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BC Ferries boards splits

The membership of boards of directors of the BC Ferry Authority (BCFA) and BC Ferries Services Inc (BCFS) have, essentially, been identical since the 'privatization' of the ferry company in 2003.

The recent reassignment of members to one or the other board follows recommendations by the provincial Comptroller General, Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland in a report in October 2009.

The Comptroller General also found board and executive compensation, set by the BCFS board, and approved by the BCFA board, excessive.

BCFS is wholly owned by the provincial government through BCFA. Theoretically, the operations and financing decisions for the company are made by the BCFS board, which is overseen by the BCFA board on behalf of the government.

When both boards have the same membership, there is some question whether such oversight could be effective.

Now, the provincial government has attempted to tackle this conflict of interest by having directors sit only on one board or the other .

The new BCFA board includes Christopher Gardner, Gordon Larkin, Jane Peverett, and Stephen Smith, all of whom were formerly on the BCFA board, and former Premier Dan Miller, who was formerly on the BCFS board. Four more appointments are yet to be made.

The new BCFS board includes Elizabeth Harrison, Holly Haston-Grant, Donald Hayes, Graham Wilson, Brian Kenning, and Wayne Stoilen, all of whom were formerly on the BCFS board. Maureen Macarenko (previously on the BCFA board) and former Attorney General Geoff Plant have been added.

Mr Stoilen is the brother of Sheldon Stoilen, who holds a senior position on the BC Ferry Commission, which regulates BC Ferries. Mr Kenning is currently taking a break from testifying at the Basi-Virk trial (see also separate article, page 5).

BCFS CEO David Hahn, who was previously a member of the BCFS board, has not been named to the new board, but will presumably attend board meetings. ✉

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