



NOVA SCOTIA
PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE

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CASE BULLETINS

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**PPS MANAGEMENT
DIRECTIVE**

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The Need for Case Bulletins

1. Accountability

Tens of thousands of criminal cases and quasi-criminal cases are before the courts in Nova Scotia each year. The DPP is responsible for the conduct of each of those cases and the Attorney General is accountable to the Legislative Assembly for every prosecution in Nova Scotia. It is, of course, impossible for the DPP or the Attorney General to have direct knowledge or involvement in more than a small portion of those cases. The DPP and other senior officials must rely upon Crown Attorneys to provide them with accurate, timely information in regard to cases around the province in order to meet their accountability obligations. It is essential that the PPS develop and maintain mechanisms through which case-specific information can be disseminated throughout the PPS and be available to effectively brief senior officials. Case Bulletins are an integral part of this process.

2. Transparency

Public confidence in the administration of criminal justice requires that the general public as well as accused persons and the citizens directly involved in criminal cases have reliable information in regard to the status of prosecutions and the rationale for certain decisions which are made by prosecutors. The PPS is committed to ensuring that appropriate information is readily available in an understandable form to those entitled to it. To meet this commitment to transparency, the communications staff of the PPS must be provided with necessary information in a timely fashion. Case Bulletins are vital to this important function.

3. Resource management

Certain "major prosecutions" have resource implications for the PPS which must be flagged as soon as possible. Some cases may require the prompt redeployment of counsel; other cases may require the procurement of extra resources. These important resource implications provide an additional need for reliable information, at the earliest possible opportunity. Case Bulletins can thus be of assistance in managing prosecution resources.

For which matters are Case Bulletins to be prepared?

Case Reports must be prepared in regard to the following matters:

1. homicides and other unlawful killings (e.g. by criminal negligence);
2. criminal conduct by, or directed at, politicians and other public figures;
3. cases involving Indigenous rights or novel Charter issues;
4. cases involving large numbers of victims or criminal activity at several places;
5. cases which have attracted (or will attract) unusual media interest.

Case Bulletins should be prepared for all other matters for which there is reason to believe that the DPP, the Attorney General, or the communications staff will require information. When uncertain about the need to prepare a Case Bulletin, Crown Attorneys should prepare a Case Bulletin, or consult with their supervisors.

What information is to be included?

To facilitate the collection and dissemination of essential information, the attached Case Bulletin template has been developed. Utilization of the template will ensure that the information is available in a standard, understandable format which can be updated as required.

Who prepares the Case Bulletin?

Generally, the Crown Attorney with carriage of the case should prepare the Case Bulletins relating to that case. If a matter does not involve criminal charges, or there is likely to be some delay before a prosecutor is assigned to the matter, the Crown Attorney who first becomes aware of the matter should prepare a Case Bulletin, unless otherwise instructed by his or her supervisor.

To whom are Case Bulletins to be sent?

Case Bulletins are to be sent simultaneously to

- the office of the DPP and Deputy DPP (holly.murphy@novascotia.ca fax 424-4484)
- the Director of Communications (chris.hansen@novascotia.ca fax 424-4484)
- the Chief Crown Attorney accountable for the matter.

How, and when, are Case Bulletins to be delivered?

It is essential that Case Bulletins be delivered as soon as possible. Ideally, this will be immediately after the Crown Attorney (or other PPS member involved in the matter) becomes aware of the matter. Case Bulletins should be sent by e-mail or fax. In exigent circumstances, an oral report may be given, with a written Case Bulletin to follow as soon possible.

PPS managers and communications staff are aware of the need to maintain confidentiality in regard to investigations and ongoing prosecutions. In many instances, the content of a Case Bulletin will be kept on file until it is appropriate to provide information to parties outside of the PPS. This does not reduce the need to prepare a Case Bulletin in a timely fashion.

Chief Crown Attorneys are responsible for ensuring that Case Bulletins are prepared and promptly delivered in regard to matters for which they are accountable, and that the content is accurate.

CASE BULLETIN

Subject: _____ **Date:** _____
NAME OF ACCUSED / PERSON / ENTITY AT CENTRE OF ISSUE

Charge(s) (if any) _____

Next court appearance (date): _____ Court: _____

Facts/background (brief summary):

Issues to be brought to the attention of the DPP/Managers/Communications staff:

Comments, including recommended action to be taken:

Contact person: Name: _____

Location: _____ Telephone: _____

Cross reference (if any): _____