

BRAIDWOOD INQUIRY INTO THE USE OF CONDUCTED ENERGY WEAPONS IN B.C. GETS MORE TIME TO COMPLETE ITS WORK

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VANCOUVER – Attorney General Wally Oppal has given the Braidwood Commissions of Inquiry into the use of conducted energy weapons in British Columbia a five month extension to complete the work of the study commission.

The study Commission will now report by November 30. The original deadline was June 30, but the number of submissions received and the level of public interest in the Commission's mandate means it needs more time to review all the information it has received.

Headed by retired B.C. Appeal Court Justice Thomas R. Braidwood, QC, the first phase of the two part inquiry held 14 days of public forums in Vancouver beginning on May 5. It heard from 46 presenters and received 43 written submissions. Another day of public forums is scheduled for June 25 to accommodate individuals who have requested an opportunity to address the Commission.

Mr. Braidwood was appointed in February by Mr. Oppal to head two inquiries. The first is a "study" commission into the use, effectiveness and safety of conducted energy weapons in B.C. by law enforcement agencies other than the RCMP. The second phase will be a "hearing and study" commission to provide a complete record of the circumstances of and relating to the death of Polish immigrant Robert Dziekanski at Vancouver International Airport in October last year.

While a "study" commission does not necessarily need to invite submissions or presentations from interested parties, Mr. Braidwood decided that input from the public and organizations with an interest in the use of conducted energy weapons would be important for him to assess all relevant views and provide informed recommendations to the Legislature.

The second inquiry will begin following the completion of the RCMP investigation into the events that preceded Mr. Dziekanski's death.

The government decided to separate the two commissions. The study commission could proceed immediately since its scope was broad and its results could be given immediate attention. The second commission would need to consider several reviews and investigations into Mr. Dziekanski's death and these should inform the commission if possible and appropriate.

Inquiry website: <http://www.braidwoodinquiry.ca/>

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