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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**AMENDMENTS TO ACCESS AND PRIVACY LEGISLATION WELCOMED BY  
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER**

**Victoria**—Information and Privacy Commissioner David Loukidelis expressed his support for amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act introduced today.

“These procedural amendments will improve the processing of freedom of information requests as well as improve my office’s processing of appeals and complaints about access requests,” the Commissioner stated. He added, “The workload of my office continues to grow and these amendments will help us meet these pressing demands for service.”

The amendments expand the Commissioner’s order-making powers, provide greater flexibility in the management of appeals and add a new section allowing the Commissioner to enforce his orders as if they were a judgment of the Supreme Court.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was reviewed by an all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly, whose May 2004 report unanimously recommended a number of changes to strengthen the public’s right of access to information and to improve government accountability. Loukidelis added, “As welcome as today’s amendments are, the government should move quickly to change the law, as the committee unanimously recommended, so public bodies can only withhold true policy advice or recommendations.” According to the Commissioner, “As the committee recognized, the current situation around release of advice to government unacceptably curtails citizens’ right to know.”

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