



Speaking Points for

The Honourable Kash Heed Solicitor General

Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2009

**Event: Body Armour Control Act Announcement
Legislature, Victoria**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

- Good morning...
- I would like to welcome ... Superintendent Bill McKinnon, head of the B.C. Association of Chiefs of Police, and Vancouver Police Inspector Brad Desmarais (de-mares)
- I do not have to tell anyone here today that gun violence has escalated between rival gangs.
- We also know that this violence has been accompanied by more gang members wearing body armour.
- Body armour like these sets that Vancouver Police Inspector Brad Desmarais (de-mares) has brought with him today.
- Vancouver Police has encountered body armour like this during gang investigations and street checks more than 230 times since 2002.
- And most of those have been in the past few years.
- Gang members and organized criminals are on our streets and in our neighbourhoods, hiding behind bullet proof vests while innocent bystanders remain unprotected and vulnerable.
- This stops now.
- Body armour was designed to protect those who put their lives at risk to protect others ... soldiers, police, corrections officers and sheriffs.
- It was never intended to protect those who prey on others – except in cases where they need to get to court in one piece so they can face justice.
- The reality is that those who break the law are knowingly putting themselves in harm's way.
- They are not entitled to wear this kind of protection so they can use it to cause havoc in our streets and put innocent lives in danger.
- Those with a complete disregard for life – who steal our freedom through fear and intimidation – should not be entitled to the same kind of protective gear as the police and security forces trying to protect law abiding citizens from them.
- That's what this legislation is about.

- Last February, the Premier announced a seven-point plan to combat gang and gun violence.
- And one component of the plan promised new rules for the sale and possession of body armour.
- Today, we are making good on that promise.
- The Body Armour Control Act, the first legislation of its kind in Canada, will give police an extra tool to stop gang violence.
- This legislation will help choke off criminals' access to body armour and make it easier for police to seize from those not authorized to possess it.
- Under these new rules, any individual who wants to possess or sell body armour will need a permit or a license.
- That means that applicants will now have to provide a good reason as to why they need to possess body armour.
- Applicants will also undergo a mandatory criminal record check.
- If a person...
 - ...fails to show a need to possess body armour;
 - ...is charged with or convicted of a crime;
 - ...or has conduct or character that tells us they should not have or sell body armour...
 - ...that permit will be denied.
- And anyone found in contravention of this Act will not only face fines – they will face the possibility of prison time.
- We will not allow our communities to be desecrated by the crime and violence perpetrated by a few.
- Gangs and gun violence have no place in this province and it is time to take our streets back.
- This new legislation is another tool in our fight against gang violence ... and I assure you ... it's a fight we intend to win.
- Thank you.