
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

B.C. TO COMPENSATE RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY OLIVER SLIDE

OLIVER – The Province is exploring additional compensation options for Oliver-area residents affected by the June 13 debris torrent, Solicitor General Michael de Jong, QC, announced today in accepting all 12 recommendations from the deputy solicitor general’s review of the incident.

“The review highlights evidence of a consistent pattern of concerns and warnings about the state of the Testalinden Dam dating back to the 1960s,” said de Jong. “We cannot turn back time or change what has happened, but going forward, we will ensure communities are better protected from this kind of risk. As well, we are currently looking at possible ways to build on existing compensation programs for either remediating or purchasing properties.”

The review, completed by deputy solicitor general David Morhart, looked into the events leading up to the failure of the Testalinden Dam, the circumstances of the debris torrent and a broad analysis of dam safety oversight in British Columbia.

“Our government is committed to strengthening the accountability of dam owners and taking greater action to ensure they fulfil their legislated licensing requirements,” said de Jong.

Recommendations from the report include a full review and updating of the dam safety regulation, including the consequence classification tool that rates risk potential. The entire report can be found at www.gov.bc.ca/pssg online.

Key to government’s acceptance of all recommendations will be the completion of the Ministry of Environment’s report on their Rapid Dam Assessment and the Dam Safety Program review. This report will include a comprehensive response to the deputy solicitor general’s recommendations and the steps government will be taking to improve dam safety in B.C. This report will be completed and made public by Oct. 1, 2010.

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