OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUDGE

MEDIA RELEASE

THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

February 12, 2003 – For immediate release

The R.C.M.P. announced yesterday that a former judge of the Provincial Court in Prince George has been under criminal investigation since 1999.

Members of the judiciary in Prince George were advised for the first time in late July 2002 of the possibility of a criminal investigation involving a judge of the Court. This information was immediately conveyed to the Chief Judge. As soon as the Chief Judge was able to confirm the existence of the criminal investigation, the judge was removed from his judicial duties. His last sitting day was July 22, 2002.

The Chief Judge initiated an investigation under the *Provincial Court Act*. Section 11 of the *Act* provides that the Chief Judge "must conduct an investigation respecting the fitness of a judge … to perform his or her duties if …the Chief Judge considers that an investigation is required." An investigation can proceed to a judicial inquiry before the Judicial Council or a judge of the Supreme Court, and can ultimately result in removal of a judge from office.

The judge tendered his resignation by a letter to the Attorney General dated October 9, 2002, effective October 31, 2002. The judge's resignation terminated the authority of the Chief Judge and made the investigation redundant.

The judge was appointed to the Court in 1991 and presided in Prince George until his resignation. The Chief Judge's investigation disclosed that none of the allegations giving rise to the criminal investigation were known to any other member of the judiciary prior to July 2002.

As the matter is now with the Ministry of Attorney General, Criminal Justice Branch, and is no longer within the authority of the Chief Judge or the Judicial Council, the Office of the Chief Judge has no further comment.

More information about the Provincial Court may be found at www.provincialcourt.bc.ca.

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