



OFFICE OF THE  
INFORMATION &  
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER  
for British Columbia

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**News Release**

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**Statement from B.C. Information and Privacy Commissioner regarding exterior-facing surveillance cameras on BC Transit buses**

**VICTORIA**—B.C. Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham issued the following statement about the use of surveillance cameras on BC Transit buses:

“I wish to express my concern about BC Transit’s announcement to use surveillance cameras on buses in Victoria and Kamloops as part of a one-year pilot project.

“My Office has been in discussions with BC Transit on this issue, and I continue to have concerns about the impact exterior-facing cameras will have on the privacy of the public. Passengers of the buses involved in the pilot will be notified via a decal inside the bus that they are being recorded, but it is not possible to alert individuals outside of the bus that they may be recorded by a camera facing forward from the front of the bus.

“The use of video surveillance subjects individuals to the recording of their ordinary, lawful public activities. This is generally done without their express consent, and should only be done by public bodies and organizations in limited circumstances. Though in this case the use of interior-facing cameras may be justifiable under privacy legislation due to legitimate issues of operator and public safety, I am not convinced that the same can be said for the use of exterior-facing cameras.

“This is because BC Transit’s exterior-facing cameras result in a continual collection of personal information such as images of license plates and of individuals who are not even on a bus. It is not apparent that this type of surveillance assists with public safety or any of the possible benefits of interior-facing cameras. Nor is it apparent that these cameras are necessary to assist with establishing liability given ICBC’s sophistication in accident reconstruction.

“I have expressed my concerns with BC Transit, and will continue to monitor this and any other public body that uses exterior-facing cameras as part of their surveillance program to ensure compliance with provincial privacy legislation.”

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