



**NEWS RELEASE  
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***COMMISSIONER SHARES BC CIVIL LIBERTIES CONCERNS OVER  
INFORMATION IN POLICE DATABASE***

**VICTORIA** – Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham today confirmed that her office has been examining the issue of employment-related criminal records checks for several months and will take the recent concerns voiced by the BC Civil Liberties Association about the PRIME police database into consideration.

PRIME is a networked database and records management system that all British Columbia police forces use to collect, use and disclose law enforcement information. The database holds a significant amount of sensitive information and may include information about who has called the police, been a victim or a suspect of a crime or charged with an offense. The BC Civil Liberties Association has expressed concerns over the use of this database for pre-employment checks that go beyond checking for criminal convictions, unfairly resulting in lost job opportunities.

“This is a very complex issue involving multiple jurisdictions, multiple data linkages, competing interests and the overlap of at least five different laws,” said Denham. “And at the end of the day, we need to be certain that the process is fair and justifiable, both ethically and legally,” she said. “In the past, the PRIME database has been considered a highly confidential tool for law enforcement in their daily activities. If PRIME is going to be used increasingly for background checks, citizens will likely demand greater access to it to ensure any information contained therein is accurate.”

The commissioner said that her office’s examination will include consultations with the Solicitor General, civil society groups, the law enforcement community and other information and privacy commissioners. “This issue is not unique to British Columbia. It’s important to involve a broad set of stakeholders in our analysis,” she said.

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