

VIDEO CONFERENCE PILOT PROJECT - LAW COURTS

The necessary equipment to support testimony by means of video conference has been acquired for use in the Halifax Law Courts. To determine the level of demand for this service and to develop the best means of providing this service, a year long pilot project will commence on June 2, 2003. This project is initially aimed at civil litigation in which a party wishes to call a witness who would have to travel from outside of Nova Scotia but the scope could be expanded depending on demand.

The party wishing to present evidence through video conferencing (the "Requesting Party") must contact the Law Courts Scheduling Office in writing at **Fax 424-8367 (Ph. 424-8223) six weeks prior to the hearing date**. This notice requirement arises in part from the need to book in advance to have the necessary connections made. Under this pilot project the first date available for booking will be July 14.

The Requesting Party must make the necessary arrangements for the out of town facilities and the staff to swear witnesses and provide other required support. The contact numbers between the out of town facilities and the Law Courts must also be provided.

At the time of booking the Scheduling Office will provide the Requesting Party with an estimate of the cost associated with the video conferencing and with the contact point for the day of the hearing.

The costs are payable by the Law Courts to a third party and therefore are to be recovered in full from the Requesting Party. At the time of this announcement, those costs consist of Connection Charges of \$1,086.75 plus Usage Charges (minimum charge) \$511.98 for a total of **\$1,598.73 plus 0.09 to 0.15 cents/hour**(all amounts quoted are exclusive of HST).

A deposit of 50% or \$799 will be required from the Requesting Party at the time of the booking. In the event that the video conference service is not required this deposit will be used to offset any penalties imposed by third parties with the remainder being refundable to the Requesting Party. A further \$799.73 will be required two weeks prior to the trial and the remaining hourly rate charges will be payable on completion of the trial.

Please address any questions to Colleen Riebe at 424-8223.

May 26, 2003