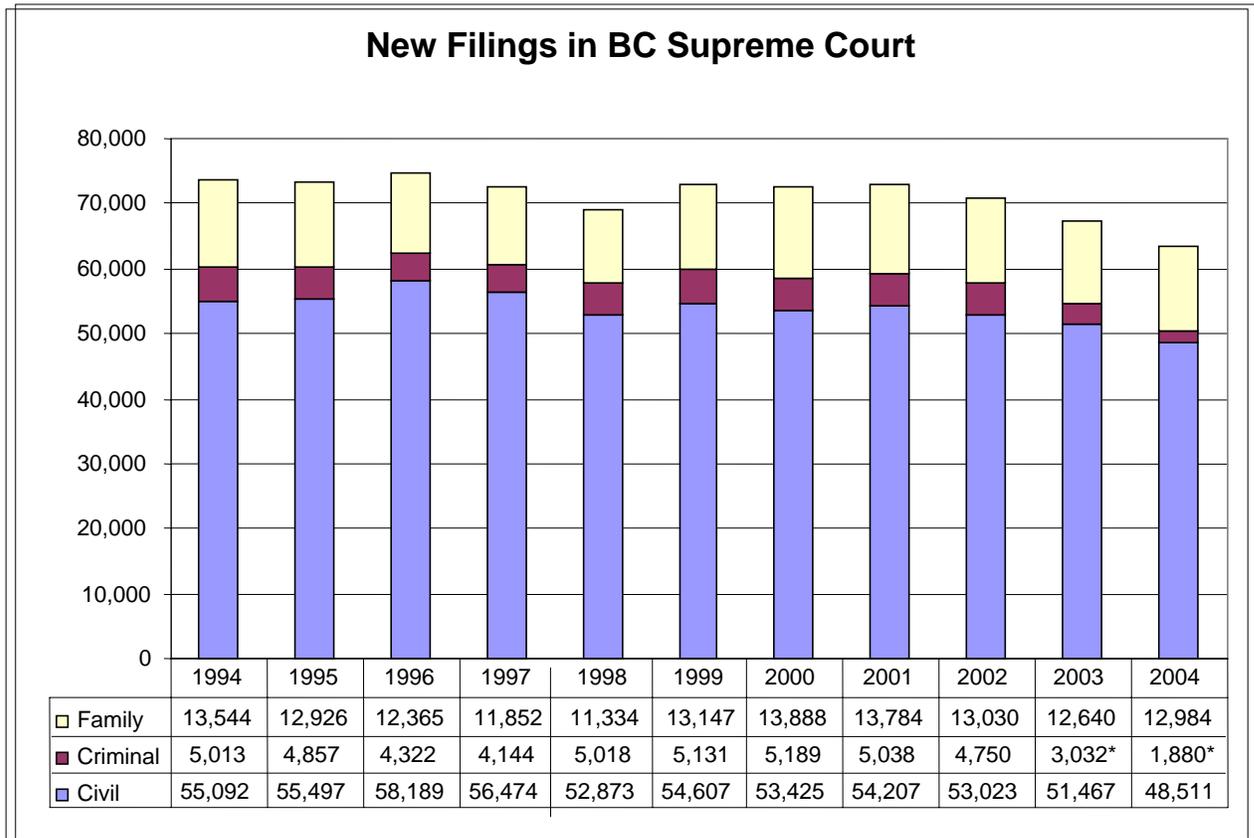


Figure 1

In Figure 1, the "Civil" category includes all general civil cases such as motor vehicle bodily injury, debt collection, breach of contract, foreclosures, adoptions, bankruptcies and *Business Corporations Act* matters. This category also includes *Family Relations Act* filings before Sept. 1, 1998. The "Family" category includes only "Divorce" filings before Sept. 1, 1998. As of Sept. 1, 1998, because of the *Divorce Act* Rule 60 changes, "Family" category includes Divorce and FRA filings.

* The criminal filings for 2003 have been adjusted upwards from 2,580 as reported in the 2003 Annual Report due to the fact that the numbers available from the Court Services Branch were not complete at the time the 2003 Annual Report was published. It should also be noted that amendments to the *Offence Act* which became effective July 1, 2003 resulted in applications to extend the time for filing an appeal of deemed convictions for traffic and by-law offences being removed from Supreme Court, which accounts in large part for the decline in the total number of cases filed in 2003 and 2004.

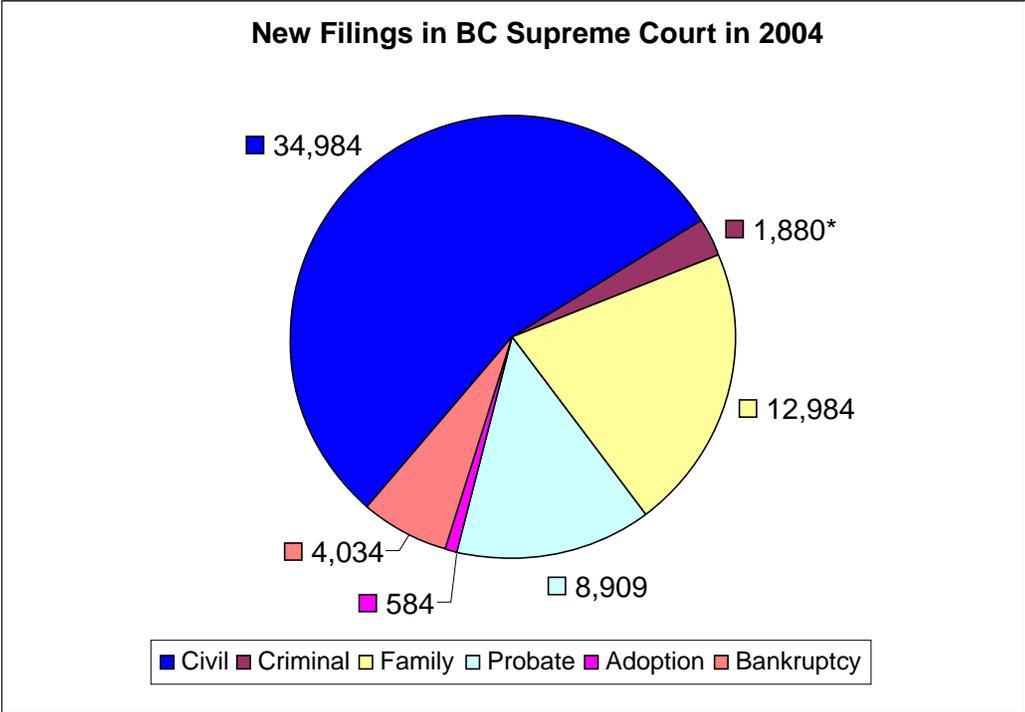


Figure 2

Figure 2 shows greater detail regarding the types of new filings received by the Supreme Court in 2002.

* It should also be noted that amendments to the *Offence Act* which became effective on July 1, 2003 resulted in applications to extend the time for filing an appeal of deemed convictions for traffic and by-law offences being removed from Supreme Court, which accounts in large part for the decline in the total number of cases filed in 2004.

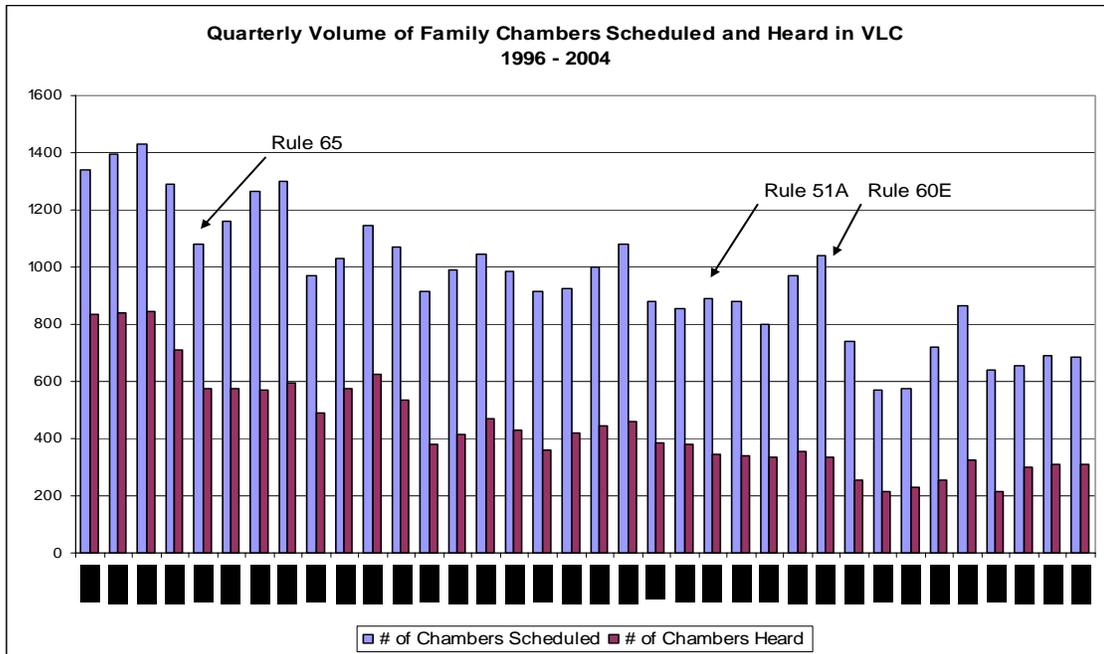


Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the quarterly volume of chambers applications scheduled and heard in Vancouver from 1996 to the end of 2004. It also demonstrates the impact of the introduction of Rules 65 (which was effective only in Vancouver), Rule 51A and the recently implemented Judicial Case Conference Pilot (Rule 60E).

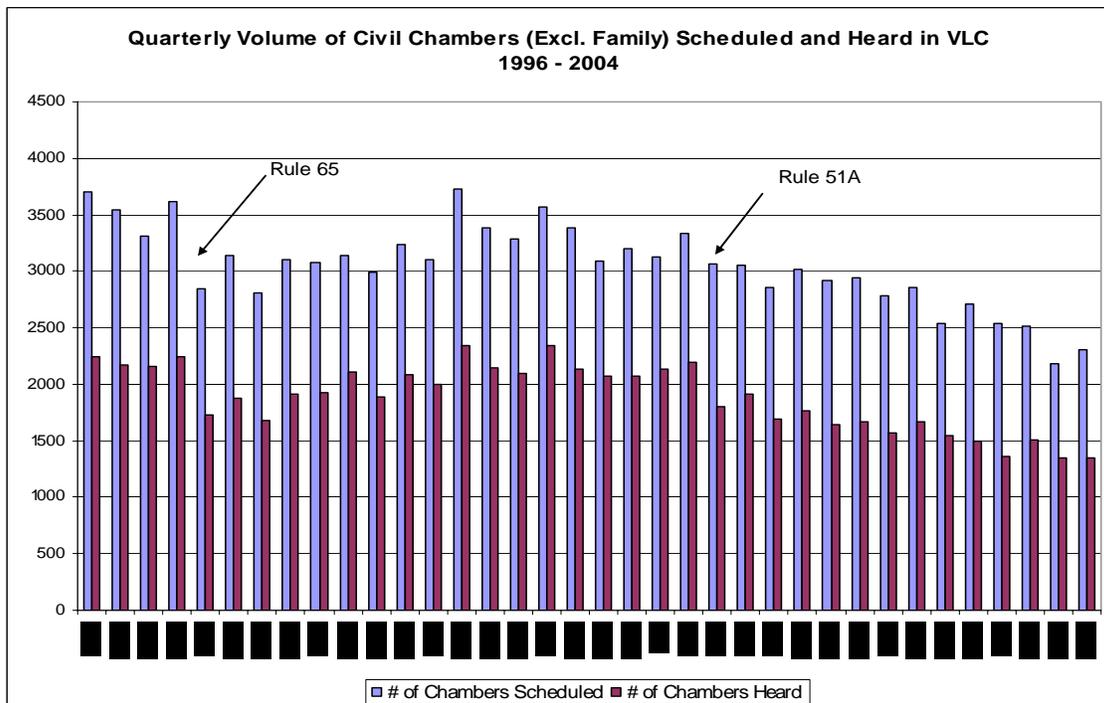


Figure 4

Figure 4 shows the quarterly volume of civil chambers applications (family excluded) scheduled and heard in Vancouver from 1996 to the end of 2004. It also demonstrates the impact of the introduction of Rule 65 (which was effective only in Vancouver), and Rule 51A.

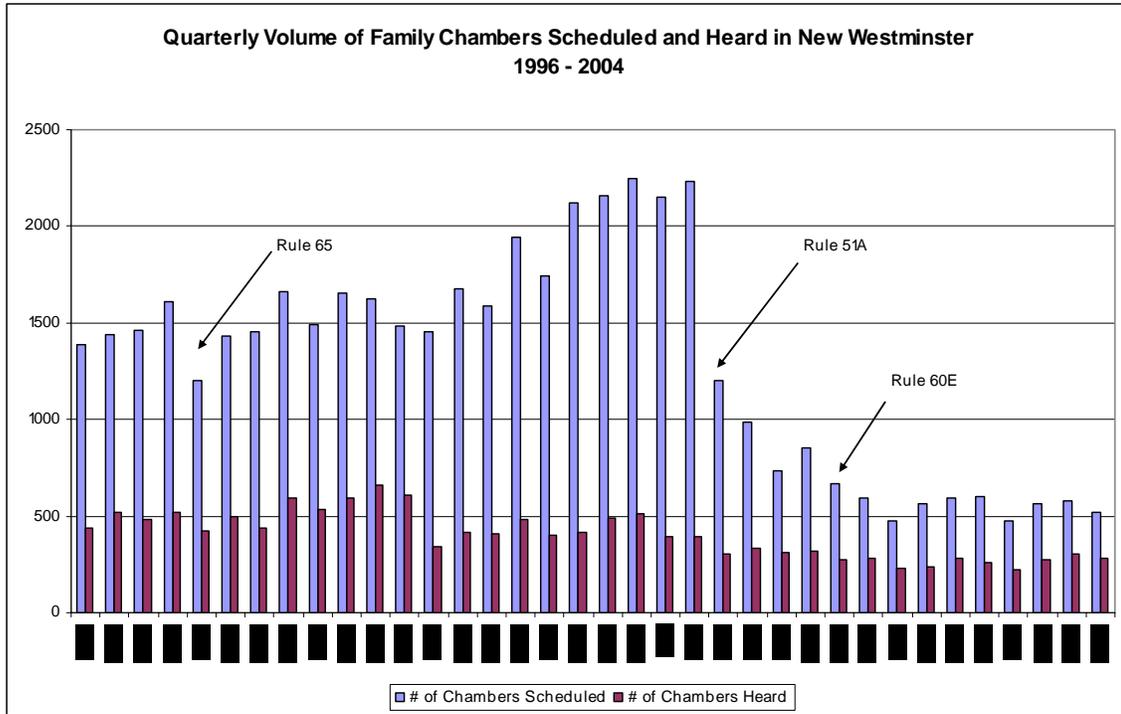


Figure 5

Figure 5 shows the quarterly volume of family chambers applications scheduled and heard in New Westminster from 1996 to 2004.

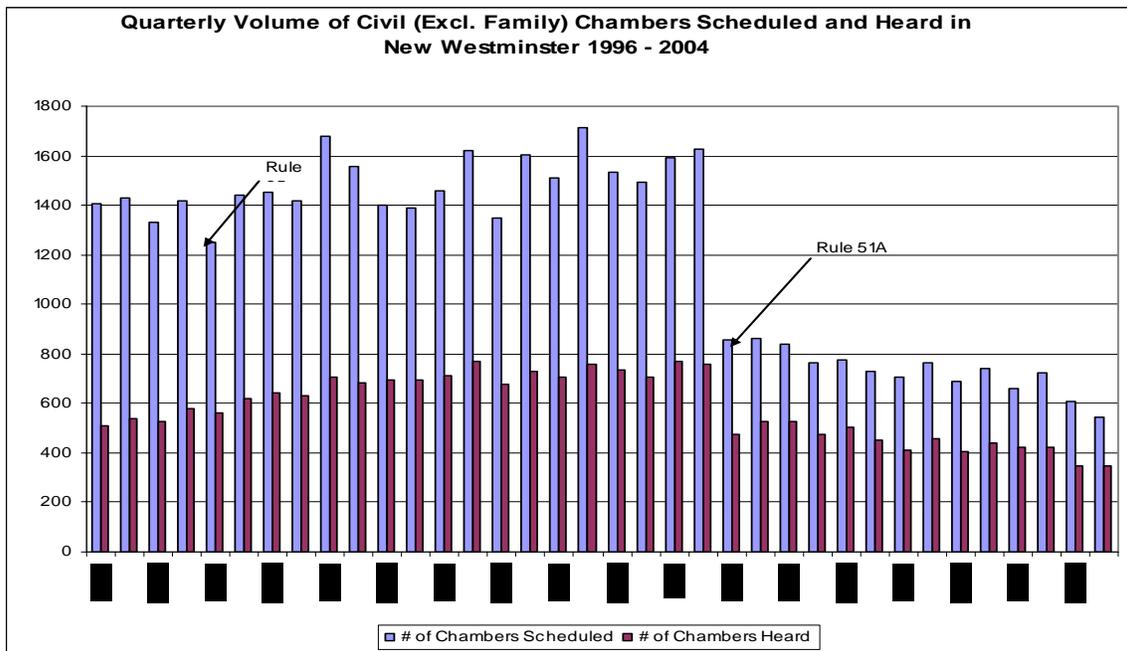


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows the quarterly volume of civil chambers applications (family excluded) and heard scheduled in New Westminster from 1996 to 2004.

Criminal Law Committee

Members: Madam Justice H. Holmes (Chair)
Madam Justice Bennett (Vice-Chair)
Mr. Justice Cullen
Mr. Justice Ehrcke
Mr. Justice Josephson
Madam Justice Koenigsberg
Madam Justice MacKenzie
Mr. Justice Romilly
Mr. Justice Stewart
Madam Justice Stromberg-Stein
Mr. Justice Williams

The committee gave much of its attention in 2004 to keeping the court apprised of developments in criminal law, evidence, and procedure, and supporting efforts to respond to changing practice.

Stewart and Bennett JJ. continued to provide members of the court with timely and insightful outlines of significant appellate and legislative developments respectively.

Cullen, Bennett JJ. and others developed and presented at the court's May 2004 conference a comprehensive educational programme on wiretap applications and reviews of authorizations. H. Holmes and Bennett JJ. hope that the similar programme they are developing on section 276 ("rape shield") applications and section 278.1 applications (for confidential records held by third parties) for this year's court conference will be as instructive and successful. The committee also reviewed the materials available to assist newly-appointed judges and recommended some changes and updating; Koenigsberg J. will oversee a further process of review.

Josephson J. participated for the committee in the court's working group on publication bans, which is considering procedures for notice of applications for publication bans as well as better procedures for making known the existence and scope of bans once they are made. The committee as a whole gave supplementary assistance to the work of that working group.

The increasing role of technology led to several issues for the committee's consideration. With the Technology Committee, the committee outlined for members of the court issues which may arise in relation to jurors using laptop computers for note-taking during trials. The committee also reviewed the public access module of JUSTIN, the electronic criminal case tracking and court record system, and provided the Chief Justice with comments.

Romilly J. resigned from the committee in 2004. He was thanked for his lengthy commitment of time and knowledge to the committee's work, as well as for his goodwill and good humour as a member. The committee is fortunate in Ehrcke J.'s agreement to now serve.

"Holmes, J."

Joint Courts Technology Committee

Members: ***The Honourable Mr. Justice Tysoe (Chair)***
 The Honourable Mr. Justice Mackenzie
 The Honourable Madam Justice Boyd
 The Honourable Mr. Justice Pitfield (until November 2004)
 The Honourable Mr. Justice Groberman (after November 2004)
 Alix Campbell, Director, Judicial Administration
 Colin Sharwood, Manager of Information Technology and Finance
 Jennifer Jordan, Registrar, B.C. Court of Appeal
 Judith Hoffman, Supreme Court Law Officer
 Cindy Friesen, Manager, Trial Coordination
 Steve Blanchard, IT Consultant

The mandate of the Technology Committee is to deal with the technology requirements of judges, including software and hardware, and security concerns arising from use of the judicial network, including the e-mail system. The Committee meets generally once a month. The following topics were discussed at the meetings over the past year.

The Committee welcomed Mr. Justice Groberman and Colin Sharwood as new members of the Committee. Mr. Justice Groberman joins the Committee as Vice-Chair and will replace Mr. Justice Tysoe as Chair at the end of 2006. Mr. Justice Pitfield retired from the Committee, which thanked him for his valuable contributions to the Committee over the past few years.

Supreme Court Trial Scheduling System (SCSS)

Work was completed on the Supreme Court Scheduling System, which was fully operational by September 2004. SCSS was developed under the direction of a steering committee chaired by Mr. Justice Tysoe and whose membership included Ms. Campbell and Ms. Friesen. SCSS has been very successful, with improvements planned as new versions are developed.

Security of E-mail Transmissions

Issues about the security of e-mail transmissions were raised and discussed. The e-mails within VLC were secure and e-mails using VPN were secure. However, e-mails sent from one courthouse to another were less secure. IT Services implemented encryption on all judicial computers. It is transparent to the user but results in the security of all e-mail transmissions. When sending e-mail from home computers, Web Outlook should be used. All transmissions will also be encrypted.

Computer Replacement Schedule

Beginning in the new budget year 2005/2006, the judicial computer replacement program will provide laptops and docking stations for all superior courts judges. This decision was made to improve the portability of the judicial workstation. It will also provide a more efficient way of ensuring that all judicial computers have the most current software and security systems, including the latest anti-virus software.

Court Services Online

The chair of the Technology Committee reviewed screen designs for the display of information which will be made available to the public through the Court Services Online program. This is an internet based system where the user will pay for searches and reports from the civil case tracking system known as CEIS.

Electronic Filing

The Technology Committees and Rules Committees from all three levels of courts had a demonstration of the proposed e-filing system. This was in anticipation of the work being undertaken by the Rules Committees on e-filing rules.

Report from IT Services

- IT Services has been running an after hours service pilot. Demand for the service has not been high. This program needs to be reviewed to determine how to provide the best service within certain budget constraints.
- IT Services implemented a security enhancement program in March, 2004.
- IT Services Policies have been prepared and reviewed by the Committee. The policies have drawn from the Blueprint for the Security of Judicial Information, a document from the Canadian Judicial Council. Security education sessions were held at the bi-annual court meetings in both the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court.
- The Committee also considered an Acceptable Use Policy for staff. The policy has been circulated to staff.
- Subsequent to the education session for judges on computer security policies, a brochure setting out the main security policies was distributed to all judicial users. The full document setting out all of the security policies is also available on the intranet.
- The design and redevelopment of the new Court website was completed and implemented in February, 2004.

Bulk Access Agreements

The Technology Committee will have a continuing role in these agreements which are made by Court Services. The agreements cover access to court record information which is requested by search companies and credit agencies. The provisions of the *Credit Reporting Act* apply to the agencies in their use of the disclosed information. The Judicial Access Policy Working Group will review applications for bulk access and refer any new issues raised by the applications to the Technology Committee.

Judgment Standards

The Committee discussed the use of Courier font in the production of reasons for judgment. It was noted that the Courier font slows down the application of computer voice dictation programs. A memo on the various font options was prepared and circulated to both courts. Judges, Masters and Registrars were asked to cast their vote on new fonts. (Those considered were Times New Roman and Arial). Arial was the favourite of a majority of the judges. Implementation of the font change took place in early 2005.

Citation of Decisions

The Committee would like to find a way of encouraging the use of neutral citations. Law clerks use the McGill Guide, which has a direction similar to the Court of Appeal Practice Direction on the use of neutral citations. The Judge's Manual will also be amended to stress the importance of using neutral citations.

Use of Computers by Juries

Increasingly jurors are bringing their laptops into jury trials. The Committee has proposed a memorandum which will be circulated to the Supreme Court Justices pointing out the security issues inherent in permitting a juror access to a laptop.

Access to Criminal Information JUSTIN

There are currently several groups which want access to criminal information in the Supreme and Provincial Courts to be offered in the same way as civil information is available. The Criminal Law Committee in the Supreme Court is discussing this request with input from the Technology Committee. Several concerns about privacy issues have been raised by the judges.

The Committee wishes to thank Steve Blanchard for his successful effort in transforming the Judicial IT Services into a professional and enviable IT Services organization. With the help of Mark Hujanen and the other Microserve contractors, IT has been re-created into a model organization meeting the needs of the judges and staff while at the same time improving the security infrastructure and establishing policies for all to follow.

"Tysoe, J."

Public Affairs Committee

Members: Mr. Justice Williamson (Chair)
Mr. Justice Blair
Madam Justice L. Smith
Ms. Judith Hoffman
Chief Justice Brenner (ex-officio)

The Public Affairs Committee has continued to work assisting journalists with a view to improving the accuracy of reporting. The Committee met with working courthouse journalists again this year, and from time to time with individual reporters, to discuss mutual concerns. The revised policy exempting accredited journalists from the prohibition against recording devices in the courtroom continues to be monitored and over the past year has functioned smoothly. The Provincial Court has modified its recording devices policy to ensure that it conforms fundamentally to ours.

The procedures put in place after the retirement of the Court Information Officer continue to work. Requests for information from the media are handled by the Chief Justice, the Chair of the Committee, the Chief Justice's executive assistant or the court's legal officer, as is appropriate. The committee will continue to monitor the efficacy of this system.

As a result of concerns raised by the media with both the Chief Justice and the Chair of the Committee about inability to access publication ban information, both at the application stage and after bans have been ordered, the Chief Justice struck a working group to consider the implementation of an electronic system which could be used to notify media outlets when applications are made for discretionary publication bans in criminal matters. The group will also explore ways to ensure that the terms of bans, once ordered, are made available to the media in a timely way. The working group is made up of members of the Judiciary, Judicial Administration and Court Services. This group is currently working on a plan to implement a notification system as a pilot project and the Vancouver Law Courts.

"Williamson, J."

Family Law Committee

Members: Mr. Justice Joyce (Chair)
Master Donaldson (Vice Chair)
Mr. Justice Barrow
Mr. Justice Chamberlist
Mr. Justice Cole
Mr. Justice Preston
Mr. Justice Ralph
Master Patterson
Judith Hoffman (Law Officer)

In 2004, the Committee has been absorbed with the collection and analysis of information to conduct an evaluation of Rule 60E, the Judicial Case Conference Pilot Project Rule. Information and feedback was sought from practitioners through the CBA Family Law Subsections and from survey forms circulated at Judicial Case Conferences. The surveys were also available on the Court website and could be completed on-line. Feedback was also sought from Judges and Masters involved in the project. This information was used to develop a series of preliminary recommendations for changes to the Judicial Case Conference program which are presently being circulated. Comments and suggestions on the recommendations are being collected. This has been a massive undertaking and a full report will be forthcoming. It is hoped that the recommendations will be made to the Court at the May meeting to obtain approval for the revised program.

During the year the availability of Duty Counsel has been of assistance to members of the public with Supreme Court matters at the Vancouver courthouse. It is hoped that this program will be expanded.

Concerns about delay in scheduling Judicial Case Conferences have been addressed in the Chilliwack and New Westminster Courts.

Desk Order Divorce processing has been improved and delays significantly reduced.

Members of the Committee will provide reports on interesting Family Law decisions on a rota basis. Barrow J. is to be commended for his past service in providing these reports.

"Joyce, J"

Education Committee

Members: ***Mr. Justice Sigurdson (Chair)***
Mr. Justice Barrow (Vice Chair)
Madam Justice Beames
Mr. Justice Cullen
Mr. Justice Goepel
Madam Justice Loo
Madam Justice Martinson
Madam Justice Neilson
Madam Justice Satanove
Mr. Justice Slade
Madam Justice L. Smith
Mr. Justice Williamson
Master Baker
Master Groves
Judith Hoffman (Law Officer)

The mandate of the Education Committee is to assist members of the court to keep informed of the constant developments in the law and to organize regular educational conferences that cover areas of interest to the members of the court. In 2004, our court reduced the number of education conferences held each year from three to two. Two very successful educational conferences were held in the past year in Penticton and Vancouver, respectively.

The Committee also organizes more informal sessions which take place bimonthly during the noon recess. Judges outside Vancouver attend these sessions via teleconference. Several such sessions were held in 2004.

There have been a few changes to the membership of the Committee in 2004. Mr. Justice Barrow was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee to take the place of Mr. Justice F. Wilson who stepped down from this position in 2003. Mr. Justice Williamson, a long standing member of the Committee, resigned his position in 2004. The Committee is grateful to Mr. Justice Williamson for his valuable contribution to its work. Madam Justice Ross has joined the Committee in his place.

The Education Committee could not do its work without the tremendous support it continues to receive from the National Judicial Institute in the way of organizational, planning and logistical assistance for our conferences and we are most grateful for their efforts.

“Sigurdson, J.”

Rules Revision Committee

Members: *Mr. Justice Macaulay (Chair)*
Madam Justice Dillon
Mr. Justice Bauman
Mr. Justice Joyce
Master McCallum
Master Baker
Ms. N. Cameron
Mr. K. Downing, Legislative Counsel
Mr. J. E. Gouge, Q.C.
Mr. N. Smith, Q.C.
Mr. J. K. McEwan, Q.C.
Ms. J. Hoffman (Secretary)
Mr. Bill Grandage, Regional Director, Court Services (ex-officio)

I. Mandate of the Committee

The *Court Rules Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 80 provides that the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council has the power to make rules governing the conduct of litigation in the Supreme Court. The Rules Revision Committee ("Committee") assists the Attorney General in making recommendations for rule changes to the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. The Attorney General appoints the members of the Committee by ministerial order, usually after consultation with the Chief Justice and the Chair. The Committee includes judges, masters, and representatives of court services, legislative drafting counsel and members of the private bar. The members of the private bar are chosen for their expertise in civil or family litigation and also broadly represent larger and smaller areas of the province.

The Committee meets regularly in person and by teleconference throughout the year to discuss proposals for rule changes expressed by the Judiciary, the Profession, and the Attorney General's department. The composition of the Committee, together with a policy of expansive consultation, ensures that proposed amendments to the Rules are evaluated in the broadest context. This report provides an appropriate opportunity for the Chair to specially thank the members of the private bar on the Committee who have each year so generously volunteered their time, energy and commitment.

Once the Committee makes recommendations to the Attorney General, the Attorney General then consults with the Chief Justice, as is required by the *Court Rules Act*, regarding the proposed changes before presenting them to Cabinet. With the exception of some stand-alone amendments, proposed rule amendments are presented to Cabinet each spring. Upon Cabinet approval, the amendments are enacted by Order-in-Council effective July 1st.

Copies of the Orders-in-Council giving effect to the amendments as well as the full text of the Rules are available on our website at www.courts.gov.bc.ca. From the Supreme Court page click the Rules Amendment link. In addition, invitations for comments on proposed rule changes are often posted on the website. We encourage members of the bar and the public to regularly check the website for information on rule amendments.

II. Composition of the Committee

During 2004, there were no changes to the composition of the Committee.

III. Work of the Committee in 2004

(a) Expedited Litigation

In the past several years, there has been a growing concern that potential and actual litigants are discouraged and sometimes even prevented from using the Supreme Court trial system because the pre-trial and trial procedures are too complex, too costly and too time consuming, having regard to the nature of the dispute. This is particularly so for cases where the amount at issue is modest relative to the practical cost of seeking judicial resolution. The Committee spent much of its time in 2004 considering how this concern could be addressed through rule amendments. Rule 68, the Expedited Litigation Pilot Project Rule is the product of those efforts.

Rule 68, which will come into force on September 1, 2005, will operate in four registries, Vancouver, Victoria, Prince George and Nelson. Rule 68 will apply to any action commenced in those registries after September 1, 2005 where the total of the monetary claims amount to \$100,000 or less, exclusive of interest and costs. However, if all parties consent, claims of greater anticipated value can be decided under the rule. Family law proceedings and those commenced under the *Class Proceedings Act* are excluded from the rule. The pilot project will run until September 1, 2007.

The objective of the rule is to simplify procedures, particularly at the pre-trial but also at the trial stage; to reduce the cost to the litigants; and reduce the time spent litigating to resolve claims; where the amount at stake is unlikely to exceed \$100,000. In assessing complexity, the Committee took into account the specific rules of procedure which, for the most part, permit the litigants and their counsel to choose what to do, when to do it, and how much of it to do, in order to get ready for and conduct a trial, as well as existing judicial interpretation of those rules. The cost of litigation is directly correlated to the time expended by lawyers on the process. Some of the available procedures can also lead to significant disbursement costs.

As such, the rule expressly removes or substantially limits some of those procedures and incorporates a proportionality test as a judicial means of maintaining those limits on procedures. In particular, limits have been placed on when contested chambers can be brought, the extent of document disclosure, examinations for discovery and the extent of expert evidence that may be called at trial. The Rule also requires the parties to engage in an earlier and more comprehensive exchange of information which includes the exchange of witness lists, summaries of evidence expected to be given by witnesses and trial briefs. The Rule also allows for the use of joint experts. Finally, the Rule provides for both a case management conference and a trial management conference at which the court can make orders aimed at streamlining the conduct of the proceeding and the trial. In these ways, the rule seeks to remove or reduce the existing complexities.

The Rules Committee will be participating in an Evaluation Committee which will plan and direct an evaluation of Rule 68 to inform any decision to expand the pilot project to other registries at the conclusion of the two year pilot period.

(b) Amendments in 2004

Some of the more substantial rule amendments passed in 2004 included the following.

- The term “praecipe” was replaced in the Rules with “requisition” to be consistent with the move towards the use of plain language in the rules.
- Subrule 51(8.1) was added to impose an obligation on parties to number the pages of documentary exhibits entered at trial.
- Subrules 60(41.1) to (41.3) were added to allow for the provision of limited court docket information in family proceedings in electronic form. This amendment was required in light of the Court Services Online project which provides for remote electronic access to court record information.
- Rule 60E, the Judicial Case Conference Pilot Project, was extended for another year.
- Rule 67, the Fax Filing Project, was extended for another year.
- Schedule 1 of Appendix C was amended to make it clear that an order for indigent status may apply to an entire proceeding, any part of or step in a proceeding or may be limited to a period of time. The amendment also gives express authority to the court to review, vary or rescind an order for indigent status on its own motion or on application.

IV. Other Matters Currently Under Consideration

Some of the more significant matters currently under active consideration by the Committee include:

- the test for the production of documents under Rule 26;
- timing of Jury Notices;
- amendments to the Tariff of Costs; and
- discoverability of Insurance Policies.

The Committee welcomes comments, suggestions and even criticism from the Court, members of the bar and the public related to its work. We also appreciate receiving copies of judgments that identify any ambiguities or anomalies in the Rules. Please forward your comments to Mr. Justice Macaulay, Chair, Rules Revision Committee, The Law Courts, 850 Burdett Avenue, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1B4.

“Macaulay, J.”

Law Clerks Committee

Members: Madam Justice Humphries (Chair)
Mr. Justice Curtis
Madam Justice Kirkpatrick
Mr. Justice Shabbits
Ms. Judith Hoffman (Law Officer)

Each year the Supreme Court hires law school graduates who have not yet been called to the bar to serve as law clerks to the judges of the Supreme Court. The clerks serve for 12 month terms commencing in September. In September 2004, 17 law clerks began their clerkships with the Supreme Court. Of these, 13 are located in Vancouver, two in New Westminster and two in Victoria. Each law clerk is assigned to a compliment of five to seven judges.

Of the 17 law clerks who commenced their terms with the Supreme Court in September 2004, 8 are graduates of UBC Law School, 8 are graduates of the UVic Law School, and one from Queen's University.

For the term commencing September 2004, the law clerks for the Court are:

Jennifer Horneland	Ryan Garrett
Jennifer Devins	Kasari Govender
Kat Kinch	Michael Litchfield
Efrat Arbel	Nicole Cardinal
Sasha Ransom	Briana Hardwick
Gordon Buck	David Curtis
Morgan Camley	Kate Campbell
Sarah Swan	Becky Black
Derek Knoechel	

In January 2004, Meg Gaily, Law Officer to the Court of Appeal, and Judith Hoffman, Law Officer to the Supreme Court, received 101 applications for the 28 law clerk positions at the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court for the 2005 – 2006 term. After reviewing the applications, the Law Officers interviewed the majority of candidates during February of 2004. Of these candidates, the Supreme Court Law Clerk Committee interviewed 30 and selected 17 candidates for the law clerk positions. A further clerk was hired for the 2005 – 2006 term, which will increase the number of clerks serving the court to 18 next year.

By way of recruitment activities for the 2006 – 2007 clerkship term, notices were sent to law schools across the country advising of the details of the clerkship program in September 2004. In November 2004, several judges, current clerks and the Law Officers from the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal attended the Faculties of Law at UBC and UVic Law to speak to law students about the law clerk program and the benefits of clerking. These events were well attended.

The Committee members wish to thank Ms. Gaily, Ms. Leacock and Ms. Hoffman for their assistance during the year. The Committee also extends its gratitude to the law clerks who have ably assisted the judges and masters of the Court this year.

“Humphries, J.”

Library Committee Report

Members: ***Madam Justice Newbury (Chair)***
 Mr. Justice Hood
 Madam Justice Humphries
 Madam Justice D. Smith
 Ms. Diane Lemieux, Librarian
 Ms. Alix Campbell

In 2004, technology continued to make its way into the Judges' Library with the implementation of *LawSource*, a WestlaweCARSWELL product, and the related training of judicial staff. *LawSource* includes all decisions published in the various Carswell law reports, plus many unreported decisions, Canadian legislation, the *Canadian Encyclopedic Digest*, and the *Canadian Abridgment*. Along with the use of the longstanding on-line legal source, *Quicklaw*, the new availability of *LawSource* will enable us to provide prompt and efficient service.

On the legislative side, the groundwork was laid for the acquisition of QP LegalEze, a web-based subscription service to the current laws of British Columbia. Produced in partnership with the Ministry of Attorney General and the Legislative Assembly, this product of the Queen's Printer will provide our judicial staff access to online sources such as the statutes and regulations, and also the British Columbia Gazette Part II and full text Orders-in-Council. Training will begin in early spring 2005.

We also negotiated a licence agreement with Canada Law Book for on-line access to the Dominion Law Reports in our Vancouver and Victoria locations. Various law report and information digests are now being e-mailed directly to participating recipients.

Along with our fingertip access to on-line information, our dedication to print remains. Hardcover textbooks continue to hold their place on our shelves, although loose-leaf editions seem to have become the norm of the legal publishing world as publishers try to minimize costs and maximize accuracy and currency. Although we are limited by budget constraints, we continue to purchase library materials, but not without great consideration of our judges' needs first and foremost.

Before we purchase a new text or edition of an existing text, we carefully consider whether it is truly necessary in our library system. Preference is usually given to purchasing legal texts in subject areas which are frequently perused, but suggestions for purchase may also be made to the Library Committee for items from the new areas of the law. With the costs of subscriptions continually rising, we are especially grateful to those judges who, through benevolent donations to the library, help in the purchasing of new law books and library resources.

On a practical note, we have designated a central location in the Judges' Library for the communal use of a scanner and colour printer supplied by our Information Technology Group for judges and judicial administrative staff. The scanner has proved to be an item of great usefulness, enabling the transfer of a photo, newspaper clipping or printed document to be made into a file format which in turn can be e-mailed to others or saved onto one's computer. This has made the transfer of information from one location to another all the more effective, especially with our judges in locations outside of Vancouver.

Although the downsizing of libraries is imminent as on-line sources evolve, the focus for the time being will continue to be on the balance of electronic and printed materials. While printed case-law reporters are inching closer to extinction with the higher costs being spread among fewer buyers, other products do not lend themselves well to perusing on a desktop. The task will be to find out where the continued reliance on print remains, before we leave the "paper age" behind.

"Newbury, J.A."

Judicial Access Policy Working Committee

Members: *Jennifer Jordan, Registrar, Court of Appeal (Chair)*
Alix Campbell, Director Judicial Administration, Superior Courts
Virginia Day, Director, Business Development and Change
Management, Court Services
Meg Gaily, Law Officer, Court of Appeal
Jill Leacock, Law Officer, Court of Appeal
Judith Hoffman, Law Officer, Supreme Court
Gene Jamieson, Legal Officer, Provincial Court
Mike Smith, Director Judicial Administration, Provincial Court
Kathryn Thomson, Legal Policy Consultant

Mandate of the Committee

In 2004 work of this Committee revolved around issues consequent on the electronic access offered to the public through CSONline. The initial access is to the Provincial Court and Supreme Court civil electronic information system (CEIS) which went online in late 2004. Access to the Court of Appeal case tracking system will be offered in 2005. With the introduction of public access to electronic case tracking and the future plan to introduce electronic filing, it was necessary to consider the development of policies relating to access to court record information by the public and other interested parties. Since the judiciary create policies governing access to this information, while Court Services is charged with the collection and storage of this information, a joint committee was contemplated which would bring together all three levels of courts. The Committee is a working group which develops draft policies and interacts with the various court committees, seeking guidance and approval for the draft policies. The Chief Justices and Chief Judge are then consulted before a policy is adopted. In addition to the policy work, the Committee also reviews access applications for those seeking bulk access to court information.

Work of the Committee

In 2004 the Committee, which meets monthly, was involved in several requests relating to access to court record information. The Committee also reviews proposals relating to specific topics which need further investigation in the electronic world. What follows is a small list of items considered:

- renewal of Bulk Search Agreements with credit reporting agencies using the new application procedure and the new agreement template;
- continuing discussion about access to criminal court record information;
- confirmation of information to be available to the public through Court Services Online;

- discussion about access to court lists online and the appropriate information to be included on the online list;
- requests for information and requests for access to the systems were received from Corrections, Drug Treatment Court, the Vancouver Court Sentencing Study, Crime Victim Assistance Program, and conservation officers from the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection;
- a library request for exemption of fees for access to CEIS was refused as the library was acting on behalf of the public in requesting information from CEIS;
- the Committee clarified the position regarding access to pardoned offences pursuant to the Criminal Records Review Act;
- work has begun on an in court module for CEIS for court clerks;
- work has also begun on a judicial module for judges who will be dealing with electronically filed documents, with the assistance of a judicial/court services working group;
- consultations are underway concerning the requirements for electronic signatures in the e-filing world; and
- the judiciary are involved in a document by document review of privacy considerations relating to access to electronic court documents.

"Jennifer Jordan"